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2014/C 218/01

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

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Hinweis für den Leser

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

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

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

Die vorliegenden Anfragen und Antworten werden gemäß den Artikeln 117 und 118 der Geschäftsordnung des Europäischen Parlaments veröffentlicht.

Alle Anfragen und Antworten sind auf der Internetseite des Europäischen Parlaments (Europarl) unter der Rubrik „parlamentarische Anfragen“ verfügbar:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html>

ABKÜRZUNGEN DER FRAKTIONEN

PPE Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten)

S&D Fraktion der Progressiven Allianz der Sozialisten und Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament

ALDE Fraktion der Allianz der Liberalen und Demokraten für Europa

Verts/ALE Fraktion der Grünen/Freie Europäische Allianz

ECR Europäische Konservative und Reformisten

GUE/NGL Konföderale Fraktion der Vereinigten Europäischen Linken/Nordische Grüne Linke

EFD Fraktion „Europa der Freiheit und der Demokratie“

NI Fraktionslos

IV

(Informationen)

INFORMATIONEN DER ORGANE, EINRICHTUNGEN UND SONSTIGEN
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**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011597/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Visas délivrés aux ressortissants marocains

La Commission européenne a annoncé vendredi avoir proposé au Conseil l'ouverture de négociations entre l'Union européenne et le Maroc sur la conclusion d'un accord destiné à assouplir les procédures de délivrance des visas de court séjour.

Cette proposition s'inscrit, selon la Commission, dans le contexte du partenariat pour la mobilité entre l'Union européenne et le Maroc, signé en juin 2013, et dont la mise en œuvre est en cours.

Une partie des mesures d'assouplissement proposées sont généralisées à tous les demandeurs, tandis que d'autres ne profiteront qu'à certaines catégories de personnes, notamment les étudiants, les chercheurs et les hommes et femmes d'affaires, précise un communiqué de la Commission.

1. En quoi consiste cette série d'assouplissements proposés?
2. Selon des statistiques de la Commission, quelque 322 094 visas «Schengen» ont été délivrés en 2012 par les consulats des États de l'espace Schengen au Maroc. Quel est le top 10 des demandes de visas?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Malmström au nom de la Commission

(22 novembre 2013)

Le 4 octobre 2013, la Commission européenne a présenté au Conseil une recommandation relative à des directives de négociation d'un accord avec le Maroc visant à faciliter la délivrance de visas. L'accord représente l'une des mesures figurant dans le partenariat pour la mobilité approuvé en juin 2013 par le Maroc, l'Union européenne et neuf de ses États membres.

La série d'assouplissements proposés comprend l'allègement pour certaines catégories de demandeurs des preuves documentaires relatives à l'objet du voyage à fournir à l'appui d'une demande de visa, la possibilité de délivrer des visas de long séjour à entrées multiples, l'exonération ou la réduction des droits de visas pour des catégories de voyageurs spécifiques, la fixation de délais pour le traitement des demandes et la possibilité d'exempter de l'obligation de visa les détenteurs d'un passeport diplomatique ou de service.

En 2012, les dix pays à l'origine de la plupart des demandes de visa Schengen étaient les suivants: la Russie (6 069 001), l'Ukraine (1 313 727), la Chine (1 242 507), la Biélorussie (698 404), la Turquie (668 835), l'Inde (506 162), l'Algérie (387 942), le Maroc (373 823), l'Arabie saoudite (255 083) et le Royaume-Uni (210 610). Ce dernier chiffre s'explique par le grand nombre de ressortissants de pays tiers résidant au Royaume-Uni qui ont besoin d'un visa pour entrer dans l'espace Schengen.

Au Maroc, en 2012, la plupart des demandes de visa ont été effectuées auprès des consulats de France (174 912 demandes, soit 46 % du total) et d'Espagne (139 134, soit 37 % du total).

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011597/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)**

Subject: Visas issued to Moroccan nationals

On Friday, the Commission announced that it had proposed to the Council to open negotiations between the European Union and Morocco on an agreement to facilitate the procedures for issuing short-stay visas.

According to the Commission, this proposal was made in the context of the Mobility Partnership between the EU and Morocco, signed in June 2013, and which is currently being implemented.

According to a Commission press release, some of the proposed facilitation measures will apply to all applicants, while others will only benefit certain groups of people, particularly students, researchers and business professionals.

1. What do these proposed facilitation measures consist of?
2. According to the Commission's figures, some 322 094 'Schengen' visas were issued to Morocco in 2012 by the consulates of Schengen States. Which countries make up the top 10 in terms of visa applications?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)**

On 4 October 2013 the European Commission presented its recommendation to the Council for negotiating directives to negotiate a visa facilitation agreement with Morocco. This agreement is one of the measures included in the Mobility Partnership agreed in June 2013 by Morocco, the EU and 9 of its Member States.

The list of suggested visa facilitations includes the simplification of documentary evidence concerning the purpose of travel to be submitted in support of the visa application for certain categories of applicants, the possibility of issuing multiple-entry visas with a long period of validity, the waiving/reducing of the handling fees for specific categories of travellers, the setting of deadlines for processing visa applications, as well as a possible exemption from the visa obligation for holders of diplomatic and service passports.

In 2012 the 10 countries from which most Schengen visa applications were made were: Russia (6 069 001), Ukraine (1 313 727), China (1 242 507), Belarus (698 404), Turkey (668 835), India (506 162), Algeria (387 942), Morocco (373 823), Saudi Arabia (255 083), United Kingdom (210 610). The UK figures are explained by the large number of third-country nationals residing in the UK who require a visa to enter the Schengen area.

In Morocco in 2012, most visa applications were made at consulates of France (174 912 applications, i.e. 46% of the total) and Spain (139 134, i.e. 37%).

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011599/13
a la Comisión**

Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE), Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar (PPE) y Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Solicitud de reintroducción del Reglamento (UE) n° 29/2012 — Normas de comercialización del aceite de oliva

En un restaurante de París una mujer italiana encontró un ratón vivo dentro de la aceitera. La noticia fue recogida en los principales periódicos italianos que protestaron por las malas condiciones sanitarias en las que se conserva el aceite que se sirve en las mesas de los restaurantes.

Desde hace meses, la mayoría de los países de Europa piden que se prohíba que los restaurantes y comedores sirvan aceite de oliva en aceiteras anónimas, sin etiqueta ni garantías anti-rellenado para los consumidores.

En mayo del año pasado el Comisario Ciolos bloqueó inexplicablemente el Reglamento (UE) n° 29/2012 sobre las normas de comercialización del aceite de oliva, por el que se establecía la obligación de utilizar botellas de aceite antifraude en los restaurantes, hospitales y comedores. Dicha propuesta podría ser muy útil para resolver el problema del rellenado de las aceiteras, lo que no garantiza la transparencia ni la seguridad del producto a los consumidores.

1. ¿Ha estudiado la Comisión el impacto de la falta de transparencia sobre el contenido real de los recipientes para los consumidores europeos, no sólo en términos económicos sino también en términos de protección de la salud, dado que el producto rellenado tiene menores propiedades organolépticas y pierde en calidad.
2. ¿Ha tenido en cuenta la Comisión el hecho de que la aplicación del Reglamento, en particular, de su artículo 2, también podría tener un papel para la promoción de los aceites de oliva extra virgen europeos, necesidad subrayada en múltiples ocasiones por la propia Comisión, transmitiendo así una información más completa sobre un producto genuino, y una opción de consumo más orientada hacia las marcas europeas?
3. ¿Tiene intención la Comisión, tras este último grave incidente y a la vista de lo que antecede, de volver a presentar el Reglamento con el fin de establecer la obligación de que los restaurantes y comedores sólo ofrezcan aceite de oliva en envases monodosis o botellas no rellenables, certificadas y etiquetadas, para garantizar a los consumidores el derecho elemental a conocer el producto que están utilizando?

Respuesta del Sr. Ciolos en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión desea señalar que la responsabilidad del cumplimiento de las condiciones de higiene en el sector de la restauración recae en principio en el explotador de la empresa alimentaria y que el control al respecto, por razones de subsidiariedad, queda bajo la entera responsabilidad de los Estados miembros. Un incidente del tipo del mencionado en la pregunta parlamentaria también puede producirse con otros productos alimentarios, incluidos los productos envasados.

En lo que respecta a la comercialización del aceite de oliva por parte de los sectores de la hostelería y la restauración, compete a los Estados miembros evaluar las prácticas y garantizar que se protejan los intereses de los consumidores. La Comisión no tiene intención de presentar propuestas legislativas sobre esta materia. La normativa de la Unión Europea no se opone, *a priori*, a que un Estado miembro adopte una legislación nacional como la adoptada por Portugal en relación con la utilización de botellas de aceite de oliva no rellenables en los sectores de la hostelería y la restauración.

La Comisión seguirá trabajando en favor de la calidad del aceite de oliva y el control de la misma.

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011599/13
alla Commissione**

Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Santiago Fisas Ayxela (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE), Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar (PPE) e Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Richiesta di reintrodurre il regolamento (UE) n. 29/2012 — Norme di commercializzazione dell'olio di oliva

In un ristorante di Parigi una donna italiana ha trovato all'interno dell'oliera un topo vivo. La notizia è stata riportata dai principali quotidiani italiani che hanno gridato allo scandalo per le scadenti condizioni sanitarie in cui era conservato l'olio servito sulle tavole del ristorante.

Da mesi la maggior parte dei paesi europei chiede il divieto per ristoranti e mense di somministrare olio di oliva in anonime oliere, prive di etichetta e di garanzie antirabbocco per i consumatori.

Nel maggio scorso è stato inspiegabilmente bloccato dal commissario Ciolos il regolamento n. 29/2012 relativo alle norme di commercializzazione dell'olio d'oliva, che avrebbe introdotto l'obbligo di utilizzare bottiglie di olio antifrode nei locali di ristorazione, negli ospedali e nelle mense. La proposta sarebbe stata invece molto utile per contrastare il fenomeno del *refilling* (rabbocco) delle oliere, che non garantisce ai consumatori né trasparenza né sicurezza in merito al prodotto.

Alla luce di quanto sopraesposto, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se ha valutato l'impatto sui consumatori europei della mancata trasparenza in merito al reale contenuto delle ampole, non solo in termini economici ma anche sotto il profilo della tutela della salute, dal momento che il prodotto rabboccato, oltre a possedere generalmente proprietà organolettiche inferiori, è deteriorato nella sua qualità;
2. se ha tenuto conto del fatto che l'applicazione del regolamento, in particolare dell'articolo 2, avrebbe potuto avere anche una funzione di promozione degli oli extra vergine europei, ovvero un'esigenza più volte sottolineata dalla stessa Commissione, e quindi veicolare un'informazione più completa per un prodotto genuino nonché una scelta di consumo maggiormente orientata verso i marchi europei;
3. se, anche a seguito dell'ultimo gravissimo episodio citato e di quanto descritto, intende ripresentare il regolamento volto a introdurre l'obbligo per i ristoranti e le mense di somministrare olio di oliva soltanto in bottiglie monouso e antirabbocco, certificate ed etichettate, al fine di garantire ai consumatori il diritto elementare di conoscere il prodotto che stanno utilizzando.

Risposta di Dacian Ciolos a nome della Commissione

(3 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione desidera sottolineare che spetta innanzitutto agli operatori della filiera alimentare garantire il rispetto delle condizioni igieniche nel settore della ristorazione e che il controllo, per ragioni di sussidiarietà, rientra interamente nella sfera di competenza degli Stati membri. Un incidente come quello citato nell'interrogazione parlamentare può verificarsi anche per altri prodotti alimentari, inclusi quelli confezionati.

Per quanto riguarda la commercializzazione di olio d'oliva da parte del settore alberghiero, della ristorazione e dei caffè, è compito degli Stati membri valutarne le pratiche e garantire la tutela degli interessi dei consumatori. La Commissione non intende legiferare in materia. La normativa dell'Unione europea non si oppone, a priori, all'adozione da parte di uno Stato membro di una legislazione nazionale come quella adottata dal Portogallo relativa all'utilizzo, nel settore alberghiero, della ristorazione e dei caffè, di bottiglie di olio d'oliva non riutilizzabili.

La Commissione continuerà a prodigarsi per tutelare e controllare la qualità dell'olio d'oliva.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011599/13
to the Commission**

Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE), Esther Herranz García (PPE), Santiago Fisas Aixela (PPE), María Auxiliadora Correa Zamora (PPE), Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE), Verónica Lope Fontagné (PPE), Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (PPE), Fabrizio Bertot (PPE), Marco Scurria (PPE), Amalia Sartori (PPE), Giancarlo Scottà (EFD), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Gabriel Mato Adrover (PPE), Eva Ortiz Vilella (PPE), Aldo Patriciello (PPE), Mario Borghezio (NI), Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra (PPE), Luigi Ciriaco De Mita (PPE), Vito Bonsignore (PPE), Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar (PPE) and Barbara Matera (PPE)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Request to reintroduce Regulation (EC) No 29/2012 on marketing standards for olive oil

An Italian woman recently found a live mouse in the oil cruet in a restaurant in Paris. The story was reported by the main Italian newspapers, which have branded the poor hygiene conditions in which the oil served in the restaurant was stored a disgrace.

For months now, most European countries have been calling for a ban on restaurants and canteens serving olive oil in unmarked oil cruets, with no label or guarantees for consumers that they are non-refillable.

In May 2013, Regulation (EC) No 29/2012 on marketing standards for olive oil, which would have introduced the obligation to use anti-fraud oil bottles in restaurants, hospitals and canteens, was inexplicably blocked by Commissioner Ciołoş. The proposal would have been very useful for combating the phenomenon whereby oil bottles are refilled, which guarantees the consumer neither transparency nor safety with regard to the product.

1. Has the Commission assessed the impact on European consumers of the lack of transparency regarding the actual content of oil cruets, not only in financial terms, but also in terms of health protection, given that the refilled product, as well as generally having inferior organoleptic properties, is of lower quality?
2. Has the Commission considered that implementing the regulation, particularly Article 2 thereof, could have also served to promote European extra-virgin oils, something repeatedly stressed by the Commission as necessary, thus providing more complete information for a genuine product and guiding consumers more towards European brands?
3. Following the latest very serious incident mentioned above, does the Commission plan to resubmit the regulation intended to introduce the requirement for restaurants and canteens to serve olive oil only in certified and labelled non-refillable, single-use bottles, in order to guarantee consumers' basic right to know what they are consuming?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Ciołoş au nom de la Commission
(3 décembre 2013)

La Commission tient à souligner que la responsabilité du respect des conditions d'hygiène dans le secteur de la restauration incombe de prime abord à l'exploitant du secteur alimentaire et que le contrôle, pour des raisons de subsidiarité, est sous l'entière responsabilité des États membres. Un incident tel que celui mentionné dans la question parlementaire peut également survenir pour d'autres produits alimentaires y compris des produits conditionnés.

Pour ce qui concerne la commercialisation d'huile d'olive par le secteur de l'hôtellerie, de la restauration et des cafés, il est du ressort des États membres d'en évaluer les pratiques et de s'assurer que les intérêts des consommateurs sont protégés. La Commission n'a pas l'intention de légiférer en la matière. La réglementation de l'Union européenne ne s'oppose pas, à priori, à l'adoption par un État membre d'une législation nationale telle que celle adoptée par le Portugal concernant l'utilisation dans le secteur de l'hôtellerie, de la restauration et des cafés de bouteilles d'huile d'olive qui ne peuvent être remplies à nouveau.

La Commission continuera à œuvrer pour favoriser la qualité de l'huile d'olive et son contrôle.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-011600/13
till kommissionen
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 oktober 2013)

Angående: Misstänkt obefogad brådska i målet om Googles sökneutralitet

Kommissionen har efter en utredning ⁽¹⁾ kommit fram till att Google möjligen agerar på ett sätt som begränsar konkurrensen i Europeiska unionen ⁽²⁾. Dessutom har kommissionen välvilligt nog tilldelat Google tid att frivilligt åta sig att komma tillrätta med det konkurrensbegränsande agerande som kommissionen har påvisat. Dessa frivilliga åtaganden publicerades under våren 2013 efter personliga möten mellan kommissionär Almunia och Googles vd Eric Schmidt ⁽³⁾. De föreslagna åtagandena har varit föremål för minst ett starkt kritiskt uttalande från en europeisk konsumentgrupp ⁽⁴⁾, i vilket åtagandena beskrivs som otillräckliga på grund av tidigare kända konsumentbeteenden samt brist på objektiva skäl till det agerande som kommissionen påvisat.

Rykten har emellertid nått frågeställaren om att kommissionen kan komma att föredra att lägga ner ärendet innan kommissionär Almunia lämnar sin tjänst nästa år, hellre än att tillhandahålla den nödvändiga kritiska granskningen av åtagandena som Google har föreslagit.

Befinner sig kommissionen för närvarande i en position där den inte har tid att göra den nödvändiga granskningen av Googles föreslagna frivilliga åtaganden innan slutet av denna valperiod? Kan kommissionen bekräfta att det inte föreligger någon risk att Google kommer att genomgå mindre än den nödvändiga granskningen av kommissionen i antitrustmålet på grund av att kommissionären önskar lägga ner ärendet innan valperiodens slut?

Svar från Joaquín Almunia på kommissionens vägnar
(5 december 2013)

Kommissionen har ingen rättslig skyldighet att avsluta ett pågående antitrustärende före utgången av en valperiod.

Googles ursprungliga förslag till åtaganden var föremål för ett marknadstest som inleddes i april 2013. Kommissionen analyserade över hundra bidrag från tredje parter i samband med marknadstestet. Kommissionen vill för närvarande få marknadsfeedback på Googles reviderade förslag till åtaganden från september 2013 för att kunna bedöma om de är tillräckliga och om kommissionen under de närmaste månaderna kan göra dessa åtaganden bindande för Google. Kommissionen har avsatt betydande resurser för detta ärende och arbetar hårt med utredningen.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-10-1624_en.htm

⁽²⁾ Se http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-372_en.htm

⁽³⁾ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-967_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.beuc.eu/BEUCNoFrame/Docs/1/GJIFKPJBLNDDOBDABAIBCNIPPDW69DBYCD9DW3571KM/BEUC/docs/DLS/2013-00280-01-E.pdf>

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011600/13
to the Commission
Amelia Andersdotter (Verts/ALE)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Suspected unwarranted rush in the Google search neutrality case

The Commission has found, after an investigation ⁽¹⁾, that Google may be engaging in anti-competitive conduct in the European Union ⁽²⁾. It has also graciously awarded Google the time to make voluntary commitments to remedy the anti-competitive behaviour that the Commission has identified. The voluntary commitments were published in the spring of 2013 after personal meetings between Commissioner Almunia and Google CEO Eric Schmidt ⁽³⁾. These proposed commitments have been the subject of at least one strongly critical statement from a European group representing consumers ⁽⁴⁾, in which the measures are described as inadequate on grounds of known previous customer behaviour and the lack of objective justification for the behaviour identified by the Commission.

However, rumours have reached the author of this question that the Commission may prefer to close the case before Commissioner Almunia leaves his post next year, rather than providing the necessary critical scrutiny of the commitments Google has proposed.

Does the Commission currently find itself in a position whereby it will not have time to provide the necessary scrutiny of Google's proposed voluntary commitments before the legislature ends? Can the Commission reaffirm that there is no risk that Google will undergo less than the necessary scrutiny by the Commission's services in the anti-trust case because the Commissioner wishes to close the case before the end of the legislature?

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

There is no legal obligation on the Commission to close an ongoing antitrust case before the end of a legislature.

Google's initial commitments proposal was subject to a market test launched in April 2013. The Commission analysed over a hundred third party submissions in the context of this market test. The Commission is currently seeking market feedback on Google's revised commitment proposal of September 2013 with a view to assessing the adequacy of the commitments offered by Google and whether, in the coming months, the Commission may make those commitments binding on Google. The Commission has devoted significant resources to this case and is conducting its investigation diligently.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-10-1624_en.htm

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-372_en.htm

⁽³⁾ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-967_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.beuc.eu/BEUCNoFrame/Docs/1/GJIFKPJBLNJDDBAIBCNIPPDW69DBYCD9DW3571KM/BEUC/docs/DLS/2013-00280-01-E.pdf>

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-011602/13

alla Commissione

Alfredo Pallone (PPE)

(10 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Stabilimento FIAT di Cassino

Il comparto dell'Automotive è strategico per l'economia dell'Italia, e al suo sviluppo è legata buona parte delle strategie nel settore metalmeccanico, dal quale dipendono migliaia dei posti di lavoro attualmente in bilico nel Paese.

La strategia industriale di Fiat Group Automobiles, basata sullo sfruttamento delle economie di scala e l'ottimizzazione dei cicli produttivi, è utile nell'ottica di una maggiore integrazione col gruppo Chrysler e per il recupero di competitività e, dunque, ai fini della riconquista di un ruolo da protagonista del gruppo nel mercato mondiale dell'auto.

Tuttavia, questo riassetto solleva alcune preoccupazioni a causa della razionalizzazione messa in atto.

Finora, sul territorio di Cassino, nessuno è stato in grado di fornire un'indicazione precisa sulle intenzioni di Fiat relativamente allo stabilimento di Piedimonte San Germano, che è l'unico rimasto senza un progetto industriale. Ottenere da Fiat un messaggio chiaro sull'intenzione di investire anche in questo impianto rappresenterebbe una notizia molto attesa nella provincia di Frosinone.

La mancanza di chiarezza sul futuro dello stabilimento Fiat di Piedimonte San Germano sta inducendo molti imprenditori a non investire su un territorio nel quale l'UE ha impiegato tanto in termini di risorse finalizzate a migliorare la competitività in maniera strutturale.

È dunque necessario un messaggio da parte della Fiat che renda chiaro se Cassino rientra nei piani dell'azienda e con quali tempi, fatta salva la doverosa riservatezza su dettagli e tempi al fine di tutelare le strategie imprenditoriali.

Infine, sarebbe importante che Cassino lanciasse un progetto ambizioso e definito — ossia la valorizzazione del marchio Alfa Romeo e la sua collocazione su un target medio alto (per diventare competitor di altri marchi), con una maggiore attenzione alla qualità.

A tale proposito, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Come intende agire nei confronti di Fiat per fare chiarezza sui programmi industriali dell'azienda per quanto riguarda lo stabilimento di Piedimonte San Germano?
2. Quali misure intende adottare la Commissione per salvaguardare i posti di lavoro nello stabilimento in questione e le risorse già impiegate dall'UE nel migliorare la competitività nell'area di Cassino?
3. Quali iniziative intende intraprendere la Commissione affinché questa situazione d'incertezza sul futuro del comparto dell'Automotive possa essere risolta a breve, in modo da consentire il rilancio della produzione?
4. Inoltre, quali garanzie può fornire la Commissione per incentivare e assicurare gli imprenditori in merito agli investimenti sul territorio?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione

(5 dicembre 2013)

1. La Commissione incontrerà i rappresentanti della FIAT per discutere la situazione dell'impianto Piedimonte San Germano, anche se la responsabilità è in ultima analisi nelle mani della regione Lazio e della FIAT.

2.-3. Conservare la base produttiva in Europa è uno degli obiettivi della politica industriale della Commissione. L'impianto Piedimonte San Germano è una importante unità produttiva per la FIAT, che ha dichiarato in più occasioni di non voler procedere alla chiusura di nessuno dei suoi impianti in Europa.

La Commissione ha già adottato il piano d'azione specifico CARS 2020 ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ CARS 2020 sostiene il finanziamento di ricerca, sviluppo e innovazione (RDI) sostenibili, l'accesso ai mercati e alla finanza attraverso i programmi Horizon 2020 e COSME.

La Commissione verificherà anche la programmazione dei fondi strutturali, in modo tale da garantire che i fondi 2014-2020 siano spesi in modo efficiente nella regione Lazio. A partire dal 1° gennaio 2014, tali fondi strutturali possono essere utilizzati per finanziare la reindustrializzazione.

La certezza delle condizioni, un ambiente favorevole agli investimenti e le opportunità di crescita dipendono largamente dall'efficacia del dialogo tra le parti interessate. È quindi importante che i dipendenti dell'impianto di Piedimonte esercitino il loro diritto ad essere informati e consultati sui piani futuri della FIAT. Ciò dovrebbe consentire inoltre alle autorità competenti e ai fornitori di compiere i passi necessari per adeguarsi ai potenziali scenari futuri.

Ciò consentirebbe, tra l'altro, alla regione Lazio di preparare un programma operativo adeguato per il 2014-2020 e di anticipare aree di azione strategiche in linea con la Strategia di specializzazione intelligente, in modo tale da migliorare la competitività generale della regione.

4. La Commissione ha proposto un quadro finanziario pluriennale dinamico per il 2014-2020. Rimane da vedere, tuttavia, come tale quadro di riferimento sarà attuato dagli Stati membri e dagli altri beneficiari, compresa l'industria automobilistica.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-011602/13
to the Commission
Alfredo Pallone (PPE)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Fiat factory in Cassino

The automotive industry is strategically important for the Italian economy and its development together with the engineering sector on which thousands of jobs depend and are currently hanging in the balance.

Fiat Group Automobiles' industrial strategy, which is based on exploiting economies of scale and optimising productive cycles, is designed to better integrate the Chrysler group and to recover competitiveness with the aim of restoring its position as a leader in the world automotive market.

However, some concerns have been raised owing to the reasons behind the reorganisation.

Until now, in the Cassino area, there has been no precise indication of Fiat's intentions concerning the Piedimonte San Germano factory, which is the only plant without an industrial plan. The Frosinone Province has long awaited a clear message from Fiat as to whether it will invest in the factory.

Given the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Piedimonte San Germano factory, many business owners have stopped investing in the area where the EU has invested significant funding with a view to improving its competitiveness in a structured way.

Fiat needs to send out a message to clarify whether Cassino is part of the company's business plans and when they intend to take action, with the exception of guarding the details and timeframe to protect its business strategy.

Finally, it is important that Cassino develops an ambitious and well-defined project on enhancing the Alfa Romeo brand and its location (to become a competitor to other brands) with a greater focus on quality.

1. What action does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Fiat clarifies its business plans regarding the Piedimonte San Germano factory?
2. What measures does it intend to adopt to safeguard jobs at the factory and the funding allocated by the EU to improve competitiveness in the Cassino area?
3. What initiatives will it take in the short term to remove the uncertainty surrounding the future of the automotive sector so that production can take place once again?
4. What guarantees can the Commission provide to encourage and reassure business owners to invest in the area?

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

1. The Commission will meet with FIAT representatives to discuss the situation of the Piedimonte San Germano's plant, even if the ultimate responsibility lies essentially in the hands of the Lazio region and FIAT.

2 and 3. Maintaining the production base in Europe is one of the objectives of the Commission's industrial policy. The Piedimonte San Germano plant is an important production unit for FIAT, which has indicated in several occasions that they do not intend to shut down any of their plants in Europe.

The Commission already adopted a sector specific CARS 2020 Action Plan ⁽¹⁾.

The Commission will also monitor the programming of structural funds ensuring that the 2014-2020 funds are efficiently spent in Lazio. As from 1 January 2014, the structural funds can be used to finance re-industrialisation purposes.

⁽¹⁾ It supports the financing of sustainable RDI, access to markets and finance via the Horizon 2020 and COSME programmes.

Gearing towards certainty, investment conducive environment and growth opportunities is largely contingent on the effectiveness of a stakeholder dialogue. It is therefore important that Piedimonte employees exercise their right to be informed and consulted about FIAT's future plans. This should also permit the relevant authorities and suppliers to take the necessary steps adjusting to any potential future scenarios.

Amongst others, this would allow the Lazio region to prepare a fit-for-purpose operational programme for 2014-2020 and anticipate strategic areas of action, in line with the Smart Specialisation Strategy, leading to an improvement of the overall competitiveness of the region.

4. The Commission has proposed a dynamic multiannual financial framework for 2014-2020. However, it remains to be seen how it will be implemented by the Member States and other beneficiaries, including the automotive industry.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011603/13

komissiolle

Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)

(10. lokakuuta 2013)

Aihe: Lakkorikkurien kouluttaminen

Työsopimusneuvottelut ovat usein hankalia ja vaativat joissain tapauksissa lakkoa viimeisimpänä keinona. Työnantajien alituiset säästötoimet eivät kuitenkaan voi yksinomaan tapahtua työntekijöiden kustannuksella.

Tietoomme on tullut suomalaisen lentoyhtiön Finnairin toimet, joilla he ovat ryhtyneet kouluttamaan lakkorikkureita Espanjassa rekrytointi- ja henkilöstövuokrausyrityksen kautta. Tämä seikka on pöyristyttänyt myös espanjalaiset lentohenkilökunnan edustajat. Lähtökohtaisesti rikkurien koulutuksen pitäisi olla laitonta paikasta riippumatta. Suomalaisiin työehtosopimuksiin kohdistuvaa tilannetta ja työtaistelua tarkastellaan Suomen lain ja työehtosopimusten mukaan, mutta näitä tulkitaan EU-sopimuksia vasten. Komission onkin välttämätöntä reagoida tähän seikkaan.

Mitä toimia Euroopan komissio on ottamassa, jotta tämänkaltaisen ennalta ehkäisevä lakkorikkureiden kouluttaminen estettäisiin ja turvattaisiin työntekijöiden työtaisteluturva heidän tarvitsemallaan tavalla?

László Andorin komission puolesta antama vastaus

(25. marraskuuta 2013)

Lakkorikkurien koulutuksesta ei ole annettu EU-lainsäädäntöä. EU ei myöskään ole toimivaltainen sääntelemään lakko-oikeutta jäsenvaltioissa.

Direktiivissä 2008/104/EY⁽¹⁾ säädetään⁽²⁾, että vuokratyön käyttöön liittyviä rajoituksia tai kieltoja koskevat direktiivin säännökset eivät estä sellaisten kansallisten lakien tai käytäntöjen soveltamista, joissa kielletään lakossa olevien työntekijöiden korvaaminen vuokratyöntekijöillä. Tietyt jäsenvaltiot nimenomaisesti kieltävät lakko-oikeuttaan käyttävien työntekijöiden korvaamisen vuokratyöntekijöillä.

⁽¹⁾ Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston direktiivi 2008/104/EY, annettu 19 päivänä marraskuuta 2008, vuokratyöstä, EUVL L 327, 5.12.2008.

⁽²⁾ Direktiivin johdanto-osan 20 kappale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011603/13
to the Commission
Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Training of staff for use as strike-breakers

Collective bargaining negotiations are often tricky and in some cases require strike action as a last resort. However, the savings measures which employers are constantly taking cannot take place exclusively at the workers' expense.

It has come to our attention that the Finnish airline Finnair is proposing to train staff as strike-breakers through a recruitment and hiring agency in Spain. This fact has also shocked Spanish aircrew representatives. In principle the training of staff to break strikes ought to be illegal regardless of where it takes place. The situation as it relates to Finnish collective agreements, and the issue of labour disputes, are being examined from the point of view of Finnish law and collective agreements, but these are being interpreted in the light of the EU Treaties. It is essential that the Commission respond to this state of affairs.

What measures is the Commission taking to ensure that such training of strike-breakers, which is preventable, is in fact prevented, and that workers' rights in connection with labour disputes are protected in the way that they need?

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

There is no EC law related to training of strike-breakers. Moreover, the EU has no competence to regulate the right to strike in the Member States.

Directive 2008/104/EC ⁽¹⁾ states ⁽²⁾ that its provisions on restrictions or prohibitions on temporary agency work are without prejudice to national legislation or practices that prohibit workers on strike being replaced by temporary agency workers. Certain Member States explicitly prohibit the recourse to temporary agency workers to replace workers exercising their right to strike.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2008/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on temporary agency work, OJ L 327, 5.12.2008.
⁽²⁾ Recital 20 of the directive.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011604/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Enseignement primaire universel

Le Parlement demande, dans sa résolution pour un enseignement primaire universel:

1. de s'engager au niveau international pour garantir que chaque enfant aille à l'école et reçoive une éducation de qualité;
2. de prendre des mesures urgentes pour combattre le décrochage scolaire dans l'Union européenne;
3. de plaider en faveur d'une amélioration du statut des enseignants aux niveaux national et international, et pour que les enseignants bénéficient de revenus décents et de conditions spécifiques en ce qui concerne leur formation professionnelle continue et leur évolution de carrière.

La Commission réagit-elle favorablement et que propose-t-elle?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(3 décembre 2013)

La Commission réagit favorablement à la résolution et reconnaît l'importance d'une éducation de qualité.

Dans le cadre des stratégies «Éducation et formation 2020» et «Europe 2020», les États membres poursuivent des objectifs communs, tels que l'amélioration de la qualité des professions enseignantes et la réduction du décrochage scolaire à moins de 10 %.

1. En mai 2013, l'UE a accueilli une conférence internationale relative à l'environnement stratégique à mettre en place pour faire progresser la réforme de l'éducation à l'échelle mondiale. La Commission a rappelé que l'UE restait déterminée à mener des actions en matière d'éducation.

L'UE soutient le Partenariat mondial pour l'éducation (qui a pour but d'aider les pays à faible revenu qui disposent de politiques saines, mais de ressources insuffisantes, à fournir un enseignement primaire de qualité) et l'Équipe spéciale internationale sur les enseignants pour l'éducation pour tous (qui vise à échanger les bonnes pratiques en matière de politiques relatives aux enseignants pour aider les pays partenaires à combler le manque d'enseignants et à améliorer la formation, la gestion et le déploiement de ces derniers).

2. Dans sa recommandation de 2011 concernant les politiques de réduction de l'abandon scolaire, le Conseil a invité les États membres à adopter des stratégies globales, comprenant des mesures de prévention, d'intervention et de compensation. Un groupe de travail sur ce thème a mis en place un apprentissage par les pairs et fournira des recommandations stratégiques. La Commission continuera de soutenir les activités visant à lutter contre le décrochage scolaire, notamment par l'intermédiaire du programme Erasmus +.

3. Dans un document de travail récent ⁽¹⁾, la Commission a recensé les défis auxquels les États membres sont confrontés en matière de renforcement des professions enseignantes. Un groupe de travail sur le perfectionnement professionnel des enseignants a élaboré des orientations stratégiques ².

⁽¹⁾ «Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes» («Le soutien aux professions enseignantes pour l'amélioration des acquis de l'apprentissage»).

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/teacher_fr.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011604/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 October 2013)**

Subject: Universal primary education

In its resolution on universal primary education, Parliament calls for:

1. action to be taken at international level to ensure that every child goes to school and receives a quality education;
2. urgent measures to be taken to combat school dropout in the European Union;
3. work to improve the status of teachers at national and international level and for teachers to receive decent pay and benefit from the specific conditions necessary for continued professional training and career development.

Does the Commission welcome this resolution and what does it propose?

**Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)**

The Commission welcomes the resolution and recognises the importance of quality education.

Through the Education and Training 2020 and Europe 2020 strategies, Member States pursue common goals, such as improving the quality of teaching professions and reducing early school leaving (ESL) to below 10%.

1. In May 2013, the EU hosted an international conference on the strategic environment for advancing education reform globally. The Commission reiterated the EU's continued commitment to education efforts.

The EU supports the Global Partnership for Education (aims at helping low-income countries with sound policies but insufficient resources to achieve quality basic education) and International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (aims at sharing best practices in teacher policies to help partner countries tackle teacher gaps and improve training, management and deployment).

2. The 2011 Council Recommendation on combatting ESL invites Member States to adopt comprehensive strategies, encompassing prevention, intervention and compensation measures. A Working Group on ESL has organised peer-learning and will deliver policy recommendations. The Commission will continue to support activities focused on ESL, notably through the programme Erasmus+.

3. A recent Commission working document ⁽¹⁾ identified challenges that Member States face in strengthening teaching professions. A Working Group on Teacher Professional Development has developed policy guidance. ⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ 'Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes'.

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/teacher_en.htm

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011605/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)**

Marc Tarabella (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Situation au Soudan

La Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle:

1. condamner les meurtres, la violence exercée à l'encontre des manifestants, la censure des médias, les intimidations politiques, ainsi que le harcèlement et l'arrestation arbitraire de défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, de militants politiques et de journalistes;
2. demander au gouvernement du Soudan de mettre un terme à ces harcèlements et de libérer sans délai l'ensemble des manifestants pacifiques, des militants politiques, des membres de l'opposition, des défenseurs des Droits de l'homme, du personnel médical, des blogueurs et des journalistes arrêtés dans l'exercice de leur droit à la liberté d'expression et de réunion; souligner que tous les prisonniers doivent pouvoir bénéficier d'un procès équitable fondé sur une enquête crédible, sur le droit d'être défendu par un avocat et sur le respect de la présomption d'innocence, et que le gouvernement doit permettre aux détenus de voir leur famille et d'accéder aux soins médicaux;
3. déplorer l'utilisation de balles réelles contre les manifestants, ce qui s'est traduit par des meurtres, par le recours disproportionné à la force et par des allégations d'homicides volontaires commis par les forces de sécurité à l'encontre des manifestants;
4. inviter instamment le gouvernement soudanais à mettre immédiatement un terme à la répression et à l'impunité dont jouissent les agents du NISS; demander l'abolition de la loi implacable de 2010 sur la sécurité nationale;
5. demander aux forces de sécurité soudanaises de respecter les principes de base des Nations unies sur le recours à la force et l'utilisation des armes à feu par les responsables de l'application des lois, qui fixent les conditions dans lesquelles il est possible de faire légalement usage de la force sans pour autant violer les Droits de l'homme, notamment le droit à la vie;
6. demander aux autorités soudanaises de restaurer et de respecter les Droits de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales consacrés par le droit international, notamment la liberté d'expression, tant en ligne que hors ligne, la liberté de réunion, la liberté de religion, les droits de la femme ainsi que l'égalité des genres, et de mettre immédiatement un terme à l'ensemble des restrictions visant l'accès à l'information et aux technologies de communication;
7. inviter instamment le gouvernement soudanais à cesser toute forme de répression à l'égard des personnes exerçant leur droit à la liberté d'expression, que ce soit en ligne ou hors ligne, et de protéger les journalistes?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission

(25 novembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a été profondément préoccupée par les informations faisant état d'actes de violence et de lourdes pertes de vies humaines au cours des manifestations organisées dans plusieurs villes du Soudan durant la deuxième moitié du mois de septembre 2013.

Le 30 septembre 2013, elle a fait publiquement part de ces préoccupations dans une déclaration de son porte-parole. Elle y condamnait les violences, qu'elles aient été perpétrées par les manifestants ou par les forces gouvernementales, et exhortait toutes les parties à faire preuve de la plus grande retenue. Elle appelait tout particulièrement les autorités soudanaises à s'abstenir de tout usage excessif de la force et à respecter la liberté d'expression, le pluralisme des médias et la liberté de réunion pacifique. Elle précisait aussi que les personnes arrêtées devaient bénéficier d'un procès équitable, que les médias devaient pouvoir travailler librement et que les incidents à l'origine des pertes humaines, des blessés et des dommages matériels devaient faire l'objet d'une enquête crédible.

Enfin, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante appelait les autorités soudanaises à honorer leur engagement d'entamer, avec toutes les parties, un dialogue national qui renforcerait l'unité nationale et encouragerait la gouvernance démocratique.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011605/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Situation in Sudan

1. Will the Vice-President/High Representative condemn the murders, the use of violence against demonstrators, the media censorship and the political intimidation in Sudan, as well as the harassment and arbitrary arrest of human rights campaigners, political activists and journalists?
2. Will she call on the Sudanese Government to stop such harassment and immediately free all of the peaceful protestors, political activists, opposition members, human rights campaigners, medical workers, bloggers and journalists who have been arrested while exercising their right of freedom of expression and assembly? Will she stress that all prisoners must be given a fair trial based on a credible investigation, the right to be defended by a lawyer and respect for the presumption of innocence, and that the Government must allow prisoners to see their families and have access to medical care?
3. Will she condemn the use of live bullets against protestors, which has resulted in people being killed, a disproportionate use of force and allegations of murder committed by the security forces against protestors?
4. Will she urge the Sudanese Government to bring an immediate end to the repression and to the impunity granted to agents of the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) and call for the merciless national security law of 2010 to be abolished?
5. Will she call on the Sudanese security forces to respect the United Nations' Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, which lays down the conditions under which it is legally possible to use force without violating human rights, especially the right to life?
6. Will she call on the Sudanese authorities to restore and respect human rights and the fundamental freedoms laid down by international law, including the freedom of expression, whether online or otherwise, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, women's rights and gender equality, and to put an immediate end to all of the restrictions on access to information and communication technologies?
7. Will she urge the Sudanese Government to stop all forms of repression against persons exercising their right to freedom of expression, whether online or otherwise, and to protect journalists?

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

The HR/VP has been deeply concerned by reports of violence and significant loss of life during protests in cities across Sudan in the second half of September 2013.

On 30 September 2013, she publicly expressed this concern in a Statement by her Spokesperson, in which she condemned violence by either protestors or government forces and urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint. The HR/VP called especially on the Government of Sudan to refrain from excessive use of force and to respect the freedom of expression, media and peaceful assembly. Those detained should be given the opportunity for a fair trial, the media should be allowed to operate freely and a credible investigation should be conducted into incidents that have led to loss of life, injury and material damage.

Finally, the HR/VP called on the Government of Sudan to carry through its commitment to begin an inclusive national dialogue that will strengthen national unity and promote democratic governance.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011607/13

à la Commission

Marc Tarabella (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Aegean Airlines et Olympic Air

La Commission a autorisé mercredi le rachat, par la compagnie aérienne grecque Aegean Airlines, de son concurrent Olympic Air en dépit de la création d'une situation de monopole sur certaines liaisons intérieures en Grèce.

Il est rare que la Commission, gardienne de la concurrence en Europe, prenne une telle décision. Elle a ainsi refusé cette année pour la deuxième fois la fusion des deux compagnies irlandaises Ryanair et Aer Lingus.

1. Qu'est ce qui a motivé ce feu vert de la Commission?
2. Quelle est la différence avec les autres fusions qui avaient été refusées?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission

(28 novembre 2013)

Le 9 octobre 2013, la Commission a autorisé sans conditions le rachat d'Olympic Air par Aegean Airlines ⁽¹⁾. Elle était parvenue à la conclusion qu'Olympic aurait de toute façon quitté le marché dans un avenir proche en raison de ses difficultés financières. Aegean aurait ainsi occupé une position dominante, voir monopolistique, sur toutes les liaisons problématiques où les activités des compagnies se chevauchent.

Une analyse des perspectives commerciales d'Olympic a montré qu'il était peu probable que la société devienne rentable dans un avenir proche, quel que soit le scénario envisagé. C'est pourquoi son actionnaire unique, Marfin Investment Group, a décidé de ne plus financer la compagnie dans l'hypothèse où elle ne serait pas vendue à Aegean. Ne pouvant trouver d'autre source de financement, Olympic aurait très probablement fait faillite rapidement. L'enquête menée sur le marché par la Commission a montré qu'il n'y avait pas d'autre acquéreur crédible, moins anticoncurrentiel, intéressé par le rachat d'Olympic et que tous ses actifs disparaîtraient complètement du marché si la compagnie devait cesser ses activités.

En d'autres termes, la Commission a retenu en l'espèce l'argument de «l'entreprise en sérieuse difficulté» puisqu'il a été démontré qu'Olympic allait bientôt disparaître en tant que concurrent d'Aegean et que ses actifs quitteraient le marché, que l'opération de concentration se réalise ou non. La Commission applique des critères très stricts à l'égard de ce type d'argument et l'accepte rarement. Aucun argument semblable n'a été invoqué dans l'affaire COMP/M.6663 — Ryanair/Aer Lingus III ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Affaire COMP/M.6796 — Aegean/Olympic II; le communiqué de presse est disponible à l'adresse suivante:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-927_fr.htm

⁽²⁾ De plus amples informations sont disponibles à l'adresse suivante:
http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=2_M_6663

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011607/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 October 2013)**

Subject: Aegean Airlines and Olympic Air

On Wednesday, the Commission authorised the Greek airline Aegean Airlines to buy out its competitor Olympic Air, despite the fact that this would create a monopoly on certain domestic flights in Greece.

As guardian of competition in Europe, the Commission rarely decides to allow such moves. This year, the Commission blocked a merger between the two Irish airlines Ryanair and Aer Lingus for the second time.

1. What were the Commission's reasons for allowing this deal to go ahead?
2. What difference is there between this merger and others that have been blocked?

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

The Commission unconditionally approved the acquisition of Olympic Air by Aegean Airlines on 9 October 2013 ⁽¹⁾. The Commission concluded that Olympic would have left the market soon in any event due to financial difficulties. As a result, Aegean would have become the dominant player, if not monopolist, on all problematic overlap routes anyway.

An analysis of Olympic's business prospects demonstrated that Olympic would probably not turn profitable under any business scenario in the near future. For this reason, Marfin Investment Group, Olympic's sole shareholder, decided to cease funding Olympic, should it not be sold to Aegean. Unable to secure financing from any other source, Olympic would most likely have gone bankrupt soon. The Commission's market investigation showed that there was no other credible, less anti-competitive, purchaser interested in Olympic and that all its assets would leave the market completely, should it go out of business.

In other words, the Commission accepted the so-called 'failing firm defence' in this case, as it was demonstrated that Olympic would soon disappear as a competitor to Aegean and its assets would leave the market, with or without the merger. The Commission applies very strict criteria to this type of defence and rarely accepts it. In case COMP/M.6663 — Ryanair/Aer Lingus III ⁽²⁾, no failing firm defence was raised.

⁽¹⁾ Case COMP/M.6796 — Aegean/Olympic II; the press release can be found at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-927_en.htm

⁽²⁾ See http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=2_M_6663 for further details.

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011608/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Évolution du marché des céréales

Avec une récolte de céréales de 301,5 millions de tonnes (Mt) pour 2013-2014, l'Union européenne devrait voir ses stocks de fin de campagne se détendre, selon un document de la Commission européenne paru le 8 octobre 2013.

En effet, la production pour 2012-2013 était de 275,9 Mt amenant un ratio stock/utilisation à 9,1 % en fin de campagne, alors que celui pour la fin de 2013-2014 est attendu à 13,2 %.

En conséquence, les prix des céréales en Europe ont baissé de près d'un tiers entre décembre 2012 et août 2013.

1. La Commission prévoit-elle une détente sur les disponibilités en oléagineux avec 29,8 Mt estimées pour 2013-2014, contre 27,3 Mt il y a un an?
2. Quelles sont les perspectives de la Commission pour le marché pour un avenir à court et moyen terme?

Réponse donnée par M. Ciolos au nom de la Commission

(14 novembre 2013)

La fixation des prix sur le marché des céréales de l'Union dépend fortement de la situation sur le marché mondial. L'augmentation des stocks de fin de campagne de l'Union européenne n'est donc pas la seule cause de la baisse des prix des céréales de l'Union.

L'Union est importatrice nette de 14 à 15 millions de tonnes d'oléagineux. Ce volume représente un tiers de l'utilisation domestique. L'augmentation prévue de la production totale d'oléagineux dans l'Union (2,5 millions de tonnes) permettra donc de réduire ce déficit mais ne modifiera pas significativement notre statut d'importateur net. Par conséquent, l'Union restera un preneur de prix.

En ce qui concerne ses prévisions à court et à moyen termes, la Commission renvoie l'Honorable Parlementaire au document intitulé «Short-term outlook for arable crop, meat and dairy markets in the European Union» (perspectives à court terme pour les marchés des cultures arables, de la viande et des produits laitiers dans l'Union européenne), publié à l'automne 2013 et disponible à l'adresse suivante:

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets-and-prices/short-term-outlook/index_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011608/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 October 2013)**

Subject: Growth in the cereals market

According to a Commission document published on 8 October 2013, the EU should have better close-of-season cereal stocks this year, with a harvest of 301.5 million tonnes (Mt) in 2013-14.

Output in 2012-13 was 275.9 Mt, leading to a close-of-season stock-to-use ratio of 9.1%, whereas the ratio for the end of the 2013-14 season is expected to be 13.2%.

As a result, cereal prices in Europe fell by almost a third between December 2012 and August 2013.

1. Does the Commission anticipate an improvement in the availability of oilseed crops, with an estimated 29.8 Mt in the 2013-14 season, compared with 27.3 Mt a year ago?
2. How does the Commission think the market will progress both in the near future and in the medium term?

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

The price setting in the Union's cereals market highly depends on the world market situation. The decrease of the Union's cereals prices is therefore not solely a consequence of better ending stocks in the European Union.

The Union is a net importer of oilseeds of some 14 to 15 million tonnes. This represents one third of the domestic use. The forecasted increase (2.5 million tonnes) of the total Union's oilseeds production will therefore reduce the deficit but will not substantially change our net import status. The Union will therefore remain a price taker.

For the short and medium term forecast, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the autumn 2013 issue of the Short-term outlook for arable crop, meat and dairy markets which is available on the following webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets-and-prices/short-term-outlook/index_en.htm

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011610/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Bisous interdits

Un couple d'adolescents a été arrêté par la police à Nador, dans le nord-est du Maroc, après avoir publié sur le réseau social Facebook une photo les montrant en train de s'embrasser.

Il s'agit d'un adolescent et de sa petite amie. Ils ont été arrêtés jeudi pour atteinte à la pudeur publique, après avoir posté une photo les montrant en train de s'embrasser.

La photo a été prise devant le lycée où ils étudient. Cette affaire a aussitôt enflammé les réseaux sociaux, plusieurs jeunes couples marocains publiant des photos similaires sur leurs comptes.

1. L'Europe compte-t-elle rester silencieuse sur ces sanctions d'un autre âge?
2. N'estime-t-elle pas qu'un couple d'adolescents a le droit de s'embrasser?
3. Ne s'agit-il pas d'une violation des Droits de l'homme?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission

(2 décembre 2013)

La Commission a connaissance de l'affaire à laquelle l'Honorable Parlementaire se réfère.

Cette affaire a soulevé une vague de protestations et de réactions au sein de la société civile marocaine et parmi les utilisateurs des médias sociaux, vague qui, nous semble-t-il, a aussi contribué à la remise en liberté des adolescents, trois jours après leur arrestation.

L'UE surveille attentivement l'évolution de la situation des Droits de l'homme au Maroc et mène un dialogue actif avec les autorités marocaines compétentes sur tout ce qui touche à ces questions. Elle suivra également de près le procès programmé le 22 novembre et agira en conséquence, étant donné que la réaction des autorités locales à Nador semble effectivement disproportionnée.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011610/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Ban on kissing

A teenage couple have been arrested by police in Nador, north-eastern Morocco, after they published a photo of themselves kissing on the social network site Facebook.

The case involves a teenager and his girlfriend. They were arrested last Thursday for breach of public modesty, after they posted a photo of themselves kissing.

The photo was taken in front of the secondary school where they are both students. The social networks were immediately up in arms over the case and several young Moroccan couples published similar photographs on their accounts.

1. Will the EU remain silent over these outdated punishments?
2. Does the Commission not believe that a teenage couple have the right to kiss?
3. Is this not a breach of human rights?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the case referred to by the Honourable Member.

This case has caused a wave of protests and reactions from Moroccan civil society and social media users, which we believe also contributed to the release of the teenagers, three days after their arrest.

The EU follows closely Human Rights in Morocco and has an active dialogue with relevant Moroccan authorities on all its aspects. The EU will also follow closely the trial scheduled for 22 November and react accordingly, as the reaction of the local authorities in Nador seems indeed disproportionate.

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011612/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Crise alimentaire à Madagascar

Quatre millions d'habitants des zones rurales de Madagascar sont en situation d'insécurité alimentaire en raison de la faible récolte de riz de cette année, ont mis en garde — mercredi — deux agences spécialisées de l'ONU.

La production de riz, l'aliment de base, et de maïs a souffert de conditions météorologiques capricieuses et d'une invasion de criquets. L'insécurité alimentaire risque de toucher 9,6 millions d'autres personnes. On peut attribuer la mauvaise campagne agricole à plusieurs facteurs: des conditions météorologiques irrégulières l'an dernier, des cyclones en début d'année, qui ont causé des inondations, suivis d'une période de faible pluviosité.

La production rizicole a fléchi de 21 % cette année, selon leurs chiffres, ce qui entraînera un déficit national de riz de 240 000 tonnes. Quant à la production de maïs de 2013, elle ne saura satisfaire les besoins intérieurs et on estime à 28 000 tonnes les besoins d'importation pour combler le déficit, ajoutent les deux agences, qui ont effectué une mission sur l'île.

La nourriture est la principale dépense d'environ un tiers des ménages, qui y consacrent jusqu'à 75 % de leur budget.

Les difficultés actuelles de Madagascar traduisent des années de déclin économique, l'aggravation de la pauvreté, des services publics limités et une série de catastrophes naturelles qui ont pesé sur les moyens d'existence et les stratégies d'adaptation des habitants, selon les deux agences.

1. Comment la Commission réagit-elle à cet alarmant constat?
2. La Commission compte-t-elle faire quelque chose politiquement mais aussi logistiquement pour fournir ou organiser une aide alimentaire aux catégories les plus vulnérables, ciblée sur les besoins particuliers des enfants et des femmes enceintes ou allaitantes?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Georgieva au nom de la Commission

(26 novembre 2013)

La Commission suit de près la situation à Madagascar. En septembre 2013, une équipe d'experts de la Commission a effectué une mission en vue de déterminer s'il est nécessaire de fournir une aide alimentaire aux populations vulnérables de la région du sud de Madagascar. Les experts ont rapporté que la dégradation actuelle des conditions de sécurité, l'instabilité politique, la détérioration persistante des infrastructures et des services en raison d'un manque d'investissements, la grande pauvreté sous-jacente et les catastrophes naturelles récurrentes représentent une menace réelle pour la sécurité alimentaire, en particulier dans les régions du sud du pays. Ils ont recommandé que les acteurs de l'aide humanitaire mettent en place de systèmes d'alerte précoce solides permettant de suivre étroitement l'évolution de la situation en matière d'alimentation, de nutrition et de santé. La Commission envisage d'affecter une partie de son enveloppe pour la préparation aux catastrophes en Afrique australe et dans l'Océan Indien au financement d'un système de surveillance en collaboration avec les acteurs locaux.

Outre l'aide d'urgence évoquée plus haut, la Commission a mobilisé 4 millions d'euros pour financer la première campagne de lutte antiacridienne conduite par la FAO. De plus, plusieurs programmes d'un montant total de près de 60 millions d'euros sont actuellement mis en œuvre pour améliorer la sécurité alimentaire, les revenus et la nutrition. Une attention particulière est portée aux ménages vivant dans des zones exposées au risque d'invasion de criquets.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011612/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Food crisis in Madagascar

On Wednesday, two specialist UN agencies warned that four million people in rural areas of Madagascar are in a situation of food insecurity as a result of this year's poor rice harvest.

Rice is the country's staple food, and both rice and maize crops have suffered as a result of volatile weather conditions and a plague of locusts. A further 9.6 million people are also at risk of food insecurity. The poor crop season can be attributed to several factors: erratic weather last year and cyclones at the start of this year which led to flooding, followed by a period of low rainfall.

According to the agencies' figures, rice production dropped 21% this year, which will lead to a national rice shortage of 240 000 tonnes. The agencies visited the island and report that the 2013 maize crop will not meet domestic demand and an estimated 28 000 tonnes will need to be imported in order to meet the shortage.

Food is the main expenditure item in around one third of households, who spend up to 75% of their budget on it.

According to the two agencies, Madagascar's present problems are the result of years of economic decline, worsening poverty, limited public services and a series of natural disasters that have taken their toll on the inhabitants' livelihoods and adaptation strategies.

1. What is the Commission's reaction to these alarming facts?
2. Does the Commission plan to take any action both on the political front and also on the logistical front, in order to supply or organise food aid to the most vulnerable groups, targeted in particular at the special needs of children and pregnant or breastfeeding mothers?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(26 November 2013)

The Commission is closely following the current situation in Madagascar. A mission was conducted in September 2013 by a team of Commission experts aiming to ascertain the need of food assistance in the vulnerable southern region of Madagascar. The mission reported that the current deterioration in security, political instability, continued deterioration in infrastructure and services due to a lack of investment, underlying deep poverty and recurrent natural disasters represents a concrete threat to food security, especially in the southern regions. It was recommended that humanitarian actors establish robust early warning systems to monitor the food, nutrition and health situations closely. The Commission is planning to allocate part of its envelope for disaster preparedness in Southern Africa and Indian Ocean to support a monitoring system in collaboration with local actors.

In addition to the emergency assistance as highlighted above, the Commission has mobilised EUR 4 million to finance the first anti-locust campaign implemented by FAO. Furthermore, various programmes totalling nearly EUR 60 million are being implemented to improve food security, income and nutrition. A specific attention is paid on households located in areas exposed to the risk of locust.

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011613/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Utilisation des fonds européens destinés à l'amélioration de la condition des Roms

Selon les données publiées par la Commission, 17,5 milliards d'euros auraient été affectés entre 2007 et 2013 aux Roms et «autres groupes vulnérables» dans les États membres.

Dans les deux États membres les plus concernés, en l'occurrence la Roumanie et la Bulgarie, le taux d'absorption des fonds européens est respectivement de 6 % et 12 %. Ainsi, la Roumanie ne consacrerait qu'une infime partie des 2,2 milliards par an prévus par la Commission pour améliorer le sort de ses deux millions de Roms.

Par ailleurs, selon les autorités roumaines et bulgares, ce sont les petits projets avec un financement associatif direct qui donnent les meilleurs résultats.

Compte tenu de ces éléments, de quelle façon la Commission pense-t-elle agir pour encourager les autorités roumaines et bulgares à faire un meilleur usage des fonds afin d'améliorer la condition des Roms?

La Commission ne pense-t-elle pas qu'il serait opportun d'encourager le développement des petits projets, seuls à avoir démontré leur valeur ajoutée jusqu'à présent?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission

(28 novembre 2013)

L'intégration des Roms est une priorité horizontale dans le cadre des programmes opérationnels en matière de «développement des ressources humaines», cofinancés par le Fonds social européen (FSE) pour la période 2007-2013 en Bulgarie et en Roumanie. Il n'y a ainsi aucune dotation financière spécifique pour les Roms dans la mesure où ils bénéficient du FSE en raison de leur statut social et économique défavorisé et non de leur appartenance à un groupe ethnique. De même, dans le cadre du Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER), la population Rom en Roumanie et en Bulgarie bénéficie d'investissements dans les logements sociaux et le développement urbain intégré, ciblant aussi d'autres communautés marginalisées.

Les taux d'absorption du FSE sont actuellement de 26 % en Roumanie et de 46 % en Bulgarie. Les services de la Commission sont en dialogue constant avec les autorités de gestion roumaine et bulgare sur les mécanismes de mise en œuvre des projets visant à améliorer l'intégration des Roms. Au cours de la période 2014-2020, les Fonds structurels et les fonds d'investissement ⁽¹⁾ se concentreront sur les politiques de soutien aux populations marginalisées, telles que les Roms, et les mécanismes seront améliorés afin d'atteindre les plus démunis.

La Commission octroie aussi une aide financière, par l'intermédiaire du programme Progress, aux projets à petite échelle visant à tester la validité des politiques innovantes, y compris pour l'intégration des Roms ⁽²⁾. Il est prévu de poursuivre le soutien des projets de test à petite échelle au cours de la prochaine période de programmation financière ⁽³⁾. En outre, la Commission, en collaboration avec le Conseil de l'Europe, a lancé le projet Romact, destiné à améliorer la capacité des municipalités à élaborer et mettre en œuvre des plans et projets pour l'inclusion des Roms, y compris en Roumanie et en Bulgarie.

⁽¹⁾ Fonds européen de développement régional (FEDER), Fonds social européen (FSE), Fonds de cohésion (FC), Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (FEADER) et Fonds européen pour les affaires maritimes et la pêche (FEAMP).

⁽²⁾ Un appel à propositions est actuellement ouvert.

⁽³⁾ Programme de l'UE pour l'emploi et l'innovation sociale (EaSI).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011613/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: Use of EU funds aimed at improving the situation of Roma people

According to figures published by the Commission, EUR 17.5 billion was reportedly allocated to Roma and 'other vulnerable groups' between 2007 and 2013 in the Member States.

In the two most affected Member States, which in this case are Romania and Bulgaria, the take-up rate of European funds stands at 6% and 12% respectively. Thus, Romania allocates only a very small part of the EUR 2.2 billion per year provided for by the Commission to improving the lives of its two million Roma.

Moreover, according to the Romanian and Bulgarian authorities, small projects with associative funding are the most effective.

In view of the above, what action does the Commission intend to take to encourage the Romanian and Bulgarian authorities to make better use of funds to improve the situation of Roma people?

Does the Commission not think that it would be appropriate to encourage the development of small projects, which are the only kind to have shown their added value up to now?

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

Roma integration is a horizontal priority under the European Social Fund (ESF) co-funded 'Human Resource Development' Operational Programmes (2007-2013) in Bulgaria and Romania. To this end, there is no specific financial allocation for Roma as they benefit from ESF based on their disadvantaged social and economic status and not on their ethnicity. Similarly, under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) the Roma population in Romania and Bulgaria benefits from investments in social housing and integrated urban development targeting also other marginalised communities.

The ESF absorption rates currently stand at 26% in Romania and 46% in Bulgaria. The Commission services are in a constant dialogue with Romanian and Bulgarian Managing Authorities about the delivery mechanisms for the projects aiming to improve Roma integration. In the 2014-2020 period, the European Structural and Investment Funds ⁽¹⁾ will concentrate on supporting policies for marginalised people such as Roma and mechanisms will be improved so as to reach the most deprived.

The Commission is also providing financial support through the PROGRESS Programme to small scale projects to test the validity of innovative policies, including for Roma inclusion ⁽²⁾. Supporting of testing innovative small scale projects is foreseen to continue during the next financial programming period ⁽³⁾. Moreover, the Commission together with the Council of Europe has launched the ROMACT project aimed at improving the capacity of municipalities in developing and implementing plans and projects for the inclusion of Roma, including in Romania and Bulgaria.

⁽¹⁾ the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

⁽²⁾ A call for proposals is currently open.

⁽³⁾ EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011614/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Lynchage à Madagascar

La semaine passée a eu lieu le lynchage de trois personnes — un Français, un Franco-italien et un Malgache — à Madagascar; le profil de la victime française se précise. L'homme a été tué par une foule de plusieurs centaines de personnes, selon des témoins, qui l'accusait de faire partie d'un réseau de trafiquants d'organes, puis de pédophilie.

Sur un enregistrement audio effectué au moment d'un simulacre de procès et retranscrit par la presse, après sa capture par la foule, le Français apparaît terrorisé, essayant tant bien que mal de se défendre des actes dont il est accusé. «Je suis victime d'un complot», assure-t-il. «Je n'aime pas les enfants, surtout pas, et je n'aime pas les personnes qui ont des rapports avec les enfants», poursuit-il face à la foule. «Tu n'aimes pas les enfants?» s'entend-il répondre par un homme. «J'adore les enfants, si, j'ai une petite fille, je n'aimerais pas qu'on lui fasse ça», balbutie-t-il. En larmes, il assure aux Malgaches qui le menacent de lynchage: «Je ne raconte que la vérité, strictement que la vérité». L'homme est mort quelques instants plus tard.

1. Quelle est votre réaction officielle face à ce lynchage?
2. Quelles sont les actions entreprises avec le gouvernement malgache?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission

(26 novembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a connaissance de l'événement tragique et profondément regrettable auquel se réfère l'Honorable Parlementaire.

Le chef de la délégation de l'UE à Madagascar a déploré la perte de vies humaines et s'est dit vivement préoccupé par de tels actes de violence. Le sujet a été largement évoqué lors d'une réunion qui s'est tenue avec le Premier ministre.

La délégation de l'UE sur le terrain a suivi de près la situation et il est clair que cet événement n'a aucun lien avec le processus électoral en cours dans le pays. Il semble s'agir d'une éruption de violence extrême au cours de laquelle la population a décidé de se faire justice elle-même.

Les autorités malgaches ont réagi rapidement et elles ont déployé des forces de sécurité supplémentaires afin de rétablir l'ordre public, d'enquêter sur les circonstances des actes de violence et d'en arrêter les auteurs. Certaines personnes qui auraient participé à l'incident ont déjà été arrêtées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011614/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Lynching in Madagascar

Last week, three people were lynched in Madagascar. They included a French man, a Franco-Italian man and a Malagasy man; clearer details regarding the French victim have emerged. According to witnesses, the man was killed by a mob of several hundred people who accused him of being part of a network for organ trafficking, then paedophilia.

In an audio recording made during a mock trial following the man's capture by the mob and transcribed by the press, the French man seemed terrified while he struggled to defend himself against the acts of which he was accused. 'I am the victim of a conspiracy', he said. 'I do not like children, absolutely not, and I don't like people who have sex with children', he explained to the mob. 'So you don't like children?' said a man to him in reply. 'I love children, yes, I have a little girl, I wouldn't want someone to do that to her', he stammered. In tears, he told the Malagasies who were threatening to lynch him: 'I'm telling the truth, strictly the truth.' The man died a few moments later.

1. What is your official reaction to this lynching?
2. What actions have been undertaken alongside the Malagasy Government?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of the tragic incident the Honourable Member of Parliament refers to, which is deeply regretful.

The EU's Head of Delegation in Madagascar has expressed regret for the loss of life and great concern about such violence. The issue was discussed at length at a meeting with the Prime Minister.

The EU Delegation on the ground has been following the situation closely and it is understood that this event has no connection with the ongoing electoral process in the country. It appears to be an eruption of extreme violence where the local population has taken law into its own hands.

The Malagasy authorities have reacted promptly by deploying additional security forces to re-establish law and order, to investigate the circumstances and to arrest the perpetrators. Some presumed participants of the incident have already been arrested.

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011617/13
à la Commission**

Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)

(10 octobre 2013)

Objet: Frontex et politique migratoire

1. L'agence de surveillance des frontières européennes peut-elle aider les pays membres à réguler les flux de migrants?
2. Si des outils communs de lutte contre l'immigration illégale ont été créés, le soutien de l'Union européenne aux États membres ne reste-t-il pas trop faible?
3. Créée en 2004, l'agence Frontex est chargée de soutenir la coopération opérationnelle entre les États membres en matière de gestion des frontières extérieures, de les assister pour la formation des garde-frontières nationaux, d'effectuer des analyses de risques, d'organiser des opérations conjointes de retour des clandestins dans leurs pays d'origine. Au cours des deux dernières années, Frontex a sauvé 16 000 vies en Méditerranée, mais de nombreux experts estiment que la baisse radicale du budget dédié à Frontex ne lui donne plus qu'un caractère symbolique. Comment réagit la Commission? N'estime-t-elle pas que cette chute des budgets des politiques migratoires explique aussi la catastrophe de Lampedusa?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Malmström au nom de la Commission

(12 décembre 2013)

Depuis son lancement en octobre 2005, l'agence Frontex a apporté un soutien considérable aux États membres dans la gestion des flux migratoires.

Outre le soutien opérationnel fourni par l'intermédiaire de l'agence Frontex, permettant notamment de déployer des équipes européennes de gardes-frontières aux frontières des États membres, le soutien de l'UE provient de quatre fonds instaurés dans le cadre du programme général «Solidarité et gestion des flux migratoires» et dotés d'un budget combiné de près de 4 milliard d'euros pour la période 2007-2013.

La Commission a proposé une augmentation substantielle de l'aide financière aux États membres au titre du nouveau Fonds «Asile et migration» et du Fonds pour la sécurité intérieure. Les propositions législatives pour la création des deux fonds, y compris les montants finaux, sont encore en cours de négociation.

Le budget de l'agence Frontex n'a pas subi de diminutions drastiques. Le montant total du financement de l'UE était de 111 millions d'euros en 2011, mais ce montant comprenait 30 millions d'euros de financement supplémentaire en vue d'alléger la pression accrue aux frontières résultant du Printemps arabe. En 2012, ce montant était de 84 millions d'euros, dont 4,5 millions d'euros prélevés sur la réserve créée par l'autorité budgétaire. En 2013, il était de 79,5 millions d'euros. En réponse aux tendances récentes, le budget de l'agence Frontex pour 2013 a été renforcé de 7,9 millions d'euros supplémentaires.

L'événement tragique qui a coûté la vie aux 300 migrants au large de Lampedusa ne peut être imputé au manque de ressources dont dispose l'agence Frontex. En effet, les actifs navals et aériens qui ont été déployés dans le cadre de l'opération conjointe Hermes de l'agence Frontex ont participé à l'opération de sauvetage et contribué à sauver la vie de 151 personnes.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011617/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(10 October 2013)**

Subject: Frontex and migration policy

1. Can the European borders monitoring agency help Member States to regulate migration?
2. While some common tools for combating illegal immigration have been established, is the European Union's support for Member States still not too weak?
3. Created in 2004, Frontex is the agency responsible for supporting operational cooperation between Member States in terms of the management of external borders, assisting them in the training of national border guards, undertaking risk analyses and organising joint operations to return illegal immigrants to their countries of origin. Over the last two years, Frontex has saved 16 000 lives in the Mediterranean, but many experts believe that the drastic cuts to the budget allocated to Frontex leaves it with a merely symbolic role. What is the Commission's reaction to this? Does it not think that such migration policy budget cuts are also to blame for the Lampedusa disaster?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)**

Since Frontex became operational in October 2005, it has provided substantial support to the Member States in managing migration flows.

Apart from the operational support provided for through Frontex, including the possibility of deploying European Border Guard Teams at the borders of the Member States, EU support is provided through four Funds established as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' with the combined allocation of nearly 4 billion EUR for 2007-2013.

The Commission has proposed significant increases of financial support to Member States under the new Asylum and Migration Fund and the Internal Security Fund. The legislative proposals for the establishment of both Funds, including the final amounts, are still under negotiation.

The budget of Frontex has not been subject to any drastic cuts. The total amount of EU funding was EUR 111 million in 2011, but this included EUR 30 million of additional funding for addressing the increased pressure at the borders due to the Arab Spring. In 2012, it was EUR 84 million, including EUR 4.5 million released from the reserve established by the Budget Authority. In 2013, it was EUR 79.5 million. As a response to the latest trends, the 2013 budget of the Agency was reinforced with an additional EUR 7.9 million.

The tragic event that cost the lives of over 300 migrants nearby Lampedusa cannot be linked to a lack of financial resources for Frontex. Indeed, the naval and airborne assets which have been deployed in the ongoing Hermes Joint Operation of Frontex, participated in the rescue operation and contributed to saving of life of 151 people.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011618/13
to the Commission**

Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)

(10 October 2013)

Subject: International governance

Increasingly, the EU is implementing legislation which is global in nature. Thus, the 'country of origin labelling' (COOL) rules come from the WTO and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation.

It was recently claimed in the UK press that the EU wishes to make it illegal for garden centres to sell popular plant varieties (such as Hidcote lavender), when the EU is merely amending its directives on plant varieties in line with rules agreed globally by bodies such as the UNECE and the OECD.

Regulation pertaining to food labelling, vehicle manufacture, banking, insurance, fisheries and many other areas clearly originates from a network of global government agencies which compel the EU to frame its rules as if it were the European regional branch of a global government to which the EU duly defers.

1. Does the Commission agree that governance is becoming increasingly remote from the electorates of the nation states and even from the electorates of the EU?
2. To what extent do those who work for the Commission (and the EU) participate in the development of 'global legislation' and sit on global committees, including agencies of the UN?
3. To whom do such staff owe their allegiance and on whose authority do they operate?
4. Does the Commission consider the EU to be subservient to international regulation of the nature described above, which is issued from unelected bodies?
5. Does the Commission agree that one of the aims of international regulation as described above is to facilitate international trade and global governance and to diminish the authority of the nation states and even supranational bodies like the EU?
6. Why does the Commission not seek to defend itself when it is criticised by the media for introducing new regulation by pointing to its global origin?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission

(11 December 2013)

In recent years there has been a rapid development of regional and global value chains: products are no longer made in one country from start to finish. Thus, the development of international standards can reduce costs for producers and contribute to more growth and employment.

This is why the Commission is supportive of international standardisation and play an active role in international bodies working in this field including in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) work on principles on international standardisation, which call for transparency, openness, impartiality and consensus in the creation of international standards.

It should however be recalled that international standards are not directly enforceable in the EU. When EU legislators consider that requirements need to be put in place in order to achieve a legitimate objective, this is achieved by the introduction of a mandatory legislative instrument such as a directive or Regulation that is enforceable in the EU.

That being said, the EU and its Member States — as all other members of the WTO — have an obligation, under the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, to use international standards to the greatest extent possible as a basis for its regulations, unless such standards are deemed inappropriate or ineffective for the legitimate objectives pursued.

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011619/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 ottobre 2013)**

Oggetto: Finanziamenti europei per immigrazione

Negli scorsi giorni è avvenuta l'ennesima tragedia a largo di Lampedusa, costata la vita a centinaia di persone che sono morte nel vano tentativo di raggiungere (in maniera comunque irregolare) il suolo europeo, trasportate da mercanti di morte senza scrupoli.

Può la Commissione indicare quanti e quali finanziamenti europei siano stati dedicati per affrontare l'emergenza sbarchi a Lampedusa a partire dal 2007?

Può la Commissione precisare se sono state previste particolari modalità o vincoli per l'utilizzazione di questi fondi da parte delle autorità italiane?

**Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(18 novembre 2013)**

L'Italia è il principale beneficiario dei quattro fondi (EBF ⁽¹⁾, EIF ⁽²⁾, ERF ⁽³⁾ e RF ⁽⁴⁾) istituiti nel quadro del programma generale SOLID ⁽⁵⁾ per il periodo 2007-2013. Durante tale periodo di programmazione, l'Italia ha ricevuto in totale 504 milioni di EUR nell'ambito di programmi nazionali, ripartiti nel modo seguente: 250 milioni di EUR nel quadro dell'EBF, 148 milioni di EUR nel quadro dell'EIF, 62 milioni di EUR nel quadro dell'ERF (compresi 26 milioni di EUR di misure di emergenza) e 44 milioni di EUR nel quadro dell'RF.

Lampedusa ha beneficiato in particolare delle misure di emergenza stanziato nel quadro dell'ERF: infatti, dal 2008 al 2013, l'Italia ha ricevuto 7 milioni di EUR nel 2008, 17 milioni di EUR tra il 2011 e il 2012, quando è iniziata l'emergenza legata alla primavera araba e 2 milioni di EUR nel 2013. La base giuridica dell'ERF prevede che questi fondi siano utilizzati entro sei mesi.

Riguardo ai 30 milioni di EUR specificamente annunciati per l'Italia, la ripartizione orientativa sarebbe di 8 milioni di EUR per le attività di Frontex, 10 milioni di EUR per le misure di emergenza ERF e rispettivamente 5 e 7 milioni di EUR per le attività di emergenza finanziate tramite azioni dell'Unione svolte nel quadro dell'EBF e dell'RF nel 2012 e 2013. Questa mobilitazione è stata ottenuta esclusivamente grazie a ridistribuzioni interne e a una riprogrammazione dei fondi esistenti (Bilancio Affari interni; «Sicurezza degli alimenti e dei mangimi» — Capitolo 17.04; assistenza tecnica per lo Sviluppo rurale — Capitolo 05.04; accordi internazionali in materia di agricoltura — Capitolo 05.06; e «Life+» — Capitolo 07.03) e non ha richiesto un bilancio rettificativo o l'uso di riserve di bilancio (margine).

⁽¹⁾ Fondo per le frontiere esterne.

⁽²⁾ Fondo europeo per l'integrazione di cittadini di paesi terzi.

⁽³⁾ Fondo europeo per i rifugiati.

⁽⁴⁾ Fondo europeo per i rimpatri.

⁽⁵⁾ Solidarietà e gestione dei flussi migratori.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011619/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(10 October 2013)

Subject: EU funding for immigration

Yet another tragedy has recently taken place off the coast of Lampedusa, in which hundreds of people transported by unscrupulous merchants of death lost their lives in a vain (and illicit) attempt to reach European soil.

How much EU funding has been allocated to dealing with the landings emergency at Lampedusa since 2007, and what is the source of this funding?

Have any special procedures or restrictions been established for the use of these funds by the Italian authorities?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(18 November 2013)

Italy is the largest beneficiary of the four Funds under the General Programme SOLID ⁽¹⁾ over 2007-2013, i.e. the EBF ⁽²⁾, the EIF ⁽³⁾, the ERF ⁽⁴⁾ and the RF ⁽⁵⁾. Over that programming period, Italy has received in total EUR 504 million under the national programmes, divided as follows: EUR 250 million under the EBF; EUR 148 million under the EIF; EUR 62 million under the ERF (including EUR 26 million of emergency measures); and EUR 44 million under the RF.

Lampedusa has particularly benefitted from the ERF emergency measures in that, over 2008-2013, Italy has received EUR 7 million in 2008, EUR 17 million over 2011 and 2012 when the pressure resulting from the Arab Spring started, and EUR 2 million in 2013. These funds must be used according to the ERF legal basis within a 6-month period.

Regarding the EUR 30 million specifically announced for Italy, the tentative allocation would be EUR 8 million for Frontex operations, EUR 10 million for ERF emergency measures, and respectively EUR 5 and 7 million for emergency activities to be funded under the EBF and RF Community actions 2012 and 2013. This mobilisation has been achieved exclusively through internal redeployments as well as the re-programming of existing funds (Home Affairs budget; 'Food and feed safety' — Chapter 17.04; technical assistance for Rural Development — Chapter 05.04; international agreements in agriculture — Chapter 05.06; and 'Life+' — Chapter 07.03); it did not require an amending budget or use of the budgetary reserve ('margin').

⁽¹⁾ Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows.
⁽²⁾ External Borders Fund.
⁽³⁾ European Fund for the integration of third-country nationals.
⁽⁴⁾ European Refugees Fund.
⁽⁵⁾ European Return Fund.

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011620/13
alla Commissione**

Claudio Morganti (EFD)

(10 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Violazioni dei diritti delle persone con disabilità in Moldova

Un recente rapporto del *Mental Disability Advocacy Center* (MDAC) di Budapest in merito all'implementazione delle misure previste dalla Convenzione delle Nazioni Unite sull'eliminazione di tutte le forme di discriminazione contro le donne, ha riscontrato come negli ospedali psichiatrici della Moldova siano costantemente violati alcuni diritti fondamentali.

Camere da 40 mq condivise da 15-20 donne, stanze da bagno e toilette prive di carta igienica e tamponi, iniezioni continue di sedativi e degenti costrette forzosamente al letto: queste sono soltanto alcune delle irregolarità riscontrate dopo una serie di visite condotte nelle principali strutture sanitarie del paese, alle quali si devono purtroppo aggiungere anche casi di violenza sessuale e aborti forzosi.

Attualmente negli istituti psichiatrici moldavi risiedono circa 2 200 persone con disturbi mentali, molte delle quali private dei minimi diritti solo in virtù della loro condizione di disabilità.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di questi fatti e delle condizioni delle persone con disabilità, donne in particolare, nella Repubblica di Moldova?

Ha la Commissione sollevato, o intende sollevare, la questione nel corso dei suoi dialoghi di partenariato con il paese dell'Europa orientale?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione

(29 novembre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza di diverse relazioni sulla situazione dei pazienti negli ospedali psichiatrici nella Repubblica di Moldova, ad esempio quelle del comitato del Consiglio d'Europa per la prevenzione della tortura, che confermano in gran parte le informazioni fornite nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare. In linea con la strategia europea sulla disabilità 2010-2020, basata sui principi della Convenzione dell'ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità, il problema è stato sollevato come questione prioritaria durante la riunione che si è tenuta ad aprile 2013 nell'ambito del dialogo UE-Repubblica moldova in materia di diritti umani e resterà all'ordine del giorno, in particolare nei dibattiti informali tra esperti sulle questioni relative ai diritti umani cui partecipano le autorità moldove, la società civile e le organizzazioni internazionali. Il più recente di questi dibattiti si è tenuto a Chisinau il 19 novembre 2013.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011620/13
to the Commission**

Claudio Morganti (EFD)

(10 October 2013)

Subject: Violations of the rights of people with disabilities in Moldova

A recent report by the Mental Disability Advocacy Center (MDAC) in Budapest regarding the implementation of measures provided for by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, found that certain fundamental rights are being constantly violated in psychiatric hospitals in Moldova.

Rooms measuring 40 m² housing 15-20 women, bathrooms and toilets with no toilet paper and tampons, continuous injections of sedatives and patients forced to stay in bed: these are just some of the irregularities found following a series of visits to the main health facilities in the country. Unfortunately, cases of sexual violence and forced abortions must also be added to the list.

Moldovan psychiatric institutions are currently home to approximately 2 200 people with mental disorders, many of whom do not enjoy even minimum rights simply because they have a disability.

Is the Commission aware of these facts and the circumstances of people with disabilities, women in particular, in the Republic of Moldova?

Has the Commission raised this issue, or does it intend to do so, during partnership dialogues with this Eastern European country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission

(29 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of several reports (e.g. by the Council of Europe's Committee against the prevention of torture) about the situation of patients in psychiatric hospitals in the Republic of Moldova, which concur to a great extent with the information conveyed in the question of the Honourable Member. In line with the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, and based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this issue was raised accordingly as a priority question during the April 2013 meeting of the EU-Moldova Human Rights Dialogue and will remain on the agenda, including in the framework of informal experts' discussions on human rights issues with the participation of the Moldovan authorities, civil society and international organisations. The next such meeting has taken place in Chisinau on 19 November 2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011621/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(10 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Vervolg vraag fraude met uitkeringen en toeslagen in Nederland

Op 17 juni heeft de heer Andor namens de Europese Commissie antwoord gegeven ⁽¹⁾ op schriftelijke vragen over grootschalige fraude met uitkeringen en toeslagen in Nederland.

De vragen waren ingegeven door berichtgeving ⁽²⁾ waarin duidelijk werd dat Oost-Europese bendes op grote schaal fraude met toeslagen en uitkeringen plegen in Nederland. Staatssecretaris Weekers van Financiën noemde het schokkend dat er op grote schaal met toeslagen en uitkeringen wordt gefraudeerd ⁽³⁾.

Vraag 1 aan de Europese Commissie luidde of de Commissie bekend is met het bericht dat er grootschalige fraude plaatsvindt met toeslagen in Nederland door Oost-Europeanen, zoals ook bevestigd door de Nederlandse Staatssecretaris van Financiën?

Het antwoord van de Commissie d.d. 17 juni 2013 op deze vraag luidt: „De Commissie heeft over deze aantijgingen geen nadere informatie ontvangen.”

In Volkskrant van 17 mei 2013 valt te lezen ⁽⁴⁾ dat eurocommissaris Reding op een persconferentie reageert op het onderwerp van de grootschalige fraude, en ook in een interview gaat zij er inhoudelijk op in ⁽⁵⁾.

Dit leidt tot de volgende vraag:

Hoe verhoudt zich de ontkenning van de Commissie in de beantwoording op 17 juni 2013 tot het artikel ⁽⁶⁾ en interview ⁽⁷⁾ op 17 mei 2013, waaruit onomstotelijk blijkt dat de Commissie wel degelijk op de hoogte was van de fraudezaken?

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

De Commissie bevestigt geen nadere informatie te hebben ontvangen over de aantijgingen van fraude met uitkeringen en toeslagen waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst, buiten de informatie die in de Nederlandse pers beschikbaar was ten tijde van het bezoek van vicevoorzitter Reding aan Nederland op 16 mei 2013. Op grond van die informatie heeft vicevoorzitter Reding de toe te passen regels van de EU-wetgeving met betrekking tot het vrije verkeer van personen verduidelijkt.

In 2012 en 2013 heeft Nederland in zijn jaarlijkse verslag inzake fraude en onjuistheden, bij de Administratieve Commissie voor de coördinatie van socialezekerheidsstelsels ⁽⁸⁾, geen melding gemaakt van wijdverbreide grensoverschrijdende sociale fraude in de sociale zekerheid. Dit rapportagemechanisme is opgericht bij een besluit ⁽⁹⁾ van de Administratieve Commissie en heeft als doel doeltreffende samenwerking tussen lidstaten te vergroten in de strijd tegen grensoverschrijdende fraude in de sociale zekerheid, als onderdeel van de correcte uitvoering van Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004. De Administratieve Commissie bestaat uit een regeringsvertegenwoordiger van elke lidstaat, en wordt geadviseerd door de Europese Commissie. De Administratieve Commissie bevordert samenwerking tussen de lidstaten op het gebied van coördinatie van de sociale zekerheidsstelsels.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004673&language=NL>.

⁽²⁾ http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2013/04_april/21/binnenland/oost-europese-bendes-frauderden-met-toeslagen.xml.

⁽³⁾ http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2013/04_april/21/binnenland/Belastingdienst_als_pinautomaat_is_onacceptabel.xml.

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3443116/2013/05/17/Bulgaren-fraude-is-geen-Europees-maar-Nederlands-probleem.dhtml>.

⁽⁵⁾ <http://nieuwsuur.nl/onderwerp/508042-bulgaarse-fraudezaak-zelf-oplossen.html>

⁽⁶⁾ opgericht bij Verordening (EG) nr. 883/2004.

⁽⁷⁾ Besluit Nr. H5 van 18 maart 2010.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:149:0005:0007:NL:PDF>.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011621/13
to the Commission**

Patricia van der Kammen (NI)

(10 October 2013)

Subject: Follow-up question on benefit and allowance fraud in the Netherlands

On 17 June, Commissioner Andor responded ⁽¹⁾ on behalf of the Commission to written questions concerning large-scale benefit and allowance fraud in the Netherlands.

The questions were prompted by reports ⁽²⁾ making clear that Eastern European gangs are committing large-scale benefit and allowance fraud in the Netherlands. The Dutch Secretary of State for Finance, Frans Weekers, is on record as saying that it is shocking that benefit and allowance fraud is taking place on a large scale ⁽³⁾.

The first question to the Commission asked whether the Commission was aware of the report that Eastern Europeans are committing large-scale allowance fraud in the Netherlands, as confirmed by the Dutch Secretary of State for Finance?

The Commission's response on 17 June 2013 was to state that it had 'not received any other information about these allegations'.

According to a report of 17 May 2013 in the Dutch newspaper *Volkskrant* ⁽⁴⁾, Commissioner Reding discussed the subject of large-scale fraud at a press conference, while she also went into the detail of the subject in an interview ⁽⁵⁾.

This raises the following question:

How does the Commission's denial of knowledge in its response of 17 June 2013 square with the article⁴ and interview⁵ on 17 May 2013, which irrefutably demonstrate that the Commission was indeed aware of the cases of fraud?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(28 November 2013)

The Commission confirms that it did not receive any other information about the allegations of benefit and allowance fraud to which the Honourable Member refers, beyond the information available in the Dutch press at the time of the visit of Vice-president Reding to the Netherlands on 16 May 2013. It was on the basis of this information that Vice-president Reding provided clarification on the applicable rules of EC law on free movement.

The Netherlands did not refer to widespread cross-border social security fraud in its annual report on Fraud and Error to the Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems ⁽⁶⁾ in 2012 and 2013. The reporting mechanism, established by a decision ⁽⁷⁾ of the Administrative Commission, aims to increase effective cooperation between Member States in combatting cross-border social security fraud as part of the proper implementation of Regulation (EC) 883/2004. The Administrative Commission is composed of a government representative from each Member State and is advised by the Commission. It promotes cooperation between Member States on social-security coordination.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004673&language=NL>

⁽²⁾ http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2013/04_april/21/binnenland/oost-europese-bendes-frauderden-met-toeslagen.xml

⁽³⁾ http://www.rtl.nl/components/actueel/rtlnieuws/2013/04_april/21/binnenland/Belastingdienst_als_pinautomaat_is_onacceptabel.xml

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/3443116/2013/05/17/Bulgaren-fraude-is-geen-Europees-maar-Nederlands-probleem.dhtml>

⁽⁵⁾ <http://nieuwsuur.nl/onderwerp/508042-bulgaarse-fraudezaak-zelf-oplossen.html>

⁽⁶⁾ Established by Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

⁽⁷⁾ Decision H5 of 18 March 2010.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:149:0005:0007:EN:PDF>

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011622/13
a la Comisión**

Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)

(11 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Grado de ejecución de los fondos europeos

Distintos medios se hacen de eco estos días del bajo nivel de ejecución en España de los fondos europeos previstos para el período 2007-2013. Según estas informaciones, se trataría de algo más de 40 000 millones de euros, de los que se habrían ejecutado únicamente en torno al 60 % de lo previsto. ¿Podría la Comisión confirmar estar informaciones y detallar las cantidades percibidas y el grado de ejecución por comunidades autónomas en España en el actual período financiero?

Las informaciones parecen todavía más preocupantes en lo que se refiere al Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader). ¿Podría asimismo detallar la Comisión las cantidades y el grado de ejecución por comunidades autónomas?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión

(13 de diciembre de 2013)

En el anexo 1, Su Señoría encontrará un cuadro con los importes abonados a España en 2007-2013 por programa, por Fondo (Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional, Fondo de Cohesión y Fondo Social Europeo) y por objetivo. A 24 de octubre de 2013, las ayudas abonadas con cargo a los Fondos Estructurales y al Fondo de Cohesión ascendían a 21 300 millones de euros, lo que supone en torno al 62 % de la asignación concedida. Los pagos intermedios ascienden a 18 700 millones de euros, lo que supone un nivel de ejecución del 54 %, como se muestra en el anexo 1.

La contribución del Fondo Europeo Agrícola de Desarrollo Rural (Feader) a los programas de desarrollo rural en España asciende a 8 000 millones de euros para el mismo período.

El importe abonado por el Feader a los programas de desarrollo rural en España figura en el anexo 2. A 15 de octubre de 2013, los pagos realizados por el Feader, adelantos incluidos, ascienden a 5 300 millones de euros. Estos pagos corresponden al 66,5 % de la contribución total del Feader a los programas vigentes.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011622/13
to the Commission**

Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Level of implementation of European funds

There have been reports in the media recently on the low level of implementation in Spain of European funds made available for the period 2007-2013. These reports claim that a little over EUR 40 billion has been used, which would be only around 60% of the expected figure. Could the Commission confirm this information and state the amounts received and the level of implementation in each of Spain's autonomous regions in the current financial period?

The figures seem even more worrying with regard to the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Could the Commission also specify for the EAFRD the amounts and the level of implementation in each autonomous region?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission

(13 December 2013)

The Honourable Member will find in Annex 1 a table with the amounts paid to Spain in 2007-2013 by programme, by Fund (European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund, European Social Fund) and by objective. As of 24 October 2013, assistance paid from the Structural and Cohesion Funds amounts to EUR 21.3 billion which represents around 62% of the decided allocation. The interim payments amount to EUR 18.7 billion which represents a level of implementation of 54% as shown in Annex 1.

The contribution of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to the rural development programmes (RDPs) in Spain amounts to EUR 8 billion for the same period.

The EAFRD amount paid to the Spanish RDPs is presented in Annex 2. As of 15 October 2013, the EAFRD payments made, including the advances, amount to EUR 5.3 billion. These payments represent 66.5% of the total EAFRD contribution to the current programmes.

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011623/13
a la Comisión**

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

(11 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Nombramientos en la CNMC (Comisión Nacional de Mercados y Competencia)

La Comisión ha declarado repetidamente que es fundamental que el nuevo organismo regulador de los mercados, de la energía y de la competencia sea independiente. Por ello, el artículo 26.3 de la ley aprobada para su creación exige convocatoria pública para todo el personal directivo (esto es, los directores de instrucción, subdirectores, vicesecretarios, jefe de la asesoría jurídica, secretario general y jefe del departamento de control interno). De este modo se reduce al mínimo la discrecionalidad política, pues la convocatoria pública y por méritos permite que se presente todo el que quiera y que la CNMC (que goza, en todo caso de discrecionalidad en el nombramiento) tenga que justificar la selección final con bases objetivas.

En este sentido, es preocupante que la propia CNMC no esté cumpliendo con este precepto y que esta semana se haya sabido que se están efectuando nombramientos que no solo ponen en entredicho la futura independencia de este órgano por sus lazos familiares con el Gobierno, sino que además incumplen la legislación que la ampara ⁽¹⁾.

Teniendo en cuenta la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta E-009835/2013, en la que afirma que «la Comisión continuará vigilando estrechamente la aplicación de la reforma de la CNMC con el fin de garantizar su compatibilidad con los requisitos pertinentes establecidos en virtud del Derecho de la UE»,

¿cree la Comisión que esta práctica de la CNMC es consistente con el principio de independencia del poder político que es tan necesario para que desarrolle correctamente sus funciones?

¿Piensa la Comisión actuar para asegurar que la CNMC efectúe los nombramientos por criterios de mérito?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión

(25 de noviembre de 2013)

La Comisión concede gran importancia a la independencia de las autoridades reguladoras nacionales y ha seguido muy de cerca la aprobación de la Ley 3/2013, de creación de la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC) en España. Tras la aprobación de la Orden Ministerial ECC/1796/2013 ⁽²⁾, la nueva autoridad inició sus actividades el 7 de octubre de 2013.

Como se indica en nuestra respuesta a la pregunta E-009835/2013, el marco regulador de la UE en materia de comunicaciones electrónicas contiene una serie de requisitos a este respecto. En particular, la Directiva 2002/21/CE, modificada por la Directiva 2009/140/CE ⁽³⁾, dispone, entre otras cosas, que los Estados miembros deben velar por que estas autoridades sean jurídicamente distintas y funcionalmente independientes de todas las entidades del sector y actúen con independencia y no soliciten ni acepten instrucciones de ningún otro organismo en la realización de determinadas tareas en virtud de la legislación nacional por la que se aplica el Derecho de la UE. La misma Directiva prevé que los Estados miembros deben velar también por que las autoridades reguladoras nacionales cuenten con los recursos financieros y humanos necesarios para participar activamente en las actividades del Organismo de Reguladores Europeos de Comunicaciones Electrónicas (ORECE) y contribuir a las mismas.

No obstante, el procedimiento para el nombramiento del personal directivo es competencia de la autoridad reguladora nacional en virtud de la legislación nacional pertinente que establece, entre otras cosas, la competencia del Consejo de la CNMC a este respecto.

La Comisión continuará vigilando estrechamente la aplicación de la reforma de la CNMC, inclusive la adecuada asignación de recursos humanos a la nueva autoridad y la independencia de la misma, con el fin de garantizar su compatibilidad con los requisitos pertinentes establecidos en virtud del Derecho de la UE.

⁽¹⁾ http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2013/10/01/empresas/1380652681_875746.html

⁽²⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-10371.pdf>

⁽³⁾ DO L 337 de 18.12.2009, p. 37.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011623/13
to the Commission**

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Appointments to the National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC)

The Commission has declared repeatedly that it is vital that the new regulatory authority for markets, energy and competition is independent. Article 26.3 of the law passed to create the authority therefore requires an open call to be made for all managerial appointments (i.e. investigation officers, deputy officers, deputy secretaries, head of the legal service, secretary-general and head of internal control). This minimises political discretion, as an open call, assessed on merit, allows anyone who so wishes to apply and forces the CNMC (which, in any case, can use discretion when making the appointment) to justify its final choice on objective grounds.

It is worrying, in this regard, that the CNMC itself is not complying with this rule and that, as came to light this week, appointments being made not only call into question the future independence of this authority, due to its close ties with the Government, but also violate the law applicable to it ⁽¹⁾.

In answer to Question E-009835/2013, the Commission stated that 'the Commission will continue to monitor closely the implementation of the CNMC reform in order to guarantee its compatibility with the relevant requirements under EC law.'

Does the Commission believe that this practice by the CNMC is consistent with the principle of independence from political power, which is vital for it to carry out its functions properly?

Will the Commission take action to ensure that the CNMC makes its appointments on merit?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission

(25 November 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to the independence of national regulatory authorities and has been following closely the adoption of Law 3/2013 creating the National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC) in Spain. Following the adoption of Ministerial Order ECC/1796/2013 ⁽²⁾ the new authority began its activities on 7 October 2013.

As indicated in our reply to E-009835/2013, the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications contains a number of requirements in this regard. In particular, Directive 2002/21/EC, as amended by Directive 2009/140/EC ⁽³⁾, provides, amongst others, that Member States shall guarantee that these authorities are legally distinct from and functionally independent of all organisations in the sector and that they shall act independently and not seek or take instructions from any other body in the exercise of certain tasks under national law implementing EC law. The same Directive provides that Member States shall ensure that national regulatory authorities have adequate financial and human resources to enable them to actively participate in and contribute to the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC).

However, the procedure for the appointment of management positions is a competence of the national regulatory authority under the relevant national legislation which establishes, amongst others, the competence of the Board of the CNMC in this regard.

The Commission will continue to monitor closely the implementation of the CNMC reform, including the independence and adequate attribution of human resources to the new authority, in order to guarantee its compatibility with the relevant requirements under EC law.

⁽¹⁾ http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2013/10/01/empresas/1380652681_875746.html

⁽²⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-10371.pdf>

⁽³⁾ OJ L 337, 18.12.2009, p.37.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011625/13

προς την Επιτροπή

Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)

(11 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πολιτικές συνέπειες του ναυαγίου της Λαμπεντούζας

Με το ναυάγιο της Λαμπεντούζας δεν χάθηκαν μόνο εκατοντάδες ανθρώπινες ζωές. Βούλιαξε ταυτόχρονα, χωρίς να αφήσει ίχνη, και η ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική για το πολιτικό άσυλο και τη μετανάστευση. Οι πολίτες της Ευρώπης και όλος ο πολιτισμένος κόσμος αισθάνονται ντροπή και αγανάκτηση γι' αυτό που συνέβη. Το χειρότερο είναι ότι τέτοια περιστατικά ήταν αναμενόμενα και ο καθένας ένοιωθε ότι κάτι πολύ τραγικό θα μπορούσε να συμβεί. Πολλά παρόμοια περιστατικά, μικρότερου όμως μεγέθους, συμβαίνουν εδώ και αρκετό καιρό σε μεσογειακές χώρες της Ένωσης χωρίς οι αρμόδιες υπηρεσίες της ΕΕ να δείχνουν την αναγκαία βούληση για αποτελεσματική αντιμετώπισή τους.

Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να υπάρξει ενιαία και αποτελεσματική πανευρωπαϊκή πολιτική για το πολιτικό άσυλο και τη μετανάστευση;
2. Πώς μπορεί να βοηθήσει τις χώρες του Ευρωπαϊκού Νότου περιλαμβανομένης της Κύπρου, οι οποίες δέχονται τις μεγαλύτερες πιέσεις από τα μεταναστευτικά ρεύματα και τους αιτητές ασύλου, ώστε να αντεπεξέλθουν στο βάρος που συνεπάγεται η κατάσταση αυτή;
3. Τι πιστεύει ότι πρέπει να γίνει ώστε το οικονομικό, κοινωνικό και διοικητικό κόστος που προκύπτει να επιβαρύνει ισότιμα και δίκαια όλες τις χώρες της Ένωσης;
4. Τι μέτρα λαμβάνονται για δίκαιη γεωγραφική κατανομή αλλά και ομαλή κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση όλων των νόμιμων μεταναστών και αιτητών ασύλου στα κράτη μέλη της Ένωσης;

Απάντηση της κ. Malmström εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή συμμερίζεται τα αισθήματα της κυρίας βουλευτού σε σχέση με τον τραγικό θάνατο πολλών εκατοντάδων μεταναστών στη Μεσόγειο κατά τους τελευταίους μήνες. Σε άμεση συνάρτηση με το γεγονός αυτό, συγκροτήθηκε ειδική ομάδα δράσης για τη Μεσόγειο η οποία θα αναζητήσει τρόπους για να αποτρεπεται στο μέλλον η απώλεια ανθρώπινων ζωών στη θάλασσα και να αποφευχθεί η επανάληψη παρόμοιων ανθρώπινων τραγωδιών.

Η νομοθεσία που περιλαμβάνει τη δεύτερη φάση του Κοινού Ευρωπαϊκού Συστήματος Ασύλου εγκρίθηκε τον Ιούνιο του τρέχοντος έτους. Σκοπός των νέων κανόνων είναι να εξασφαλίσουν καλύτερη πρόσβαση στη διαδικασία ασύλου, να οδηγήσουν σε δικαιότερες αποφάσεις, να παράσχουν εγγυήσεις στους ανθρώπους που φοβούνται πιθανές διώξεις ότι δεν θα επιστρέψουν εκεί όπου θα κινδύνευαν, να εξασφαλίσουν αξιοπρεπείς συνθήκες και καλύτερη πρόσβαση σε μέτρα ένταξης. Το έργο που πρέπει να επιτελεστεί είναι η εξασφάλιση αποτελεσματικής και ομοιόμορφης εφαρμογής των κανόνων από όλα τα κράτη μέλη. Η ΕΕ έχει επίσης χαράξει μια ολοκληρωμένη πολιτική για τη νόμιμη και την παράνομη μετανάστευση.

Η ΕΕ έχει θέσει σε εφαρμογή πολλές δράσεις που αποσκοπούν στην παροχή βοήθειας στα κράτη μέλη που αντιμετωπίζουν πιέσεις στο σύστημα ασύλου, μεταξύ των οποίων η επανεγκατάσταση. Η οικονομική αλληλεγγύη σε θέματα ασύλου εξασφαλίζεται μέσω του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου για τους Πρόσφυγες (2008-13). Δεν υπάρχουν, ωστόσο, σχέδια για τη δημιουργία κλείδας κατανομής ή άλλου μηχανισμού για την κατανομή των αιτούντων άσυλο και των μεταναστών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών.

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει ότι η Κύπρος, λόγω της γεωγραφικής της εγγύτητας με όσα διαδραματίζονται στη Συρία, είναι ιδιαίτερα εκτεθειμένη στον κίνδυνο μαζικής εισροής ατόμων που χρήζουν διεθνούς προστασίας. Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει το πρόσφατο αίτημα της Κύπρου για επείγουσα βοήθεια ύψους 2,7 εκατ. ευρώ με σκοπό να αυξηθεί η ικανότητα υποδοχής της χώρας. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή μελετά επί του παρόντος από κοινού με τις κυπριακές αρχές τα κατάλληλα μέτρα στήριξης της Κύπρου, μεταξύ των οποίων και πρόσθετη χρηματοδότηση από μέρους της ΕΕ.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011625/13
to the Commission**

Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Political repercussions of the Lampedusa shipwreck

The shipwreck off Lampedusa did not only cause the loss of hundreds of human lives. It also caused European policy on political asylum and migration to sink without trace. The citizens of Europe and of the entire civilised world felt shame and indignation about this incident. The worst thing is that such incidents were expected and everyone felt that something much more tragic might happen. Numerous similar incidents, on a smaller scale, have been occurring for some time now off the Mediterranean countries of the Union, without the EU services demonstrating the necessary will to take effective action to prevent them.

Will the Commission answer the following:

1. What does it intend to do to ensure a single, effective, pan-European policy on political asylum and migration?
2. How can it help the countries of southern Europe, including Cyprus, which are under the most pressure from migratory movements and asylum-seekers, to cope with the burden caused by this situation?
3. What does it believe must be done so that the resultant economic, social and administrative costs are borne equally and fairly by all the Member States of the Union?
4. What measures are being taken to ensure a fair geographical distribution and proper social integration of all legal migrants and asylum-seekers in the Member States of the Union?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission

(13 December 2013)

The Commission shares the sentiment of the Honourable Member in relation to the tragic deaths of many hundreds of migrants in the Mediterranean in recent months. As a direct consequence, a Task Force for the Mediterranean has been set up that will look at ways to prevent the loss of lives at sea and to avoid that such human tragedies happen again.

The legislation comprising the second phase of the Common European Asylum System was adopted in June this year. The new rules are designed to provide better access to the asylum procedure; lead to fairer decisions; ensure that people in fear of persecution are not returned to danger; provide dignified conditions; and better access to integration measures. The task ahead will be to ensure effective and uniform implementation across Member States. The EU has also been developing a comprehensive policy on legal and irregular migration.

The EU has many actions in place to assist Member States facing pressures on their asylum system, including through relocation. Financial solidarity on asylum has been available through the European Refugee Fund (2008-13). However, there are no plans to create a distribution key or other mechanism to divide up asylum-seekers and migrants across Member States.

The Commission is aware that, due to its geographical proximity to the events in Syria, Cyprus is particularly exposed to the risk of a mass influx of persons in need of international protection. The Commission is considering Cyprus' recent request for EUR 2.7 million of emergency assistance to increase reception capacity. In this context, the Commission is currently discussing with the Cypriot authorities appropriate measures to support Cyprus, including through additional EU funding.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011627/13
za Komisijo
Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)
(11. oktober 2013)

Zadeva: Finančni instrumenti in kohezijska politika

Komisija se je že zavezala, da bo v naslednjem programskem obdobju 2014–2020 okrepila vlogo finančnih institucij v kohezijski politiki. Parlament je pobudo ob številnih priložnostih toplo pozdravil in v različnih besedilih poudaril, da sta potrebni takojšnja pravna varnost in večja preglednost pri uvajanju novih inovativnih oblik financiranja.

Ker so standardni finančni instrument vedno ena od možnosti, ki bi lahko spodbudila uporabo takšnih instrumentov tudi med regionalnimi in lokalnimi organi, ki jih še ne poznajo, je bilo izraženih več zahtev po pravni jasnosti in pravočasni uvedbi ustreznih pravil, ki se uporabljajo za standardne instrumente.

1. Ali je Komisija manj kot leto dni pred začetkom novega programskega obdobja 2014–2020 že pripravila kakšen standardni instrument?
2. Katere komunikacijske kanale je Komisija uporabila za obveščanje morebitnih uporabnikov o pravilih in tehničnih podrobnostih v ozadju takšnih standardnih instrumentov?
3. Kako bo Komisija promovirala in spodbujala uporabo vseh vrst inovativnih finančnih instrumentov v zadnjem letu pred začetkom novega programskega obdobja 2014–2020?
4. Ali lahko Komisija pove več o prihodnosti finančnih instrumentov, ki se izvajajo sedaj (Jessica, Jeremy, Jasper)? Ali bodo na enak način delovali tudi v novem programskem obdobju 2014–2020?

Odgovor g. Hahna v imenu Komisije
(6. december 2013)

1–3. Za standardizirane finančne instrumente, na katere se vprašanje nanaša, veljajo standardni pogoji za finančne instrumente v skladu s pravili za naslednji Evropski strukturni in investicijski sklad (ESIF), ki jih je treba še določiti v izvedbenem aktu.

Komisija je pripravila osnutek ključnih elementov standardiziranih finančnih instrumentov. Ta osnutek je bil v okviru procesa posvetovanja že predstavljen strokovni skupini držav članic in zainteresiranim stranem, ki so trenutno dejavne na področju finančnih instrumentov. Standardizirani finančni instrumenti so bili ob več priložnostih predstavljeni v različnih državah članicah, o njih pa se je razpravljalo v okviru seminarjev, konferenc in delavnic.

4. Organi upravljanja bodo odločali, kako bodo po obdobju upravičenosti v skladu s pravili delovali tisti instrumenti finančnega inženiringa, ki se že izvajajo. Ti instrumenti bi lahko delovali še naprej, če bi bila potreba po tem potrjena na podlagi predhodne presoje in bi bili del programa za državo članico. Ker so pravila za obdobje 2014–2020 podrobnejša od tistih za obdobje 2007–2013, bo treba te instrumente, pod pogojem da bodo podprti v okviru evropskih in strukturnih investicijskih skladov za obdobje 2014–2020, prilagoditi, da bodo usklajeni z novimi pravili.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011627/13
to the Commission**

Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Financial instruments in cohesion policy

The Commission has already committed itself to strengthening the role of financial instruments within cohesion policy in the upcoming programming period (2014-2020). Parliament has warmly welcomed this initiative on a number of occasions and, in various texts, called for immediate legal clarity and increased transparency with regard to the introduction of new, innovative forms of financing.

As one option has always been off-the-shelf financial instruments which regional and local authorities still unfamiliar with such instruments would find easier to use, there have been repeated calls for legal clarity and the timely introduction of appropriate rules applicable to such off-the-shelf instruments.

1. With less than a year to go before the start of the 2014-2020 programming period, has the Commission prepared any such off-the-shelf instruments yet?
2. What channels has the Commission been using to communicate the rules and technicalities associated with such off-the-shelf instruments to potential users?
3. How will the Commission promote and incentivise the use of all forms of innovative financial instrument in the final year before the start of the 2014-2020 programming period?
4. Can the Commission elaborate on the future of those financial instruments already in operation (Jessica, Jeremy and Jasper)? Will they continue to operate in the same way throughout the next programming period (2014-2020)?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission

(6 December 2013)

1 - 3. The off-the-shelf financial instruments mentioned in the question are the standard terms and conditions for financial instruments in line with the future European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) regulations, to be set out in an implementing act.

The Commission has prepared a draft of the key elements of the off-the-shelf instruments. This draft has already been shared, through a consultation process with the Member States expert group and stakeholders active in financial instruments in the current period. The off-the-shelf instruments have also been presented and discussed on multiple occasions during seminars, conferences and workshops in different Member States.

4. Concerning those financial engineering instruments under implementation, managing authorities will have to decide how to continue these after the end of the eligibility period within the limit of the regulations. These instruments could be continued if the need is confirmed by an *ex-ante* assessment and if they are part of the programme for the Member State. Since the 2014-2020 rules are more detailed than those of the 2007-2013 period, these instruments, if supported by the 2014-2020 ESIF Funds, will have to be adapted in order to comply with the new regulations.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-011628/13

za Komisijo

Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)

(11. oktober 2013)

Zadeva: Platforma za dobro davčno upravljanje

Komisija je kot del akcijskega načrta za boj proti davčnim goljufijam in utajam ter agresivnemu davčnemu načrtovanju jeseni leta 2013 ustanovila platformo za dobro davčno upravljanje.

Platforma ima nalogo, da pozorno spremlja, kako se izvajata priporočili, ki ju je Komisija pred poletjem leta 2013 izdala v zvezi z davčnimi goljufijami in davčnimi oazami v vseh državah članicah, in da se pri tem posvetuje s številnimi zainteresiranimi stranmi, med drugimi nacionalnimi davčnimi organi, socialnimi partnerji in sindikati, zato se porajajo sledeča vprašanja:

1. Ali platforma že deluje in kdo pri njej sodeluje?
2. Kdaj lahko pričakujemo njeno prvo poročilo?
3. Ali bo glede na zaveze, ki so jih države članice letos poleti dale v zvezi z direktivo o prihrankih in mehanizmom za hiter odziv v primerih goljufij na področju DDV, platforma nadzorovala tudi izvajanje teh dveh zakonodajnih aktov?

Odgovor Algirdasa Šemete v imenu Komisije

(29. november 2013)

1. Da, platforma že deluje. Vzpostavljena je bila 23. aprila 2013. Prvo srečanje članov platforme je potekalo 10. junija 2013, drugo pa 16. oktobra 2013. Člani platforme so bili izbrani na podlagi razpisa. Seznam članov in druge informacije o platformi so objavljene na spletišču platforme:
http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/good_governance_matters/platform/index_en.htm

2. Povzetki zapisnikov s srečanj članov platforme se objavijo na spletišču, ko jih potrdijo člani. Komisija bo poročilo o izvajanju svojih priporočil z dne 6. decembra 2012 pripravila do konca decembra 2015 v sodelovanju s platformo.

3. Delovni program platforme je dostopen na spletišču. Izvajanje direktive o prihrankih in mehanizma za hiter odziv v primerih goljufij na področju DDV ne bo ena izmed prednostnih nalog platforme.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011628/13
to the Commission**

Mojca Kleva Kekuš (S&D)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Platform for Tax Good Governance

As part of the Commission's action plan to combat tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning, a 'Platform for Tax Good Governance' was established in autumn 2013.

As its mission is to monitor closely the implementation of the two Commission recommendations issued before summer 2013 regarding tax fraud and tax havens in all Member States, and to consult during this monitoring process with a number of different stakeholders, including national tax workforces, social partners and trade unions, the following questions seem relevant:

1. Is the Platform already operational and who is participating in it?
2. When can we expect its first report?
3. In view of the commitments given by Member States this summer regarding the implementation of the Savings Directive and the quick reaction mechanism against VAT fraud, will the Platform also be overseeing and monitoring the implementation of these two legislative acts?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission

(29 November 2013)

1. Yes, the Platform is already operational. It was established on 23 April 2013. The first meeting took place on 10 June 2013 and a second meeting was held on 16 October 2013. The members of the Platform have been selected following a Call for Applications. Its members and other information on the Platform have been published on the Platform's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/gen_info/good_governance_matters/platform/index_en.htm

2. A summary record of the Platform's meetings is published on the website once approved by the members. The Commission will report on the implementation of its 6 December 2012 Recommendations by the end of 2015, the Platform will assist the Commission in preparing this report.

3. The Platform's Work programme can be consulted on the website. The implementation of the Savings Directive and the quick reaction mechanism against VAT fraud will not be amongst the Platform's priorities.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011629/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Food and Veterinary Office inspections on horses

When will the Food and Veterinary Office publish its programme of inspections for 2014? How many of its inspections will cover equine-related issues in Member States and third countries? Of these, how many are likely to be unannounced?

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

The Food and Veterinary Office will publish its work programme 2014, including its programme of audits for 2014, in November. Equine-related issues will be included in the scope of fifteen audits in Member States, three audits in Candidate Countries and five audits in third countries. All audits will be announced to the competent authorities of the countries concerned.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011630/13

alla Commissione

Oreste Rossi (PPE)

(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Allarme carestia in Madagascar

Il Madagascar è la quarta isola più grande del mondo, con una superficie di 587 000 km². Nonostante le sue risorse naturali abbondanti, il paese resta uno dei meno sviluppati del pianeta. La strategia internazionale per lo sviluppo del paese si focalizza sulla riduzione della povertà attraverso il raggiungimento degli obiettivi di sviluppo del Millennio entro il 2015. Nel 2007, il nuovo piano d'azione per il Madagascar (Madagascar Action Plan, MAP) ha rimpiazzato il documento strategico per la riduzione della povertà entro il 2012 (Strategic Document on Poverty Reduction until 2012). Il 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES) si inserisce in questo contesto. Esso è strutturato intorno allo sviluppo delle infrastrutture, allo sviluppo rurale e alla pianificazione, mentre enfatizza la promozione del buon governo e rinforza l'integrazione regionale.

Tredici milioni di persone — quasi il 60 % della popolazione — rischiano oggi la fame a causa dell'infestazione delle locuste malgache, che minacciano la sicurezza alimentare e i mezzi di sussistenza.

Il flagello delle locuste è iniziato nell'aprile del 2012. Vasti sciame di questi insetti molto mobili hanno danneggiato ampie aree di terra coltivata e di pascoli. Sebbene le locuste abbiano principalmente colpito il sud del paese, secondo una missione di valutazione della FAO condotta nell'aprile/maggio di quest'anno, si prevede che verso la fine del 2013 e l'inizio del 2014 alcuni sciame raggiungeranno le più produttive regioni settentrionali. In alcune regioni si stima sia stato danneggiato il 70 % delle colture di cereali, tra cui quelle di riso — il principale alimento di base — e di mais.

Considerato che:

- la campagna contro le locuste è di vitale importanza per cercare di limitare altri danni alle colture dei contadini poveri;
- finora la FAO ha ricevuto solo 23 milioni di dollari per il programma (che avrà un costo previsto di 41,5 milioni di dollari per i tre anni di operazioni);

può la Commissione far sapere:

se, alla luce degli eventi, intende rivedere le stime per i fondi destinati alla cooperazione internazionale, ed in particolare al Madagascar?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione

(2 dicembre 2013)

La prima campagna contro le locuste, che ha avuto inizio nel settembre 2013, è una risposta iniziale per arrestarne l'invasione. Gli sforzi compiuti dalla comunità internazionale, compresa l'Unione europea (UE) che ha mobilitato rapidamente 4 milioni di EUR assegnandoli alla FAO, hanno contribuito a far sì che questa prima campagna fosse avviata senza indugio e attuata integralmente per avere un impatto decisivo. Le prossime campagne contro le locuste (che saranno condotte nel 2014/2015 e nel 2015/2016) dovrebbero assicurare il ritorno alla normalità.

L'UE, oltre al suddetto stanziamento di 4 milioni di EUR, continua a sostenere la popolazione colpita dall'invasione di locuste attraverso vari programmi per un importo complessivo di quasi 60 milioni di EUR. Questi programmi hanno l'obiettivo di migliorare la sicurezza alimentare, il reddito e l'alimentazione delle famiglie che vivono in zone a rischio di invasione di locuste e comprendono attività di formazione e sostegno agli agricoltori per rafforzarne la resilienza ai vari rischi.

La delegazione dell'UE in Madagascar continua le consultazioni e la collaborazione con altri partner per lo sviluppo attivi nel paese, nonché con le autorità malgache, al fine di creare le condizioni necessarie per eliminare permanentemente la minaccia delle locuste. Particolare attenzione viene prestata al rafforzamento delle capacità di sorveglianza e controllo preventivo.

Il sostegno dell'UE a favore delle campagne contro le locuste è stato finanziato mediante fondi inutilizzati del 10° FES che erano stati assegnati al Madagascar prima della crisi politica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011630/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Famine alert in Madagascar

Madagascar is the fourth-largest island in the world, with an area of 587 000 km². Despite its abundant natural resources, it is one of the least-developed countries on the planet. The international development strategy for the country focuses on poverty reduction through achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. In 2007, the new Madagascar Action Plan (MAP) replaced the Strategic Document on Poverty Reduction until 2012. The 10th European Development Fund (EDF) fits into this context. It is structured around the development of infrastructure, rural development and planning, and emphasises the promotion of good governance and the strengthening of regional integration.

Thirteen million people — nearly 60% of the population — are currently at risk of hunger due to infestations of the Malagasy locust, which threaten food security and means of subsistence.

The locust plague began in April 2012. Vast, highly mobile swarms have damaged huge areas of cultivated land and pastures. Although they have largely struck the south of the country, a UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) assessment mission conducted in April and May of this year estimates that some swarms may reach the more productive northern regions by the end of 2013 or beginning of 2014. In some regions, 70% of cereal crops are estimated to have been damaged, including rice — the primary staple food — and maize.

The campaign against the locust is vitally important to limit further damage to poor farmers' crops. To date, the FAO has received only USD 23 million for the programme (which is expected to cost USD 41.5 million over its three years of operation).

In light of this situation, does the Commission intend to review the estimates for funds allocated to international cooperation, particularly for Madagascar?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

The first anti-locust campaign, started in September 2013, provides the initial response to halt the locust invasion. The efforts made by the international community, including the European Union (EU) which quickly mobilised EUR 4 million and allocated these funds to the FAO, helped to ensure that this first campaign was launched on time and carried out in its entirety to have a decisive impact. The future anti-locust campaigns (in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016) should ensure the effective return to a situation of remission.

The EU, in addition to the abovementioned allocation of EUR 4 million, is continuing its support to people affected by the locust invasion through various programmes totalling nearly EUR 60 million. These programmes aim at improving the food security, income and nutrition of households located in areas at risk of exposure to locusts. They include activities coaching and supporting farmers to strengthen their resilience to various hazards.

The EU Delegation in Madagascar is continuing its consultation and coordination with other development partners active in Madagascar as well as with the Malagasy authorities to ensure that the conditions are met to permanently halt the locust threat. Particular attention is being paid to strengthening surveillance and preventive control capabilities.

The EU's support to the anti-locust invasion has been funded through available unused 10th EDF funds that had been allocated to Madagascar before the political crisis.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011631/13

alla Commissione

Oreste Rossi (PPE)

(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Fenomeno del land grabbing nei paesi in via di sviluppo

Un recente studio di un'importante organizzazione internazionale ha evidenziato che per la coltivazione dello zucchero numerose imprese acquisiscono vaste porzioni di terreni dei paesi in via di sviluppo, sradicando le popolazioni indigene, senza il consenso né il risarcimento delle comunità che abitano su quella terra. Si tratta di una pratica nota come «land grabbing».

Nello studio si citano casi specifici, come ad esempio la situazione dello Stato di Pernambuco (Brasile), dove nel 1998 una comunità di pescatori è stata cacciata con la violenza per far posto a uno zuccherificio. Oppure il caso del distretto di Sre Ambel (Cambogia), in cui 200 famiglie stanno ricorrendo in giudizio per riavere la terra da cui sono state sfrattate nel 2006 per far posto a una piantagione. In aggiunta sono anche illustrati i gravi conflitti per la terra scatenatisi in paesi come Mali, Zambia e Malawi.

Considerato che:

- sono coinvolte nel land grabbing delle multinazionali operanti in tutto il mondo;
- con tale pratica si impoverisce il suolo, si provocano tensioni sociali e gravi conflitti per la terra, si affamano le popolazioni che sussistono grazie a agricoltura e allevamento;
- la terra destinata alla coltivazione della sola canna di zucchero è pari a 31 milioni di ettari, una superficie pari all'Italia, per cui si tratta di un fenomeno molto diffuso;

si chiede alla Commissione se:

1. ritenga sia necessario adottare una politica di «tolleranza zero» invitando tutte le imprese a rivelare in modo trasparente i paesi e i produttori dai quali si riforniscono di materie prime;
2. sia opportuno effettuare valutazioni sulle conseguenze che la produzione dello zucchero ha sulle comunità locali in tali paesi;
3. abbia intenzione di mobilitare attivamente l'industria alimentare affinché si rispettino i diritti sulla terra.

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione

(27 novembre 2013)

La normativa dell'UE per quanto riguarda la fornitura di informazioni sui prodotti alimentari ai consumatori si applica a tutti gli alimenti destinati al consumatore finale o alle collettività. Per quanto riguarda l'etichettatura di origine obbligatoria si stabilisce che la Commissione presenti relazioni al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio esaminando la possibilità di estendere a determinati prodotti alimentari l'etichettatura di origine obbligatoria. A seconda delle conclusioni di tali relazioni la Commissione può presentare proposte di modifica delle disposizioni pertinenti dell'Unione o, ove opportuno, adottare nuove iniziative per settori. Pertanto in questa fase la Commissione non può adottare una posizione in merito alla questione sollevata.

La Commissione esegue valutazioni nei paesi terzi per quanto riguarda le sue attività e sono disponibili relazioni sulla sua partecipazione nel settore dello zucchero a favore del Malawi. La Commissione sostiene, tra l'altro, organizzazioni indipendenti quali l'«International Land Coalition», la principale fonte in loco delle informazioni utilizzate da OXFAM nella sua urgente campagna sullo zucchero.

La Commissione sostiene attivamente i processi per assicurare l'impegno e la responsabilizzazione delle industrie agroalimentari per quanto riguarda il rispetto dei diritti fondiari consuetudinari. Essa ha partecipato e ha sostenuto la negoziazione degli orientamenti volontari per una governance responsabile in materia di proprietà fondiaria, pesca e foreste (Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests) e si impegna attivamente per la loro applicazione a livello nazionale attraverso la recente approvazione di un programma da 33 milioni di EUR per l'Africa e la Land Transparency Initiative del G8. I negoziati in corso sugli investimenti agricoli responsabili affronteranno in modo specifico gli obblighi del settore privato per l'acquisto di terreni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011631/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Land grabbing in developing countries

A recent study by a major international organisation shows that many companies purchase vast swathes of land in developing countries for sugar cultivation, uprooting the indigenous population without consent from or reimbursement to the communities occupying the land. This is a practice known as 'land grabbing'.

The study mentions specific cases, such as the situation in the State of Pernambuco (Brazil), where a fishing community was violently expelled in 1998 to make room for a sugar refinery, and the case of the Sre Ambel district (Cambodia), where 200 families turned to the courts to recover the land they were evicted from in 2006 to make room for a plantation. The study also illustrates serious conflicts over land in countries like Mali, Zambia, and Malawi.

Multinationals operating throughout the world are involved in land grabbing. This practice depletes the soil, creates social tensions and serious conflicts over land, and starves populations that subsist on agriculture and raising livestock. Some 31 million hectares of land is used to cultivate sugar cane alone — an area equal to the size of Italy — which means it is an extremely widespread problem.

Does the Commission believe it necessary to adopt a 'zero tolerance' policy, requiring all companies to be transparent and reveal the countries and producers from which they obtain their raw materials?

Does the Commission believe it opportune to perform assessments on the consequences of sugar production on local communities in these countries?

Does it intend to actively mobilise the food industry to respect land rights?

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

The EU Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers applies to all foods delivered to the final consumer or to mass caterers. Regarding mandatory origin labelling, it requires the Commission to submit reports to Parliament and the Council exploring the possibility to extend mandatory origin labelling with respect to certain foods. Depending on the outcome of the reports, the Commission may submit proposals to modify the relevant Union provisions or take new initiatives, where appropriate, on a sectoral basis. As such, the Commission cannot at this stage take a position on the issue raised at hand.

The Commission performs assessments in third countries in relation to its activities, and reports are available on its involvement in the sugar sector for Malawi. The Commission, *inter alia*, supports independent organisations, such as the International Land Coalition, the main provider of the information from the ground used by OXFAM in its sugar rush campaign.

The Commission actively supports processes to ensure the agro-food industries are committed to and held responsible for respect for customary land rights. It participated in and supported the negotiation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests and is actively engaged in their application at country level, with a recently approved EUR 33 million programme for Africa, as well as the G8 Land Transparency Initiative. The current negotiations on responsible agricultural investments will specifically tackle the obligations of the private sector in land acquisition.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011633/13

alla Commissione

Oreste Rossi (PPE)

(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Rendicontazione dei finanziamenti dell'Unione europea diretti a Haiti

Haiti è il paese più povero del continente americano: il 70 % della popolazione è disoccupato e la maggior parte vive con meno di 2 dollari al giorno.

Il 12 gennaio 2010 un terremoto di magnitudine 7.0 ha devastato il Paese, provocando 230 000 morti, 300 000 feriti e 1 300 000 senza tetto. Lo stesso anno, in ottobre, si è registrata una delle più violente epidemie di colera al mondo, con 651 339 casi di cui 8 053 mortali. Nel 2012 il Paese è stato colpito dalla tempesta tropicale Isaac e poi dall'uragano Sandy.

Per quanto riguarda gli aiuti dagli altri Paesi, sono arrivati circa 7,5 miliardi di dollari, ma risulta che solo l'1 % dei fondi raccolti per l'emergenza sanitaria e il 10 % di quelli per la ricostruzione sono arrivati allo Stato. La maggior parte dei soldi è stata versata sui conti di ONG internazionali, Banca Mondiale, Nazioni Unite, *Inter-America Development Bank* e società di consulenza, e imprese di costruzioni occidentali. Solamente queste organizzazioni sanno come sono stati spesi i soldi e non devono renderne conto a nessuno. Oltre a ciò, un ulteriore problema è rappresentato dal fatto che i flussi di aiuti internazionali rientrano in Europa o negli Usa, in quanto le società che si aggiudicano i bandi per la ricostruzione sono quasi sempre straniere. Inoltre, si sottolinea che c'è stato molto lavoro nella fase di emergenza, ma che successivamente la maggior parte delle ONG ha lasciato il paese.

Considerato che:

- Haiti è un paese martoriato da instabilità, violenza, povertà, analfabetismo e deforestazione, e che quattro anni dopo il terremoto la ricostruzione sembra appena cominciata;
- dal 2010 ad aprile 2013 l'UE ha stanziato 213 milioni di EUR di finanziamenti per l'assistenza umanitaria diretta a tale Paese;
- non è stato tuttavia possibile reperire informazioni precise sul rendiconto dei programmi realizzati ad Haiti,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Quali azioni di monitoraggio sono state effettuate sui finanziamenti ad Haiti?
2. Quali sono stati i risultati raggiunti?
3. È possibile ottenere un rendiconto dettagliato di tutte le attività poste in essere dall'UE in tale Paese?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione

(27 novembre 2013)

I finanziamenti dell'UE ad Haiti comprendono sia assistenza umanitaria che aiuti allo sviluppo. La delegazione dell'UE e l'ufficio ECHO ad Haiti controllano l'attuazione dei progetti dell'Unione. Ogni anno vengono eseguite missioni di verifica esterne, come anche missioni di audit e valutazione di ciascun programma di sviluppo al suo completamento.

Le schede d'azione di tutti i programmi di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE sono pubblicate sul sito web di EuropeAid⁽¹⁾ e informazioni sulle attività dell'UE e sul loro impatto sono disponibili sul sito della delegazione dell'UE⁽²⁾. Attualmente è in corso una valutazione globale della sostenibilità, dell'impatto, della pertinenza, dell'efficienza e dell'efficacia della cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'Unione europea ad Haiti dal 2008 al 2012; la relazione di valutazione sarà pubblicata sul sito web di EuropeAid nel secondo trimestre del 2014.

La realizzazione delle operazioni finanziate dalla DG Aiuti umanitari prevede diversi livelli di verifica e controllo lungo tutto il ciclo del progetto, tra cui: un'accurata selezione dei partner; l'identificazione delle azioni da finanziare in base al grado di necessità; il monitoraggio di progetti sul campo e a livello della sede centrale; valutazioni esterne; audit finanziario sul campo e a livello della sede centrale.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/country-cooperation/haiti/haiti_en.htm

⁽²⁾ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/haiti/index_fr.htm

Una valutazione delle azioni umanitarie sostenute dall'UE nel periodo 2009-2011 è stata effettuata nel 2011. Ulteriori dettagli sulle attività finanziate sono disponibili nelle relazioni annuali della Direzione generale per gli Aiuti umanitari e la protezione civile ⁽³⁾.

Informazioni in generale sui finanziamenti dei donatori e sui pagamenti sono disponibili anche sul sito web dell'Inviato Speciale delle Nazioni Unite ad Haiti ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/caribbean_pacific/haiti_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.lessonsfromhaiti.org>

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011633/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Reporting of EU funding for Haiti

Haiti is the poorest country in the Americas: 70% of the population is unemployed and most people live on less than USD 2 a day.

On 12 January 2010, a magnitude 7.0 earthquake devastated the country, leaving 230 000 dead, 300 000 injured and 1.3 million homeless. October of the same year saw an outbreak of one of the most virulent epidemics of cholera in the world, with 651 339 cases, 8 053 of which were fatal. In 2012, the country was hit by Tropical Storm Isaac and subsequently by Hurricane Sandy.

Other countries have given approximately USD 7.5 billion in aid, but only 1% of funds collected for the health emergency and 10% of those for reconstruction have reached the State. Most of the money was paid into the accounts of international NGOs, the World Bank, the United Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank, consultancy firms and Western construction companies. Only these organisations know how the money was spent, and they are accountable to no one. Furthermore, there is an additional problem insofar as international aid flows come back to Europe or the US since the companies which are awarded the reconstruction contracts are almost always foreign. Moreover, it should be stressed that there was a great deal of work during the emergency, but subsequently, most NGOs left the country.

— Haiti is a country beset by instability, violence, poverty, illiteracy and deforestation, and four years after the earthquake, reconstruction appears to have only just begun.

— Between 2010 and April 2013, the EU allocated EUR 213 million to fund direct humanitarian assistance in this country.

— It has not, however, been possible to find precise information on the reporting of programmes carried out in Haiti.

1. How has funding to Haiti been monitored?
2. What were the results?
3. Is it possible to obtain a detailed report of all the activities carried out by the EU in this country?

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

EU funding to Haiti includes both humanitarian and development assistance. The EU Delegation and ECHO office in Haiti monitor the implementation of EU projects. External monitoring missions are carried out annually, including the audit and evaluation of each development programme after completion.

The action fiches for all EU development cooperation programmes are published on EuropeAid's website ⁽¹⁾ and information on the EU's activities and their impact is to be found on the EU Delegation's website ⁽²⁾. A comprehensive evaluation is currently being carried out on the sustainability, impact, relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of EU development cooperation to Haiti from 2008-2012. The evaluation report is expected to be published on EuropeAid's website in the 2nd quarter of 2014.

The implementation of Humanitarian Aid funded operations is ensured through several layers of checks and controls throughout the project cycle. This includes: strict selection of partners; needs-based criteria for the identification of actions to be funded; monitoring of projects at field and HQ levels; external evaluations; financial audits at field and HQ levels.

An evaluation of EU supported humanitarian actions in 2009-2011 was carried out in 2011. Further details on activities funded can be found in the annual Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection reports ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/country-cooperation/haiti/haiti_en.htm

⁽²⁾ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/haiti/index_fr.htm

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/caribbean_pacific/haiti_en.htm

Information on overall donor funding and disbursement is also available on the website of the UN Special Envoy to Haiti ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽⁴⁾ <http://www.lessonsfromhaiti.org/>

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011634/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Rigassificatori e strategia energetica comune

L'Italia punta a diventare il più importante polo sud-europeo del gas naturale, attraverso il suo piano di Strategia energetica nazionale (SEN). Le previsioni per il 2020 delineano un aumento dei consumi di gas naturale in Europa da 528 a 575 Sgm³/anno e una riduzione della produzione da 21 a 13 Sgm³/anno.

Per poter raggiungere tale obiettivo, indispensabile per l'Italia come per l'Europa, sono in costruzione diversi rigassificatori al largo delle coste italiane, che per entrare in funzione a costi competitivi di mercato devono accedere al regime regolato dell'energia e beneficiare di un fattore di garanzia.

Questo perché il costo dell'infrastruttura stessa viene determinato da una stima nei piani di infrastrutture dello Stato, ma per i benefici il calcolo è più complesso: per verificare se l'investimento è giustificabile si effettua una stima dell'abbassamento del prezzo di mercato della materia prima all'iniezione di nuova liquidità.

Considerato che:

- queste stime necessarie per le valutazioni infrastrutturali diventano sempre più volatili ed arbitrarie e le ultime analisi hanno rilevato come il costo di arbitraggio fisico dato dal costo di trasporto del gas scambiato col Nord Europa si sia ridotto fino ad annullarsi (come rilevato nella relazione europea sui mercati del gas della DG Energia), rendendo alcuni rigassificatori in costruzione economicamente non sostenibili;
- i costi dell'energia, influenzati in maniera consistente dal mercato del gas, incidono in misura oltremodo rilevante sui costi che le industrie devono sostenere per produrre nei paesi europei (fino a 4 volte tanto che negli USA);

può la Commissione far sapere:

se ritiene necessario rivedere la priorità ed urgenza dei programmi sulla super rete intelligente (Super Smart Grid) che, oltre ad abbattere i costi di produzione ed al consumo, allevierebbero le centrali attuali di carichi degradanti?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(6 dicembre 2013)

Contrariamente a quanto accade nel settore dell'energia elettrica, le reti intelligenti suscitano un debole interesse nel settore del gas, in particolare a causa dell'incertezza dei costi e dei benefici. Uno studio realizzato dall'industria del gas e dai gestori delle reti nell'ambito della task force per le reti intelligenti è giunto alla conclusione che le reti intelligenti del gas non possono essere sviluppate isolatamente, ma devono essere collegate alle reti intelligenti dell'energia elettrica di prossima costruzione e favorire un uso accorto dell'energia, ad esempio nella cogenerazione (PCCE), nel riscaldamento e nel raffreddamento. Perché gli investimenti nelle reti intelligenti generino pieni benefici pare tuttavia necessario che il settore evolva ulteriormente.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011634/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Regasification plants and the common energy strategy

Italy aims to become the most important southern European hub for natural gas, through its National Energy Strategy (NES). Forecasts predict an increase in natural gas consumption in Europe from 528 to 575 Gm³/year by 2020, and a reduction in production from 21 to 13 Gm³/year.

To meet this objective, essential both for Italy and for Europe, various regasification plants are being built off Italy's coasts. In order to become operational with competitive market costs, they must operate under the regulated energy system and benefit from an 'income guarantee'.

This is because the cost of the actual infrastructure is decided by an estimate in the State's infrastructure plans, but it is more complicated to calculate the benefits: to check whether the investment is justifiable, an estimate is made of the reduction in the market price of the raw material when new capital is injected.

Given that:

- these estimates, necessary to make valuations of the infrastructure, are becoming increasingly more volatile and arbitrary, and the latest analyses show that the cost of arbitrage, determined by the cost of transporting gas traded with northern Europe, has fallen to zero (as established by the Directorate-General for Energy's Report on European Gas Markets), meaning that certain regasification plants under construction are not economically sustainable;
- energy costs, significantly influenced by the gas market, have a huge impact on the costs that industry has to bear in order to manufacture in European countries (up to four times as much as in the US);

does the Commission believe it necessary to review the priority and urgency of Super Smart Grid programmes which, in addition to cutting production and consumption costs, would relieve current plants of harmful materials?

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

Contrary to the high support given by the power sector to the electricity smart grids, the interest of the gas industry in smart gas grids seems to be much lower, especially due to cost and benefits uncertainties. A study conducted by the gas industry and network operators under the Smart Grid Task Force concluded that smart gas grids cannot be developed in isolation but should be linked to future electricity smart grids and should facilitate smart energy utilisation, e.g. in cogeneration(CHP), heating and cooling. However, further development seems to be necessary to ensure fully exploitation of the requested smart grids investments.

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011635/13
a la Comisión**

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

(11 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Denegación de visados a médicos de Kosovo para asistir a un congreso internacional de anestesiología en España — Régimen de visados en la EU

Veinte médicos de Kosovo no pudieron asistir en el mes de junio a un congreso internacional de anestesiología en Barcelona. La diplomacia española no se lo permitió porque eran ciudadanos de un Estado que España no reconocía.

El Gobierno español ha explicado en el Congreso de los Diputados las razones por las que se denegaba la entrada de estos anestesistas diciendo que los consulados españoles ni siquiera tramitan las demandas de visado porque son ciudadanos de un Estado que para España no existe ⁽¹⁾.

En el documento de respuesta entregado a un diputado en el Congreso español, el Gobierno dice que solo concede «visados de validez territorial limitada» en casos excepcionales, como cuando existe una razón humanitaria, una razón de interés nacional o alguna similar.

El Parlamento Europeo aprobó el de 18 de abril de 2013 una Resolución sobre el proceso de integración europea de Kosovo ⁽²⁾.

En las conclusiones de las reuniones del Consejo de Asuntos Generales de 7 de diciembre de 2009, de 14 de diciembre de 2010 y de 5 de diciembre de 2011 se subraya y reafirma que Kosovo, sin perjuicio de la posición de los Estados miembros sobre su estatuto, debe también beneficiarse de la perspectiva de la posible liberalización del régimen de visados cuando se cumplan todas las condiciones, y se celebra el inicio de un diálogo sobre visados en enero de 2012 y la presentación de una hoja de ruta para la liberalización de visados en junio de 2012.

98 de los 193 Estados miembros de las Naciones Unidas, incluidos 22 de los 27 Estados miembros de la UE, reconocen la independencia de Kosovo.

¿Piensa la Comisión que es normal que los ciudadanos de Kosovo puedan obtener visados a través de la UE pero no en España, teniendo en cuenta las próximas negociaciones de adhesión a la UE?

¿Es la Comisión consciente de esta situación? ¿Qué medidas va a tomar la Comisión para resolver esta situación?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión

(4 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión es consciente de la situación a la que se enfrentan los ciudadanos de Kosovo que desean viajar a España. La Comisión está estudiando actualmente la interpretación y aplicación que las autoridades españolas hacen de la política común de visados, para comprobar si están en consonancia con las disposiciones legales.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.vilaweb.cat/noticia/4148843/20131010/lestat-espanyol-considera-kosovesos-ciutadans-normals.html>

⁽²⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0187+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011635/13
to the Commission**

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Refusal of visas to doctors from Kosovo to attend an international anaesthesiology conference in Spain — Visa system in the EU

Twenty doctors from Kosovo were unable to attend an international anaesthesiology conference held in Barcelona in June. Spanish diplomats did not allow it because they were nationals of a state not recognised by Spain.

The Spanish Government explained in the Congress of Deputies the reasons for these anaesthetists being denied entry, saying that Spanish consulates do not even process such visa applications because they are for nationals of a state that, as far as Spain is concerned, does not exist ⁽¹⁾.

In the answer given to a member of the Spanish Congress, the Government says that it only grants 'visas with limited territorial validity' in exceptional cases, such as for humanitarian reasons, reasons of national interest, or similar.

On 18 April 2013, Parliament adopted a resolution on the European integration process of Kosovo ⁽²⁾.

The conclusions of meetings of the General Affairs Council on 7 December 2009, 14 December 2010 and 5 December 2011 highlight and reaffirm that Kosovo, without prejudice to the position taken by Member States on its statute, should also benefit from the prospect of possible liberalisation of the visa system when all conditions are met. Talks on visas were begun in January 2012 and a roadmap for visa liberalisation was presented in June 2012.

Ninety-eight of the 193 Member States of the United Nations, including 22 of the 27 EU Member States, recognise Kosovo's independence.

Does the Commission find it normal that Kosovar citizens can obtain visas through the EU but not in Spain, in view of the forthcoming negotiations on accession to the EU?

Is the Commission aware of this situation? What steps will the Commission take to resolve this situation?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission

(4 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the situation which Kosovar nationals wishing to travel to Spain face. The Commission is currently examining the Spanish authorities' interpretation and implementation of the common visa policy to verify whether they are in line with the legal provisions.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.vilaweb.cat/noticia/4148843/20131010/lestat-espanyol-considera-kosovesos-ciutadans-normals.html>

⁽²⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2013-0187+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES>

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011636/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(11. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Pferdesteuer in Höhe von 20 % pro Monat ab 1.1.2014

Medienberichten zufolge ist ab 1.1.2014 eine Änderung der Besteuerung von Betrieben mit Reitpferden oder Vermietung von Pferdeeinstellplätzen vorgesehen. Die Begründung der Kommission lautet: Die Pferdehaltung rein zum Reiten sowie das Vermieten von Pferdeboxen würden nicht unter die Tätigkeiten der Land- und Forstwirtschaft fallen. Für kleine Betriebe, die bis zu fünf eigene bzw. vermietete Reitpferde haben, wird es keine steuerlichen Änderungen geben — „größere“ Betriebe müssten hingegen in Zukunft mit einer Erhöhung der Besteuerung um 20 % pro Monat rechnen.

1. Entspricht der oben dargestellte Sachverhalt der Realität? Wenn ja, seit wann besitzt die Kommission die Zuständigkeit, eine solche Steuer einzuführen? Liegt die Steuerhoheit nicht mehr weiterhin bei den Mitgliedstaaten?
2. Wann und wie würden die Betriebe von der Änderung der Besteuerung konkret erfahren?
3. Welche Betriebe würden genau unter die neue Besteuerung fallen? Woher kommt die willkürliche Grenze von 5 Pferden? Ist ein Reitstall mit 10 Pferden nicht auch noch ein kleiner Reitstall?
4. Wie begründet die Kommission die Gefährdung der Existenzgrundlage vieler dieser kleinen Betriebe?
5. Sind auch Vereine von der Besteuerung betroffen?
6. Reitsportbegeisterte sind zu 75 % unter 21 Jahre alt. Der Pferdereitsport ermöglicht Jugendlichen Bewegung in der Natur und Kontakt zu Tieren. Die anfallenden Mehrkosten würden vermutlich auf die Verbraucher abgewälzt, Reiten würde damit teurer. Konterkariert dies nicht die Pläne der Kommission, Jugendlichen Bewegung im Freien näher zu bringen?

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

Mangels genauerer Angaben, anhand deren sie die erforderlichen Nachforschungen zu dem angesprochenen Problem vornehmen könnte, kann die Kommission die Frage zurzeit nicht beantworten. Es wäre hilfreich, genaue Angaben darüber zu erhalten, um welche Art von Steuer (Ertragssteuer, Mehrwertsteuer oder eine andere indirekte Steuer, Gewerbesteuer, Kommunalsteuer ...) und um welchen Mitgliedstaat es sich handelt. Die Kommission bittet den Herrn Abgeordneten um nähere Erläuterungen zu der Anfrage.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011636/13
to the Commission**

Franz Obermayr (NI)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Horse tax of 20%/month from 1 January 2014

According to media reports, from 1 January 2014 there is to be a change in the taxation of companies that own horses for riding or rent accommodation for horses. The Commission's justification is that the activities of renting out horseboxes and keeping horses purely for riding will not come within the activities of agriculture and forestry. For small businesses that have up to five of their own or rented horses for riding, there are to be no tax changes — 'larger' companies, on the other hand, will face a tax rise of 20% per month.

1. Does the description above match the reality? If so, since when has the Commission had the competence to introduce such a tax? Is the raising of taxes no longer a competence of the Member States?
2. When and how will these businesses know for certain about the changes in taxation?
3. Exactly which companies will be subject to the new taxation? What is the reasoning behind the random threshold of five horses? Is it not the case that a 10-horse riding stable is still a small one?
4. How does the Commission justify the existential threat posed to many of these small businesses?
5. Will clubs also be subject to this tax?
6. Seventy-five per cent of riding enthusiasts are aged under 21. Horse-riding allows young people the chance to be active in the natural environment and provides contact with animals. It is to be expected that the additional costs incurred would be passed on to customers, thereby pushing up the cost of riding. Does this not run counter to the Commission's plans to promote outdoor exercise by young people?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M Šemeta au nom de la Commission

(22 novembre 2013)

En l'absence de précisions qui permettent à la Commission d'effectuer les recherches nécessaires sur le problème évoqué, la Commission regrette de ne pas pouvoir répondre pour le moment à la question. En effet, il serait utile de préciser le type de taxe en cause (taxe sur le résultat, TVA ou autre taxe indirecte, taxe locale...) ainsi que l'État membre concerné. La Commission prie dès lors l'Honorable Parlementaire de bien vouloir en préciser davantage le libellé.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011637/13

an die Kommission

Franz Obermayr (NI)

(11. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Safe-Harbor-Verfahren — Konzerne täuschen EU-Bürger beim Datenschutz

Eine Studie der Datenschutz-Beratungsfirma Galexia, welche im September 2013 veröffentlicht wurde, warnt europäische Kunden vor der Unsicherheit des Safe-Harbor-Abkommens. Eigentlich sollte das sogenannte Safe-Harbor-Abkommen Datenschutzstandards bei der Verwendung personenbezogener Daten von EU-Bürgern durch amerikanische IT-Unternehmen sicherstellen. Bedauerlicherweise sieht die Realität aber offenbar anders aus: Bei knapp 3 000 untersuchten US-Firmen, welche sich dem Safe-Harbor-Abkommen unterworfen haben, wurden 427 Verstöße dagegen gefunden. Ungefähr 30 % der untersuchten Firmen teilen ihren Kunden zudem nicht mit, wie das Verfahren bei Verstößen abläuft oder an wen man sich wenden muss. Andere wiederum verweisen ihre EU-Kunden in den Nutzungsbedingungen an Organisationen, die gegen Entgelt (!) Beschwerden entgegennehmen.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Ist der Kommission die oben erwähnte Untersuchung bekannt? Hat die Kommission selbst ähnliche Untersuchungen zur tatsächlichen Umsetzung des Safe-Harbor Abkommens durchgeführt oder in Auftrag gegeben? Wenn ja, mit welchen Ergebnissen? Wenn nein, warum nicht?
2. Wie steht die Kommission zu den aufgezeigten Missständen?
3. Wie kann eine effektive Umsetzung und Kontrolle der Einhaltung der Safe-Harbor-Datenschutzregeln sichergestellt werden?
4. Gibt es Bestrebungen seitens der Kommission, das gegenständliche Abkommen angesichts der groben Verstöße amerikanischer IT-Unternehmen neu zu verhandeln?
5. Sieht die Kommission angesichts dieser Missstände die Notwendigkeit, wirklich abschreckende finanzielle Sanktionen für IT-Unternehmen in die Datenschutzgrundverordnung aufzunehmen? (Umso mehr vor dem Hintergrund des NSA-Skandals) Wenn ja, in welcher Höhe?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission

(28. November 2013)

Die Studie Galexia ist der Kommission bekannt. Die Kommission arbeitet derzeit ihre Bewertung der Safe Harbor Vereinbarung aus und wird sie vor Ende 2013 vorlegen.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011637/13
to the Commission**

Franz Obermayr (NI)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Safe Harbor procedure — companies mislead EU citizens on data protection

A study by the data protection consultants Galexia published in September 2013 warns European customers of the unreliability of the Safe Harbor Agreement. The Safe Harbor Agreement is actually intended to guarantee data protection standards when US IT firms use the personal data of EU citizens. Unfortunately, the reality is manifestly somewhat different: among the almost 3 000 US firms studied that had signed up to the Safe Harbor Agreement, 427 infringements of the agreement were uncovered. What is more, roughly 30% of the companies in the study do not inform their customers of what happens under the procedure in the event of infringements or to whom to report such infringements. Others, meanwhile, direct their EU customers, in their terms of use, to organisations that handle complaints for a fee(!).

1. Is the Commission familiar with the study referred to above? Has the Commission itself carried out or commissioned similar studies into the implementation of the Safe Harbor Agreement in practice? If so, what were the results? If not, why not?
2. What is the Commission's view of the shortcomings that have been identified?
3. How can effective implementation and monitoring of compliance with the Safe Harbor data protection rules be ensured?
4. Is the Commission taking steps to re-negotiate the current agreement in light of the major breaches by US IT firms?
5. In light of these shortcomings, does it see the need to adopt truly deterrent financial sanctions for IT firms in the General Data Protection Regulation (all the more so given the NSA scandal)? If so, at what level should they be set?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission

(28 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of the Galexia study. The Commission is currently preparing its assessment of the Safe Harbour arrangement and will present it before the end of 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011638/13

an die Kommission

Franz Obermayr (NI)

(11. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Schutz europäischer Zugvögel in Ägypten — Tierquälerei und Bedrohung der Vogelpopulation

Ein deutsches Filmteam des Bayrischen Rundfunks veröffentlichte im September 2013 einen erschreckenden Bericht über ein millionenfaches Töten von europäischen Zugvögeln in Ägypten ⁽¹⁾.

Mehr als 700 Kilometer lange Vogelfangnetze sind entlang der ägyptischen Mittelmeerküste aufgespannt. Mindestens zehn Millionen Zugvögel werden hier jeden Herbst gefangen gehalten. Die gefangenen Vögel werden eingesammelt und anschließend deren Flügel gebrochen, damit sie nicht mehr fliegen können — umgebracht werden sie erst später. Dabei hat auch Ägypten die Bonner Konvention (CMS), welche den Schutz von wandernden Tieren gewährleisten sollte, unterzeichnet.

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Ist der Kommission die oben dargestellte Praxis bekannt? Wenn ja, gibt es eine diesbezügliche Stellungnahme?
2. Das politische Chaos in Ägypten erleichtert die illegale Jagd. Gedenkt die Kommission, Druck auf die ägyptische Regierung auszuüben, um die illegale Jagd einzudämmen und eine nachhaltige Jagd, die den Bestand der Populationen sichert, einzuführen bzw. zu gewährleisten? Wenn ja, wie?
3. Wie kann die ägyptische Regierung zur Einhaltung der Bonner Konvention zum Schutz wandernder Tierarten bewegt werden? Welche Möglichkeiten gibt es auf internationaler Ebene?
4. Wird sich die Kommission dafür einsetzen, dass die ägyptische Regierung den neuen Aktionsplan zum Schutz Eurasisch-Afrikanischer ziehender Landvögel (AEMLAP) unterzeichnet und umsetzt?

Antwort von Herrn Potočník im Namen der Kommission

(29. November 2013)

1. Der Kommission ist das Problem des Tötens von Vögeln in Ägypten bekannt. Sie hat für den Umgang mit derartigen Fragen in Drittstaaten aber keinerlei rechtliche Befugnisse.

2. Aufgrund der aktuellen politischen Lage in Ägypten verzögern sich die normalen Abläufe der bilateralen Kontakte zu Umweltbelangen und damit zusammenhängenden Fragen. Die Kommission wird dieses Thema jedoch in der nächsten Sitzung zur Sprache bringen und in der Zwischenzeit die EU-Delegation auffordern, einen ersten Kontakt mit der ägyptischen Regierung herzustellen.

3./4. Ägypten ist Vertragspartei des Übereinkommens zur Erhaltung der wandernden wildlebenden Tierarten (CMS) und des Abkommens zur Erhaltung der afrikanisch-eurasischen wandernden Wasservögel (AEWA). Als Vertragspartei ist es rechtlich verpflichtet, für die Einhaltung von CMS und AEWA zu sorgen, die u. a. die Erhaltung wandernder Tierarten in ihrem gesamten Lebensraum auf dem Land, im Wasser und in der Luft zum Ziel haben. Es liegt im alleinigen Ermessen der ägyptischen Regierung, den Aktionsplan zum Schutz eurasisch-afrikanischer ziehender Landvögel (AEMLAP) zu unterzeichnen.

⁽¹⁾ http://og-bayern.de/?page_id=3116

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011638/13
to the Commission**

Franz Obermayr (NI)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Protection of European migratory birds in Egypt — animal cruelty and threat to the bird population

In September 2013, a German film crew from the Bavarian public broadcaster *Bayrischer Rundfunk* released a shocking report on the killing of millions of European migratory birds in Egypt ⁽¹⁾.

Over 700 km of bird nets are hung along Egypt's Mediterranean coast. At least 10 million migrating birds are caught in these nets each autumn. The birds caught are collected and then have their wings broken so that they cannot fly away — they are not killed until later. In this connection, Egypt, too, has signed the Bonn Convention (The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, or CMS), which is supposed to protect migratory creatures.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the practice described above? If so, has it issued an opinion in this regard?
2. The political chaos in Egypt facilitates illegal hunting. Does the Commission plan to apply pressure to the Egyptian Government to contain illegal hunting and introduce and safeguard a sustainable form of hunting that ensures the survival of bird populations? If so, how?
3. How can the Egyptian Government be pushed to comply with the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals? What options are there at international level?
4. Will the Commission take steps to ensure that the Egyptian Government signs and implements the new African-Eurasia Migratory Landbird Action Plan (AEMLAP)?

Answer given by Mr Potočník on behalf of the Commission

(29 November 2013)

1. The Commission is aware of the issue of the killing of birds in Egypt. The Commission has no legal competence to deal with such issues in a non-Member State.
 2. Due to the current political situation in the country the normal cycle of bilateral contacts with Egypt on environmental and related issues has been delayed. The Commission will however take up this issue in the next meeting and in the meantime will request that the EU Delegation makes a first contact with the Egyptian Government.
- 3 and 4. Egypt is Party to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). As a Party it is legally obliged to ensure compliance with CMS and AEWA, *inter alia*, aiming at conservation of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range. It remains the sole discretion of the Egyptian Government to sign the African-Eurasia Migratory Action Plan (AEMLAP).

⁽¹⁾ http://og-bayern.de/?page_id=3116

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011639/13

alla Commissione

Mara Bizzotto (EFD)

(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Introduzione della nuova tassa «Rifiuti e servizi» in Italia: imprese a rischio

La legge n. 2014 del 22 dicembre 2011 ha introdotto in Italia la TARES (tassa rifiuti e servizi), in sostituzione della tariffa di igiene ambientale (TIA) e della tassa per lo smaltimento dei rifiuti solidi urbani (TARSU).

Secondo l'analisi svolta da Rete Imprese Italia, la nuova imposta colpirà fortemente il tessuto economico del paese e, soprattutto, le attività del commercio e dell'artigianato. Dallo studio dei dati risulta che la tariffa è aumentata del 4,9 % rispetto al marzo 2012, del 22,1 % nel periodo 2008-2013 e, se raffrontati gli ultimi 10 anni, del 56,6 %.

Gli aumenti maggiori, per come è strutturata ora tale imposta, ricadranno sulle attività artigianali: i produttori di pasta +93 %, i panificatori +93,6 %, le pizzerie al taglio +301 %, i laboratori di pasticceria +181,7 %.

La Commissione:

1. è al corrente dei fatti sopra esposti?
2. Può fornire dati in merito all'aumento delle tariffe rifiuti nella zona euro e negli Stati membri, negli ultimi 10 anni?
3. Alla luce della crisi economica che investe l'Italia e del fatto che, nel primo quadrimestre del 2013, 4.218 imprese hanno dovuto chiudere in Italia, cioè il 13 % in più rispetto allo stesso periodo nel 2012, la Commissione non ritiene che un'imposta di questo tipo sia, di fatto, contraria agli obiettivi di aumento dell'occupazione e di uscita dalla crisi delineati nella strategia Europa 2020?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione

(3 dicembre 2013)

Il controllo sulle decisioni nazionali relative alla spesa e alle entrate è di competenza delle autorità nazionali. La Commissione sorveglia la conformità agli obiettivi di bilancio stabiliti nel trattato e nel diritto derivato, in particolare il patto di stabilità e crescita.

La Commissione sorveglia inoltre la conformità alle raccomandazioni formulate dal Consiglio nel contesto del semestre europeo. Nel luglio 2013 il Consiglio ha tra l'altro raccomandato all'Italia di trasferire il carico fiscale dal lavoro e dal capitale ai consumi, ai beni immobili e all'ambiente assicurando la neutralità di bilancio.

La raccomandazione si è basata sulla valutazione che, mentre a breve e medio termine ridurre l'onere fiscale complessivo non è possibile a causa delle attuali ristrettezze di bilancio, il trasferimento del carico fiscale contribuirebbe a ridurre gli effetti distorsivi della tassazione, dato che le imposte sull'ambiente, sui beni immobili e sui consumi sono considerate meno dannose per la crescita. Questo approccio e le relative raccomandazioni sono stati approvati dal Consiglio, come indicato sopra.

La relazione della Commissione *Taxation Trends in the European Union* (edizione 2013, http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2013/report.pdf) comprende i dati relativi alle imposte sull'inquinamento/risorse, tra cui imposte sulle emissioni misurate o stimate nell'aria e nell'acqua, gestione dei rifiuti solidi e dell'inquinamento acustico, nonché ogni altra imposta legata all'estrazione o all'uso di risorse naturali. In Italia nel 2011 questa categoria corrispondeva a meno dello 0,1 % delle entrate fiscali complessive, e rappresentava la 7ª quota più bassa tra gli Stati membri dell'UE e meno di 1/3 della media UE. Nel decennio precedente la quota è rimasta sostanzialmente stabile in Italia mentre è aumentata di 0,1 punti percentuali nell'UE.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011639/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(11 October 2013)**

Subject: Introduction of the new 'Waste and Services' tax in Italy: businesses at risk

In Italy, Law No 14 of 22 December 2011 introduced the waste and services tax (TARES), replacing the environmental hygiene tax (TIA) and the municipal solid waste disposal tax (TARSU).

According to the analysis performed by Rete Imprese Italia, the new tax will heavily impact the economic fabric of the country, especially the business and crafts sectors. Study data show that the tax has increased by 4.9% since March 2012, 22.1% over the period 2008-2013, and 56.6% over the last 10 years.

As this tax is currently structured, the largest increases will hit the crafts sector: pasta makers +93%, bakers +93.6%, pizzerias +301%, and pastry shops +181.7%.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

Can it provide data on the increase of waste taxes in the euro area and the Member States over the past 10 years?

In light of the economic crisis affecting Italy and the fact that 4 218 companies were forced to close in Italy during the first quarter of 2013 — 13% more than the same period in 2012 — does the Commission believe that a tax of this kind is actually contrary to the objectives of increased employment and recovery from the crisis, as outlined in the Europe 2020 strategy?

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

Control over national expenditure and revenue decisions is the competence of national authorities. The Commission monitors compliance with the budgetary targets set out in the Treaty and secondary legislation, in particular the Stability and Growth Pact.

The Commission also monitors compliance with the recommendations issued by the Council in the context of the European semester. In July 2013 the Council recommended Italy — among others — to shift the tax burden from labour and capital to consumption, property and the environment in a budgetary neutral manner.

The recommendation was based on the assessment that, while in the short to medium term reducing the overall tax burden is not an option under the current budgetary constraints the tax shift would help reducing the distortionary effects of taxation, as taxes on the environment, property and consumption are considered to be less detrimental to growth. This approach and the recommendation were endorsed by the Council, as written above.

The Commission report 'Taxation Trends in the European Union' (2013 edition, http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_structures/2013/report.pdf) includes data for pollution/resource taxes, including taxes on measured or estimated emissions to air and water, management of solid waste and noise, as well as any tax linked to extraction or use of a natural resource. In Italy, this category amounted to less than 0.1% of total taxation revenues in 2011, the 7th lowest shares among EU member states and less than 1/3 of the EU average. In Italy the share remained broadly stable over the previous 10 years while it increased by 0.1 pp in the EU as a whole.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011640/13

alla Commissione

Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)

(11 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Misure comunitarie di contrasto alle conseguenze dell'utilizzo dell'amianto

L'amianto (o asbesto) è un materiale molto utilizzato nel settore manifatturiero. Il suo impiego, tuttavia, è andato incontro a una serie di limitazioni normative, quantomeno nei paesi avanzati, dalla fine del XX secolo a causa delle gravi patologie che l'esposizione all'amianto può provocare. Il legame diretto tra le malattie correlate all'amianto e l'utilizzo di tale minerale è, però, stato scoperto con notevole ritardo, se si considera che il materiale era già adoperato nelle antiche civiltà romane e greche in virtù della sua abbondanza nel territorio e delle sue proprietà. L'amianto, infatti, annovera tra le sue caratteristiche una marcata resistenza alla corrosione, agli sforzi di trazione e all'usura, stabilità agli agenti chimici e fisici, isolamento sonoro e, in particolare, isolamento termico e resistenza al calore. Queste qualità hanno fatto sì che l'amianto sia stato molto utilizzato, soprattutto negli anni di boom economico successivi alla fine della seconda guerra mondiale, nella costruzione, ad esempio, di palestre, scuole, tubazioni, impianti di riscaldamento e condizionamento, abbigliamento ignifugo, autobus, treni, impianti frenanti.

Considerata la portata dell'utilizzo dell'amianto nei decenni passati nelle più disparate attività manifatturiere e che la popolazione di tutti i paesi può essere ritenuta potenzialmente esposta e, conseguentemente, suscettibile di contrarre patologie correlate all'amianto, tra cui il mesotelioma maligno, caratterizzato da un elevato periodo di latenza e un altissimo indice di mortalità,

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se ritiene opportuno predisporre un piano di intervento coordinato a livello dell'Unione per contrastare efficacemente le problematiche derivanti dall'utilizzo per lungo tempo dell'amianto?
2. Su quali fronti intende intervenire in priorità, giacché il problema dell'amianto ha ripercussioni sul piano sanitario, ambientale ed economico?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione

(9 dicembre 2013)

Sono stati effettuati soltanto pochi tentativi di quantificare l'incidenza globale del mesotelioma (provocato dall'amianto), principalmente a causa del fatto che si tratta di una tipologia di tumore relativamente rara e in molti paesi del mondo non riscontrata.

In conseguenza di ciò, il mesotelioma non è presente nella banca dati sull'incidenza del cancro e sulla mortalità mondiale pubblicata dall'Agenzia internazionale per la ricerca sul cancro (IARC). Tuttavia, secondo una stima del progetto RARECARE ⁽¹⁾ (mirato alla sorveglianza dei tumori rari in Europa), che si avvale del sostegno del programma europeo per la salute, nell'Unione europea vi sarebbero ogni anno 8 009 nuovi casi di mesotelioma pleurico e pericardico e 7 912 decessi. La stima si basa su dati raccolti da RARECARE dai registri dei tumori relativamente a pazienti che hanno ricevuto la diagnosi fra il 1978 e il 2002; le informazioni sullo stato in vita sono aggiornate fino al dicembre 2003 ed oltre.

La Commissione ha inoltre lanciato, nel quadro del programma per la salute, l'iniziativa «Support to an information network on lung mesothelioma», volta a fornire sostegno a una rete di informazione sul mesotelioma polmonare. L'obiettivo è quello di sostenere la nascita di una rete di informazione incentrata sulle migliori pratiche per il trattamento del mesotelioma polmonare.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims.asp>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011640/13
to the Commission
Fabrizio Bertot (PPE)
(11 October 2013)**

Subject: EU measures to tackle the consequences of asbestos use

Asbestos is a commonly used material in manufacturing. However, since the late 20th century, a series of regulatory limitations has been put upon its use (at least in advanced countries) due to the serious illnesses that asbestos exposure can cause. The direct link between asbestos-related illness and the use of this mineral was only discovered rather recently, considering that it was used in ancient Rome and Greece because of its regional abundance and its properties. In fact, asbestos is strongly resistant to corrosion, tensile stress, and wear; it is chemically and physically stable, provides sound insulation and particularly thermal insulation, and is heat-resistant. These qualities led to the widespread use of asbestos in construction, especially during the post-World War II economic boom, for example in gyms, schools, piping, heating and air conditioning systems, fire retardant clothing, buses, trains and brake systems.

Given the widespread use of asbestos in many different manufacturing activities over the past decades, the populations of all countries can be considered to have been potentially exposed and consequently susceptible to contracting asbestos-related diseases, including malignant mesothelioma, which is characterised by a long latency period and a very high mortality rate.

Does the Commission consider it appropriate to prepare an action plan coordinated at EU level to effectively deal with problems arising from the long-term use of asbestos?

Since the asbestos problem has repercussions in the areas of health, the environment and the economy, what are the Commission's priority action areas?

**Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)**

Only few attempts have been made to quantify the global incidence of mesothelioma (caused by asbestos), mainly on the grounds that it is a comparatively rare cancer and is not reported in many countries worldwide.

Consequently, mesothelioma is not included in the cancer incidence and mortality worldwide database published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). However the RARECARE (Surveillance of Rare Cancers in Europe) Project ⁽¹⁾, supported by the EU Health Programme, has estimated that for the Mesothelioma of the pleura and pericardium, an estimated number of 8 009 new cases per year and an estimated of 7 912 deaths per year could be expected in the European Union. RARECARE gathered Cancer Registries data on patients diagnosed from 1978 up to 2002, with vital status information available up to December 2003 or later.

In addition, the Commission has launched, under the Health Programme, an action to provide 'Support to an information network on lung mesothelioma'. The aim is to support the creation of an information network focusing on best practices for treatment of lung mesothelioma.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.rarecare.eu/aims/aims.asp>

(Versiunea în limba română)

**Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011642/13
adresată Comisiei**

Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE)

(11 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Măsuri privind reducerea consumului de sare

Potrivit unei comunicări publicate în data de 26 Septembrie 2013 pe site-ul Direcției Generale Sănătate și Consumatori din cadrul Comisiei Europene, consumul zilnic de sare în statele europene variază între 8 g și 12 g pe zi, valoare care depășește cu mult pragul de 5 g pe zi recomandat de către Organizația Mondială a Sănătății.

Cercetările medicale în acest domeniu au demonstrat că un consum ridicat de sare pe termen lung crește riscul de infarct sau alte afecțiuni ale inimii, atac cerebral și de cancer la stomac și poate cauza afecțiuni cronice ale rinichilor.

În concluziile sale din 8 iunie 2010 privind „Acțiunile de reducere a aportului de sare în rândul populației în vederea îmbunătățirii stării de sănătate”, Consiliul Uniunii Europene a invitat Comisia să continue abordarea sistematică de soluționare a consumului ridicat de sare la nivel european, prin punerea în aplicare a cadrului UE privind reducerea consumului de sare și să identifice în mod periodic, împreună cu statele membre, concentrațiile de sare cele mai scăzute care pot fi atinse în prezent la nivel european în diversele categorii și subcategorii de produse alimentare.

Având în vedere cele menționate mai sus, poate Comisia să ne informeze ce acțiuni a întreprins în acest domeniu în ultimele luni și care sunt măsurile pe care intenționează să le ia în viitorul apropiat?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei

(26 noiembrie 2013)

În urma mandatului din partea Consiliului ⁽¹⁾, serviciile Comisiei au pregătit un raport ⁽²⁾ în care este prezentată o analiză a situației și a acțiunilor întreprinse în UE și în statele membre în 2012, pentru perioada începând de la mijlocul anului 2008 până la jumătatea anului 2012. Acest raport a fost publicat pe pagina de internet a DG Sănătate și Consumatori (SANCO) în decembrie 2012. Activitatea Grupului la nivel înalt pentru alimentație și activitate fizică (HLG) și a Platformei de acțiune a UE privind alimentația, activitatea fizică și sănătatea (Platforma) în ceea ce privește reducerea consumului de sare a continuat în 2013 și va continua în 2014. Acțiunile lor vor aborda, de asemenea, reducerea utilizării altor substanțe nutritive selectate, cu un accent special pe grăsimile saturate. De exemplu, reuniunea Platformei din data de 28 februarie 2013 s-a axat pe reformulare și a abordat problema reducerii aportului de sare. Tema reuniunii grupului la nivel înalt din 7 februarie 2013 a fost reformularea, inclusiv în ceea ce privește sarea, iar obiectivul acestui eveniment fiind grăsimile saturate.

Activitățile viitoare vor include un studiu realizat de Centrul Comun de Cercetare referitor la standardele privind alimentația din școli în statele membre, inclusiv în ceea ce privește cantitățile de sare. Rezultatele urmează a fi dezbătute în cadrul grupului la nivel înalt. Cu toate acestea, în prezent, ar fi prematur să se prevadă eventuale acțiuni.

⁽¹⁾ La 8 iunie 2010, Consiliul Ocuparea Forței de Muncă, Politică Socială, Sănătate și Consumatori a adoptat concluzii cu privire la măsuri menite să reducă consumul de sare al populației, pentru o sănătate mai bună — JO (2010/C 305/04).

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/salt_report1_en.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011642/13
to the Commission**

Elena Oana Antonescu (PPE)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Measures aimed at reducing salt consumption

According to a communication published on 26 September 2013 on the website of the Commission's Directorate-General Health and Consumers, daily salt consumption in European states varies between 8 g and 12 g a day, a figure far exceeding the 5 g daily limit recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Medical research conducted in this area has highlighted that high, long-term consumption of salt increases the risk of heart attacks or other heart disorders, as well as of strokes and stomach cancer, and can cause chronic kidney disorders.

In its conclusions of 8 June 2010 on 'Action to reduce population salt intake for better health', the Council called on the Commission to continue its systematic approach to tackling high salt consumption at European level by implementing the EU framework on salt reduction and to regularly identify with Member States the lowest salt levels currently being achieved at EU level in the different food categories and sub-categories.

In view of the above, can the Commission tell us what actions it has taken in this area in recent months and what measures it intends to take in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission

(26 November 2013)

Following the mandate of the Council ⁽¹⁾, the Commission services compiled a report ⁽²⁾ providing an analysis of the situation and actions taken in the EU and its Member States in 2012, covering the period from mid-2008 until mid-2012. This report was published on the webpages of DG Health and Consumers (SANCO) in December 2012. The work on salt reduction in the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity (HLG) as well as in the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (Platform) continued in 2013 and will continue in 2014. The work will also address the reduction of other selected nutrients, with a special focus on saturated fat. For example, the Platform meeting on 28 February 2013 focused on reformulation and included issues of salt reduction. The topic of the HLG meeting on 7 February 2013 was reformulation, including salt, while the focus of this meeting was on saturated fat.

Future work will include a study carried out by the Joint Research Centre that will look into school meal standards in Member States, including standards in relation to salt levels. It is planned to discuss the findings in the HLG. However, it would be premature to predict any actions that may follow in the future at this point in time.

⁽¹⁾ On 8 June 2010, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council adopted conclusions on action to reduce population salt intake for better health, OJ (2010/C 305/04).

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/salt_report1_en.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-011643/13

komissiolle

Sari Essayah (PPE)

(11. lokakuuta 2013)

Aihe: Latvian juutalaisten omaisuuden takaisinlunastus

Euroopan unioni pitää ihmisoikeuksia yleismaailmallisina ja jakamattomina. Se edistää ja puolustaa ihmisoikeuksia aktiivisesti sekä rajojensa sisällä että suhteissaan ulkopuolisiin maihin. Euroopan unionin perusoikeuskirjan 17 artiklassa säädetään omaisuus oikeudesta. Sen mukaan jokaisella on oikeus nauttia laillisesti hankkimastaan omaisuudesta sekä käyttää, luovuttaa ja testamentata sitä. Keneltäkään ei saa riistää hänen omaisuuttaan paitsi yleisen edun sitä vaatiessa laissa säädetyissä tapauksissa ja laissa säädettyjen ehtojen mukaisesti ja siten, että hänelle suoritetaan kohtuullisessa ajassa oikeudenmukainen korvaus omaisuuden menetyksestä. Omaisuuden käyttöä voidaan säännellä lailla siinä määrin kuin se on yleisen edun mukaan välttämätöntä. Samoin myös Euroopan ihmisoikeussopimuksen ensimmäisen lisäpöytäkirjan 1 artiklassa säädetään omaisuuden suoja.

Neuvostoliitto valtasi Latvian kesäkuussa vuonna 1940. Myöhemmin Natsi-Saksan miehittämänä tapettiin vuosina 1941–1942 noin 80 000 Latvian juutalaista. Latvian saatua itsenäisyytensä takaisin vuonna 1991 yksilöillä, mukaan lukien juutalaisilla, oli oikeus lunastaa takaisin omaisuutta, joka heillä oli ollut ennen Neuvostoliiton valtaamista. Osa juutalaisyhteisölle kuuluvista omistusoikeuksista jäi tuolloin luovutusprosessin ulkopuolelle, eikä näitä omistusoikeuksia ole vielä palautettu tai korvattu. Latvian juutalaisneuvoston laskelmien mukaan yhteisöllä oli ollut omistusoikeus noin 270 kohteeseen ennen kuin Neuvostoliitto valtasi Latvian vuonna 1940. Omistusoikeuksien palauttaminen tai korvaaminen ei ole ratkennut Latvian valtion taholta eikä maassa ole säädettynä lakia pidätetyn omaisuuden edunpalautuksesta tilanteissa, joissa perijä ei ole tiedossa.

Minkälaisiin toimenpiteisiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä, että Euroopan unionin perusoikeuskirjan omaisuus oikeutta sekä Euroopan ihmisoikeussopimuksen omaisuuden suoja kunnioittaen Latvian juutalaisyhteisölle palautetaan tai korvataan sille kuuluvat omistusoikeudet niihin kohteisiin, joiden omistusoikeudet se menetti Neuvostoliiton hyökättyä vuonna 1940?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus

(4. joulukuuta 2013)

Euroopan unionin perussopimusten nojalla komissiolle ei ole yleisiä valtuuksia puuttua jäsenvaltioiden toimintaan. Komissio voi toimia vain, jos asia liittyy Euroopan unionin oikeuteen. Euroopan unionin perusoikeuskirjaa ei sovelleta kaikkiin tilanteisiin, joissa perusoikeuksia väitetään loukatun. Perusoikeuskirjaa sovelletaan sen 51 artiklan mukaan jäsenvaltioihin ainoastaan niiden soveltaessa unionin oikeutta. Lisäksi Euroopan unionista tehdyn sopimuksen 6 artiklan 1 kohdassa todetaan, että "perusoikeuskirjan määräykset eivät millään tavoin laajenna perussopimuksissa määriteltyä unionin toimivaltaa".

Arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen toimittamien tietojen perusteella ei vaikuta siltä, että kyseessä oleva jäsenvaltio olisi toiminut unionin lain soveltamisen aikana. Euroopan unionin toiminnasta tehdyn sopimuksen 345 artiklan mukaan perussopimuksen säännöksillä ei puututa jäsenvaltioiden omistusoikeusjärjestelmiin. Lisäksi ennen Euroopan unioniin liittymistä pakollisesti omaisuuden palauttaminen on kansalliseen toimivaltaan kuuluva asia.

Arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen esille nostamassa asiassa on siksi kyseisen jäsenvaltion vastuulla määrittää omaisuuden takaisinlunastuksen soveltamisala ja ehdot aikaisempien omistajien omistusoikeuksien palauttamiseksi kansallista ja kansainvälistä lakia sekä Euroopan ihmisoikeussopimusta noudattaen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011643/13
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Restitution of property to Latvian Jews

The European Union regards human rights as universal and indivisible. It promotes and supports human rights actively both within its own borders and in its relations with third countries. Article 17 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union enshrines the right to private property. It states that 'Everyone has the right to own, use, dispose of and bequeath his or her lawfully acquired possessions. No one may be deprived of his or her possessions, except in the public interest and in the cases and under the conditions provided for by law, subject to fair compensation being paid in good time for their loss. The use of property may be regulated by law in so far as is necessary for the general interest'. In the same way Protocol No 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights governs the protection of property.

The Soviet Union occupied Latvia in June 1940. Later, in 1941-42, when the country was occupied by Nazi Germany, some 80 000 Latvian Jews were killed. When Latvia regained its independence in 1991 individuals, including Jews, had the right to redeem property which had been taken from them by the Soviet Union. At that time the property rights of some of the Jewish community were excluded from this relinquishment process, and these rights have still not been restored or any compensation paid. According to the calculations of the Council of the Jewish Communities of Latvia, the community had held ownership rights in some 270 properties before the Soviet occupation of Latvia in 1940. The return of, or compensation for, ownership rights has not been settled by the Latvian state and no law has been enacted in Latvia concerning the restitution of seized property in situations where the owner is unknown.

What measures does the Commission propose to take to ensure that, in compliance with the right to property under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and with the European Convention on Human Rights, the ownership rights of the Latvian Jewish community are restored or compensated for in respect of properties to which it lost ownership rights following the Soviet invasion in 1940?

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

Under the Treaties on which the European Union is based, the Commission has no general powers to intervene. It can do so only if an issue of European Union law is involved. The Charter of Fundamental Rights does not apply to every situation of an alleged violation of fundamental rights. According to its Article 51, the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing European Union law. Moreover, Article 6(1) of the Treaty of the European Union states that 'the provisions of the Charter shall not extend in any way the competences of the Union as defined in the Treaties'.

On the basis of the information provided by the Honourable Member, it does not appear that the Member State concerned did act in the course of implementation of Union law. According to Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the provisions of the Treaty shall in no way prejudice the rules in Member States governing the system of property ownership. Furthermore, restitution of properties expropriated prior to the accession to the European Union is a matter which falls in principle under national competence.

In the matter referred to by the Honourable Member, it is therefore for the Member State concerned to determine the scope of property restitution and the choice of the conditions to restore the property rights of former owners, in conformity with relevant national and international law, including the European Convention on Human Rights.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011645/13

à la Commission

Gaston Franco (PPE)

(11 octobre 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre la revente spéculative et le marché noir des billets de spectacle

La revente spéculative de billets pour des manifestations sportives ou culturelles s'est développée ces dernières années avec l'apparition de nombreuses plateformes illicites de revente sur internet, qui proposent des billets contrefaits ou inexistantes et vendent des billets nettement plus chers que leur prix d'origine ou dans une catégorie ne correspondant pas à celle commandée. Ces sites Internet de revente pratiquent l'assèchement des billetteries dès la mise sur le marché des billets de spectacle et en font un véritable commerce, portant ainsi préjudice aux spectateurs mais aussi aux artistes et aux producteurs de spectacles. C'est ce que l'on appelle «le second marché». À cela s'ajoute la revente à la sauvette devant les salles de concert. En France, les différentes condamnations de revendeurs et la mobilisation des artistes et producteurs ont abouti à la promulgation de la loi du 12 mars 2012, qui sanctionne la revente de billets sans autorisation de l'exploitant. Désormais, «le fait de vendre, d'offrir à la vente ou d'exposer en vue de la vente [...] des titres d'accès à une manifestation sportive, culturelle ou commerciale ou à un spectacle vivant, de manière habituelle et afin d'en tirer un bénéfice, sans autorisation du producteur, de l'organisateur ou du propriétaire des droits d'exploitation» sera passible d'une amende de 15 000 euros, qui pourra être doublée en cas de récidive. En outre, en juillet 2012, une campagne de communication contre le marché noir des billets de spectacle a été lancée et diffusée dans les festivals à l'initiative du syndicat ProdiSS (Union du spectacle musical et de variété). Plus récemment, en octobre 2013, le site www.levraibillet.fr a été créé pour permettre aux spectateurs de connaître le «vrai» prix d'un billet, mais également de prendre conscience des enjeux et des risques liés à l'existence d'un marché noir.

1. En France, le «second marché» représentait, en 2012, 60 millions d'euros annuels, selon les professionnels. La Commission a-t-elle estimé le montant de ce marché pour toute l'Union européenne?
2. La France a été le premier pays à adopter une telle législation au sein de l'Union européenne. La Commission compte-t-elle proposer une législation au niveau européen pour lutter contre le marché noir des billets de spectacle?
3. La Commission pourrait-elle envisager de lancer une campagne de communication européenne sur le «vrai» prix des billets?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission

(9 janvier 2014)

1. Même si elle est consciente du problème évoqué par l'Honorable Parlementaire, la Commission ne dispose pas encore, à ce stade, d'informations sur le volume potentiel du marché secondaire de la revente de billets de spectacle qui couvriraient l'ensemble de l'UE.

En juin 2010, 414 sites de vente de billets ont été contrôlés par les autorités nationales chargées de l'application de la législation dans le cadre d'une opération «EU sweeps» (enquête sur des marchés en ligne spécifiques coordonnée par la Commission sur la base du règlement (CE) no 2006/2004 et suivie par des actions des autorités nationales visant à assurer cette application). Les principaux problèmes relevés avaient été les clauses contractuelles déloyales et l'information incomplète ou trompeuse sur les prix ou les coordonnées de l'opérateur. Le 29 septembre 2011, la Commission a annoncé qu'après les actions de mise en application, 88 % des sites contrôlés aux fins de détection des infractions aux règles UE de protection des consommateurs étaient dorénavant conformes, contre seulement 40 % en juin 2010. Ce secteur avait notamment été ciblé en raison des nombreuses plaintes sur les pratiques de vente de billets à l'international reçues par le réseau des centres européens des consommateurs (réseau des CEC). Les informations et conseils qui ont été fournis aux consommateurs sur ces questions sont consultables en ligne ⁽¹⁾.

2. La Commission n'envisage pas de présenter une proposition de législation de l'UE qui traiterait spécifiquement de la revente de billets.

Elle tient néanmoins à souligner que la législation de l'UE en vigueur impose déjà aux entreprises des obligations précises dans leurs relations commerciales avec les consommateurs. La directive 2005/29/CE ⁽²⁾ sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales, en particulier, prohibe les actions trompeuses qui contiendraient des informations fausses, sur le prix notamment.

3. Eu égard à la multiplicité des questions en jeu, la Commission n'envisage pas de lancer une campagne sur le «vrai» prix des billets.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/online_ticket_sales/index_fr.htm

⁽²⁾ JO L 149 du 11.6.2005.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011645/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(11 October 2013)**

Subject: Combating the speculative resale of and the black market in event tickets

The speculative resale of tickets for sporting or cultural events has taken off in recent years with the appearance of numerous illegal resale platforms on the Internet. These platforms offer counterfeit or non-existent tickets and sell them at a significantly marked-up price or in a category that does not match that which was ordered. These Internet resale sites empty the ticket offices as soon as the event tickets are placed on sale and do a roaring trade out of it, thus harming audiences and spectators as well as the performers and producers of the shows. It is what is known as 'the second market'. In addition to this, there is ticket touting outside concert venues. In France, various convictions of resellers and the mobilisation of performers and producers led to the passing of the law of 12 March 2012, which punishes the resale of tickets without the authorisation of the operator. From now on, the fact of selling, offering for sale or setting out to sell tickets affording access to a sporting, cultural or commercial event or a live show, on a regular basis and for economic benefit, without the authorisation of the producer, organiser or owner of the operating rights, shall be punishable by a fine of EUR 15 000, which may be doubled for a repeat offence. Moreover, in July 2012, a communications campaign against the selling of event tickets on the black market was launched and promoted at festivals by the trade union Prodis (trade union for musical and variety shows). More recently, in October 2013, the website www.levraibillet.fr was created to enable spectators to find out the 'true' price of a ticket, but also to make them aware of the stakes and risks associated with the existence of a black market.

1. In France, the 'second market' was valued at EUR 60 million a year in 2012, according to the professionals. Has the Commission put a figure on the value of this market for the entire European Union?
2. France was the first country in the European Union to adopt such legislation. Is the Commission intending to propose legislation at EU level to combat the black market in event tickets?
3. Does the Commission plan to launch a European communications campaign on the 'true' price of tickets?

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(9 January 2014)**

1. The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member. However, at this stage the Commission has no information as to the possible value of the secondary market in ticket resale for the whole EU.

In June 2010, 414 ticketing sites were checked by national enforcement authorities as part of an 'EU sweeps' (a screening of specific online markets coordinated by the Commission under the regulation 2006/2004/EC, followed by enforcement actions by national authorities). The main issues identified were unfair contract terms and conditions, missing or misleading price information and trader details. On 29 September 2011, the Commission announced that 88% of the websites checked for breach of EU consumer rules were in line after enforcement actions compared to only 40% in June 2010. This sector was chosen, notably because European Consumer Centers Network (ECC-Net) received numerous complaints on international ticketing practices. Information and tips were provided to consumers on the issues found and are available online ⁽¹⁾.

2. The Commission does not intend to propose EU legislation specifically dealing with ticket resale.

However, the Commission would like to stress that existing EC law already provides for specific obligations for businesses in their commercial relations with consumers. Specifically, Directive 2005/29/EC ⁽²⁾ on unfair commercial practices prohibits misleading actions that may contain false information, including on the price.

3. Giving the number of issues at stake, the Commission is not planning to launch an EU-wide campaign on the 'true' price of tickets.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/enforcement/sweep/online_ticket_sales/index_en.htm

⁽²⁾ OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011647/13
a la Comisión**

Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)

(11 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Actual situación del tercer sector social

Una de las principales recomendaciones para España fijadas por la Comisión dentro de la Estrategia Europa 2020 es el establecimiento de unas finanzas públicas sostenibles con la finalidad de frenar el aumento de la deuda pública. Sin embargo, una de las consecuencias de esta medida es la paralización o la demora del pago por parte de las administraciones públicas a organismos o entidades que suministran servicios básicos en nuestra sociedad, como es el tercer sector social. El estado de bienestar social es un derecho que debe de garantizarse sobre todo en aquellos sectores de la sociedad que corren el riesgo de verse gravemente vulnerados.

En el caso de Cataluña, los recortes presupuestarios derivados de la crisis afectan, en el tercer sector social, especialmente a las personas de la tercera edad que viven en residencias de ancianos. La reducción de personal contratado para atenderles y la falta de liquidez para atender a pagos hacen que el estado de bienestar peligre, sin olvidar que también afecta directamente a otros factores como el desempleo, la pobreza y la exclusión social (solo en Cataluña se atiende a más de 55 000 ancianos en residencias de la tercera edad y se generan 33 000 puestos de trabajo)

Teniendo en cuenta estas circunstancias,

1. ¿Qué medidas considera la Comisión que deberían llevarse a cabo para garantizar el estado de bienestar social, cuando, por otro lado, se exige que se adopten políticas tendentes a reducir el gasto público?
2. ¿No cree la Comisión que deberían promoverse e impulsarse determinados sectores como el comentado, para evitar situaciones de desempleo o exclusión social, que son a su vez objetivos de la Estrategia Europa 2020?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión

(25 de noviembre de 2013)

1. Mediante su conjunto de medidas de inversión social ⁽¹⁾, la Comisión solicita a los Estados miembros que utilicen sus presupuestos sociales con mayor eficiencia y eficacia a fin de garantizar una protección social adecuada y sostenible. Preconiza paquetes integrados de prestaciones y servicios que puedan estimular la participación en la sociedad y en el mercado laboral, haciendo hincapié en que es mejor prevenir que curar, reduciendo así la necesidad de prestaciones. También invita a utilizar financiación nacional y de la UE para fomentar el acceso a servicios de calidad en salud, educación y vivienda, entre otros, aumentando el potencial de las nuevas oportunidades de empleo en esos sectores (incluida la asistencia a las personas de edad avanzada). A este respecto, el FSE puede ser una valiosa fuente de financiación para unir los imperativos de saneamiento presupuestario y la necesidad de liberar el crecimiento, crear empleo y mitigar el impacto social de la crisis. Por consiguiente, es importante hacer el mejor uso posible de los Fondos Estructurales.
2. Promover la inclusión social y luchar contra la pobreza son prioridades del recientemente adoptado Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento de 2014. La Recomendación del Consejo dirigida específicamente a España para 2013 ⁽²⁾ y, en particular, su punto 6, insta a España a adoptar y aplicar las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social reforzando las políticas activas dirigidas al mercado de trabajo, con el fin de aumentar la empleabilidad de las personas con menor acceso al mercado de trabajo y mejorando el objetivo, la eficiencia y la eficacia de las medidas de apoyo, incluidos servicios de ayuda de calidad a las familias.

⁽¹⁾ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en>

⁽²⁾ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/es/13/st10/st10656-re01.es13.pdf>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011647/13
to the Commission**

Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)

(11 October 2013)

Subject: Current status of the third social sector

One of the main recommendations for Spain set out by the Commission as part of the Europe 2020 strategy is the establishment of sustainable public finances in order to halt rising public debt. One of the consequences of this measure, however, is the freezing of or delay in payments from the Government to bodies or institutions that provide basic services in our society, such as the third social sector. The social welfare state is a right that must be guaranteed above all others in those sectors of society that are at risk of serious harm.

In the case of Catalonia, the budget cuts resulting from the crisis particularly affect senior citizens residing in care homes, in terms of the third social sector. The reduction in the numbers of staff hired to care for them and the lack of cash to make payments puts the welfare state in danger, not to mention that it also has a direct effect on other factors such as unemployment, poverty and social exclusion (in Catalonia alone over 55 000 elderly people are being looked after in care homes, generating 33 000 jobs).

1. What action is the Commission thinking of taking to safeguard the social welfare state when, on the other hand, it is being required to adopt policies to reduce public spending?
2. Does the Commission not think it should promote and encourage certain sectors such as the one mentioned above, to prevent unemployment and social exclusion, which are in turn objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(25 November 2013)

1. Through its Social Investment Package ⁽¹⁾, the Commission is asking Member States to use their social budgets more efficiently and effectively to ensure adequate and sustainable social protection. It advocates for integrated packages of benefits and services that can help people to participate in society and the labour market, stressing prevention rather than cure, and thus reducing the need for benefits. It also invites to use both national and EU funding to support access to high quality health, education and housing services amongst others, bringing potential for new job opportunities in those sectors (including elderly care). To this respect, the ESF can be a useful source of financing to build the bridge between the urge for fiscal consolidation and the need to unblock growth, create jobs and mitigate the social impact of the crisis. It is therefore important to make the best possible use of Structural Funds.
2. Promoting social inclusion and tackling poverty is a priority in the recently adopted 2014 Annual Growth Survey. The Council Country Specific Recommendations to Spain for 2013 ⁽²⁾, and particularly Recommendation 6 already invites Spain to adopt and implement the necessary measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion, by reinforcing active labour market policies to improve employability of people further away from the labour market, and by improving the targeting and increasing efficiency and effectiveness of support measures, including quality family support services.

⁽¹⁾ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en>

⁽²⁾ <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/13/st10/st10656-re01.en13.pdf>

(Version française)

**Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011651/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)**

Christine De Veyrac (PPE)

(11 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Lynchage d'Européens à Madagascar

Ce jeudi 3 octobre à Madagascar, deux Européens soupçonnés de trafic d'organes ont été tués puis brûlés par une foule d'émeutiers sur l'île de Nosy Be. L'événement déclencheur de cette chasse à l'homme fut la disparition d'un enfant de 8 ans, retrouvé le lendemain mort sans sa langue ni ses organes génitaux. Les deux Européens soupçonnés d'être à l'origine de ce crime furent alors torturés, battus, puis brûlés par les émeutiers.

Suite à cet événement, le consulat de France à Madagascar a fortement déconseillé à ses ressortissants tout déplacement sur cette île.

De plus, il est rappelé aux ressortissants européens que la période électorale, qui sera marquée, le 25 octobre, par le premier tour des élections présidentielles et, le 20 décembre, par le second tour des élections présidentielles et les élections législatives, est susceptible d'avoir une incidence sur le niveau d'insécurité.

Il apparaît que les lynchages publics ne sont pas rares à Madagascar, où des voleurs présumés ou des conducteurs impliqués dans des accidents mortels ont récemment été brûlés vifs.

En conséquence, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante entend-elle condamner ces actes de barbarie perpétrés à Madagascar à l'encontre de ressortissants européens et a-t-elle l'intention d'entreprendre des démarches pour établir des mesures de prévention afin d'assurer la sécurité des expatriés européens en vue de la probable instabilité du pays à l'approche des élections présidentielles et législatives?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission

(25 novembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a connaissance de l'événement tragique et profondément regrettable auquel se réfère l'Honorable Parlementaire.

Le chef de la délégation de l'UE à Madagascar a déploré la perte de vies humaines et s'est dit vivement préoccupé par de tels actes de violence. Le sujet a été largement évoqué lors d'une réunion qui s'est tenue avec le Premier ministre.

Les autorités malgaches ont réagi rapidement et elles ont déployé des forces de sécurité supplémentaires afin de rétablir l'ordre public, d'enquêter sur les circonstances des actes de violences et d'en arrêter les auteurs. Certaines personnes qui auraient participé à l'incident ont déjà été arrêtées.

La délégation de l'UE sur le terrain a suivi de près la situation et il est clair que cet événement n'a aucun lien avec le processus électoral en cours dans le pays. Il semble s'agir d'une éruption de violence extrême au cours de laquelle la population a décidé de se faire justice elle-même.

L'UE n'est pas compétente en ce qui concerne l'adoption de mesures préventives visant à assurer la sécurité des expatriés européens. Il appartient à chaque État membre de proposer et d'adopter, le cas échéant, des mesures concrètes pour leurs ressortissants résidant ou séjournant à Madagascar. Dans ce contexte, le consulat de France à Antananarivo a organisé, avec le soutien de la délégation de l'UE, une réunion avec les consuls des États membres à Madagascar afin d'échanger des informations et d'harmoniser toute réponse concernant la protection des citoyens européens dans le pays.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011651/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Lynching of Europeans in Madagascar

On Thursday 3 October 2013, in Madagascar, two Europeans suspected of organ trafficking were killed and their bodies burnt by a crowd of rioters on the island of Nosy Be. What sparked this manhunt was the disappearance of an eight-year-old boy, found dead the following day, missing his tongue and genitals. The two Europeans suspected of being responsible for this crime were subsequently tortured, beaten and then burnt by the rioters.

Following the incident, the French consulate in Madagascar strongly advised its nationals not to travel to the island.

Furthermore, European nationals are reminded that the election season, which will begin on 25 October with the first round of presidential elections, follow by the second round of presidential elections and legislative elections on 20 December, is likely to adversely affect security levels.

It appears that public lynchings are not uncommon in Madagascar, where suspected thieves or drivers involved in fatal accidents have recently been burnt alive.

Consequently, will the High Representative condemn these barbaric acts perpetrated against European nationals in Madagascar? Furthermore, does she intend to take steps to establish preventative measures in order to ensure the safety of European expatriates in view of the likely instability in the country in the run up to the presidential and legislative elections?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is aware of the tragic event the Honourable Member refers to, which is deeply regretful.

The EU's Head of Delegation in Madagascar has expressed regret for the loss of life and high concern about such violence and the issue was discussed at length during a meeting that was held with the Prime Minister.

The Malagasy authorities have reacted promptly and have deployed additional security forces to re-establish law and order, to investigate the circumstances and to arrest the perpetrators. Some presumed participants of the incident have already been arrested.

The EU Delegation on the ground has been following the situation closely and it is understood that this event has no connection with the ongoing electoral process in the country. It appears to be an eruption of extreme violence where local population has taken law into its own hands.

The EU has no responsibility in adopting preventive measures to ensure the safety of European expatriates. It is up to each Member State to recommend and adopt, if necessary, specific measures for their nationals living or visiting Madagascar. In this context, the French Consulate in Antananarivo has organised, with the support of the EU Delegation, a meeting with the Member States' consuls in Madagascar to exchange information and harmonise any response dealing with the protection of European citizens in the country.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-011653/13

adresată Comisiei

Elena Băsescu (PPE)

(11 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Comunicarea privind consolidarea dimensiunii sociale a uniunii economice și monetare

Comisia Europeană a lansat la data de 2 octombrie 2013 Comunicarea privind consolidarea dimensiunii sociale a uniunii economice și monetare (UEM).

Printre propunerile Comisiei se numără consolidarea monitorizării evoluției ocupării forței de muncă și a situației sociale ca parte a supravegherii macroeconomice, elaborarea unui tablou de bord cu principalii indicatori sociali și de ocupare a forței de muncă și consolidarea coordonării politicilor în aceste domenii, precum și o coordonare mai bună a politicilor sociale și privind ocuparea forței de muncă în cadrul semestrului european.

Însă Comisia propune și măsuri de natură structurală care să conducă la aprofundarea UEM, precum „instituirea unei autorități autonome pentru bugetul zonei euro, dotată cu capacitatea bugetară necesară pentru a sprijini statele membre în absorbirea șocurilor”. Practic, o astfel de măsură ar institui un buget autonom al zonei euro în materie de politici cu caracter social (spre exemplu, în domeniul asigurărilor de șomaj).

Este de acord Comisia că o astfel de măsură ar certifica, pe fond, crearea unei Europe cu două viteze, lăsând, în practică, statele care nu au adoptat încă moneda euro fără o asemenea plasă de siguranță? Nu consideră Comisia că o astfel de măsură ar fi foarte dificil de pus în practică din cauza condițiilor economice eterogene din statele membre, dar și a faptului că sistemele de asigurări sociale din statele zonei euro sunt deosebit de variate, fiind fondate pe principii diferite?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei

(3 decembrie 2013)

Comunicarea Comisiei privind consolidarea dimensiunii sociale a Uniunii economice și monetare (UEM) ⁽¹⁾ face referire la Proiectul pentru o UEM profundă și veritabilă ⁽²⁾ pentru detalierea aspectelor pe termen lung ale reformei UEM, care sunt deosebit de importante pentru dimensiunea socială a UEM. Acest proiect include o examinare a posibilității de a stabili, pe termen lung, un buget autonom al zonei euro care să confere zonei euro capacitatea bugetară de a sprijini statele membre să absoarbă șocurile. Un posibil instrument de stabilizare identificat în acest context a fost reprezentat de un sistem de asigurări de șomaj la nivelul UEM. Cu toate acestea, astfel de măsuri ar presupune, în orice caz, o modificare substanțială a tratatului, deoarece, în prezent, UE nu are competența de a le adopta.

Comisia nu consideră că un instrument de stabilizare la nivelul UEM, cum ar fi, de exemplu, un sistem de asigurări de șomaj pentru zona euro, ar crea în mod necesar o Europă cu două viteze, fie și numai pentru faptul că instrumentul respectiv ar putea fi proiectat astfel încât să fie deschis pentru viitoarele țări din zona euro.

Analiza tehnică preliminară realizată de serviciile Comisiei a arătat că punerea în aplicare a unui sistem de compensare a șomajului la nivelul UEM ar constitui o provocare, dar că ar putea exista soluții — bazate și pe experiența altor sisteme federale — pentru ca un sistem supranațional să devină compatibil cu sistemele naționale. O analiză mai detaliată în acest sens este, cu siguranță, necesară.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2013) 690.

⁽²⁾ COM(2012) 777.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011653/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(11 October 2013)

Subject: Communication on the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union

On 2 October 2013, the Commission released the communication on the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU).

The Commission's proposals include the following: improving the monitoring of employment trends and the social situation as part of macroeconomic supervision, creating a scoreboard of the key social and employment indicators and strengthening policy coordination in these areas, as well as improving the coordination of social and employment policies under the European Semester.

However, the Commission is also proposing structural measures resulting in deeper EMU, such as establishing 'an autonomous euro area budget providing the euro area with a fiscal capacity to support Member States absorb shocks'. In practical terms, such a measure would establish an autonomous euro area budget for policies of a social nature (for example, in the area of unemployment insurance).

Does the Commission agree that such a measure would essentially endorse the creation of a two-speed Europe, leaving, in practice, Member States which have not yet adopted the euro without this safety net? Does the Commission not think that it would be extremely difficult to implement such a measure, not only due to the varied economic conditions in Member States, but also to the fact that the social insurance systems operating in the euro area countries are particularly diverse, given that they are based on different principles?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

The Commission's Communication on strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) ⁽¹⁾ refers to the Blueprint for a deep and genuine EMU ⁽²⁾ when elaborating on longer-term aspects of EMU reform that are particularly important for the EMU's social dimension. This includes a consideration of the longer-term possibility of an autonomous euro area budget providing the euro area with a fiscal capacity to support Member States to absorb shocks. One possible stabilisation tool identified in such a context has been an EMU-level unemployment insurance scheme. However, such measures would in any event require a substantial Treaty change, as the EU currently does not have the competence to adopt them.

The Commission does not consider that an EMU-wide automatic stabiliser like a euro area unemployment insurance scheme would necessarily create a two-speed Europe, if only because it could be designed to be open to future euro area countries.

Preliminary technical analysis of Commission services has shown that implementation of an EMU unemployment compensation scheme would be challenging but that there could be solutions — building also on lessons from other federal systems — to make a supranational system compatible with the national ones. Further analysis in this respect is certainly required.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2013) 690.

⁽²⁾ COM(2012) 777.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор P-011654/13

до Комисията

Preslav Borissov (PPE)

(14 октомври 2013 г.)

Относно: Ескалиращите проблеми, които срещат предприятията за автомобилен транспорт, извършващи превози между ЕС и Република Турция

В последните години компетентните контролни органи на Република Турция все по-често задържат български товарни автомобили на граничните пунктове, ограничавайки достъпа им до турския пазар на товарни превози. През 2009 г. турската страна едностранно въведе минимално времетраене на превозите по различните релации в Европа, извършвани от превозвачите от България, Чехия, Румъния, Македония и Молдова с ЕКМТ/СЕМТ разрешителни. Реално необходимото време за извършване на тези превози е по-кратко и превозвачите са принудени да чакат на турските гранични пунктове, за да изтече произволно определеното от турските власти време.

От 1 септември 2013 г. турското правителство въведе такса от 3000 евро при превози с „несъответстващи“ разрешителни. Всеки ден турските митнически органи задържат български товарни автомобили под претекст, че разрешителните им са „несъответстващи“. Определят се за „несъответстващи“ двустранни разрешителни при превози между товарен и разтоварен пункт съответно в Турция и България, като се изисква разрешително за превоз за/от трета страна или транзитно разрешително. Турските контролни органи не зачитат транспортните документи и определят вида на превоза въз основа на произхода, собствеността на стоката и други, посочени в търговската фактура или незасягащи превоза, документи. Тези безпрецедентни дискриминационни действия от страна на турските контролни органи са в нарушение на международните договорености и възприетите практики в автомобилния транспорт, възпрепятстват търговията между Турция и ЕС и водят до тежки загуби за автомобилните превозвачи от ЕС и особено от България, които са активни на този пазар.

1. Запозната ли е Комисията с гореизложената ситуация и следи ли развитието ѝ?
2. Изисквала ли е Комисията информация по този въпрос от Република Турция?
3. Каква информация е изискана от Република Турция и предоставена ли е тя?
4. Какви мерки възнамерява да предприеме Комисията за решаване на ескалиращите проблеми, които срещат автомобилните превозвачи при превозите между ЕС и Турция?

Отговор, даден от г-н Калас от името на Комисията

(19 ноември 2013 г.)

Правилното прилагане на разпоредбите на Европейската конференция на министрите на транспорта и на договореностите на Международния форум за транспорта (ITF) е отговорност на подписващите страни (държавите членки и трети държави). В очакване на евентуално бъдещо сключване на споразумения на ЕС в областта на автомобилния транспорт, настоящите отношения между държавите членки и трети държави в областта на международните автомобилни превози се уреждат чрез двустранни или многостранни споразумения между държавите членки и съответните трети държави.

Тъй като е вероятно мерките, взети от Турция, да доведат до смущения не само в транспорта, но и в търговията, Комисията ще потърси информация по този въпрос от турските власти, за да се гарантира, че разпоредбите на митническия съюз между ЕС и Турция са спазени.

(English version)

**Question for written answer P-011654/13
to the Commission**

Preslav Borissov (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Escalating problems for road hauliers operating between the EU and Turkey

Over the past few years, the Turkish customs authority has been stopping Bulgarian lorries at border crossing points with increasing frequency, thus restricting their access to the Turkish road haulage market. In 2009, Turkey unilaterally introduced minimum journey times for various European routes served by hauliers from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Moldova operating with European Conference of Ministers of Transport (CEMT) permits. The actual times required for the journeys are shorter than the periods stipulated, and the hauliers are thus forced to wait at the border crossings into Turkey until the times arbitrarily set by the Turkish authorities have expired.

On 1 September 2013, the Turkish Government introduced a EUR 3 000 charge for hauliers whose transport permits were 'not in order'. The Turkish customs authority is stopping Bulgarian lorries on a daily basis on the pretext that the hauliers' permits are 'not in order'. The customs officers refuse to accept bilateral permits for carriage between loading and unloading points in Turkey and Bulgaria respectively, and ask for third-country or transit permits. The Turkish authorities do not recognise the hauliers' transportation documents, and they categorise the freight on the basis of the origin and ownership of the goods and other data included on the commercial invoice or in documents unrelated to the shipment. This unprecedented and discriminatory action by the Turkish authorities is in breach of international agreements and accepted practice in the road haulage sector; it impedes trade between Turkey and the EU and it is causing heavy losses for EU, and especially Bulgarian, hauliers operating in this market.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation and is it monitoring it?
2. Has the Commission requested information from Turkey about this matter?
3. What information has been requested from Turkey and has it been provided?
4. What measures does the Commission intend to take to resolve the escalating problems faced by road hauliers operating between the EU and Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission

(19 November 2013)

The correct application of the provisions of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport and the International transport Forum (ITF) arrangements is the responsibility of the signatories (Member States and third countries). Pending the possible future conclusion of EU agreements covering the area of road transport, the current international road transport relations between Member States and third countries are governed by bilateral or multilateral agreements between the Member States and the third countries concerned.

As the measures taken by Turkey are susceptible of producing disruption not only to transport, but also to trade, the Commission will inquire on this issue with the Turkish authorities to ensure that the provisions of the Customs Union between the EU and Turkey are respected.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-011655/13

an die Kommission

Andreas Mölzer (NI)

(14. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: US-Schulden-Blockade

Den USA geht das Geld aus. Am 17. Oktober wird die gesetzliche Höchstschwelle für die Staatsverschuldung erreicht. Einigen sich Demokraten und Republikaner nicht auf die Anhebung der Schuldenobergrenze, kann die Regierung nicht mehr alle Verbindlichkeiten erfüllen — und wird damit zumindest teilweise zahlungsunfähig. Dies kann wiederum weltweit zu wirtschaftlichen Schwierigkeiten führen. Die Schulden der USA belaufen sich mit 16 Billionen Dollar auf über 30 Mal so viel wie der Marktwert, den Lehman kurz vor der Pleite erreicht hatte. Und diese Pleite hatte immense weltweite Auswirkungen. Etwa die Hälfte der Schulden der USA wird von ausländischen Regierungen und Zentralbanken gehalten; denn bisher dato gelten US-Bonds als eine der sichersten Investitionen weltweit. Ein Zahlungsausfall würde diese Bestände und den Dollar als Weltwährung massiv infrage stellen.

Auch hätte die US-Regierung im Falle einer Pleite wohl nicht einmal das Geld, um die Banken in Folge der Turbulenzen an den Finanzmärkten zu stützen. Doch selbst wenn die US-Regierung es schafft, ihren Verpflichtungen nachzukommen und Staatsanleihen zu bedienen, kann es zu schweren Erschütterungen an den Finanzmärkten kommen. Sollte die Schuldengrenze nicht angehoben werden, wäre die US-Regierung gezwungen, massive Streichungen bei den Ausgaben vorzunehmen. Experten sprechen davon, dass die USA damit in eine tiefe Rezession stürzen würden — und als größter Konsument viele andere Volkswirtschaften mit herunterziehen.

In der Euro-Krise genügten den Rating-Agenturen oft deutlich kleinere Anlässe, um Länder herabzustufen. Obwohl mit jedem Tag des Haushaltsstreits die Gefahr steigt, dass die USA ihre Schulden nicht mehr bedienen können, bleiben die US-Rating-Agenturen erstaunlich gelassen. Dabei steigt die US-Staatsverschuldung durch die zusätzlichen Kosten der Krise weiter an.

1. Gibt es in der EU Notfallpläne für das bevorstehende Chaos, das selbst dann droht, wenn die USA kurzfristig doch noch eine Einigung erzielen können?
2. Wie reagiert die Kommission darauf, dass beispielsweise Frankreich bei einem Schuldenstand von knapp 90 % seitens der US-Ratingagenturen die Bestnote aberkannt wurde, die USA-Schuldenquote von gut 103 % indes nach wie vor Höchstnoten genießt?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission

(15. November 2013)

Am 16. Oktober 2013 hat der US-Kongress ein Gesetz verabschiedet, mit dem die Schuldengrenze angehoben und nach einem 16-tägigen Stillstand die Regierungsgeschäfte wieder aufgenommen wurden. Wichtige Entscheidungen zu beiden Themen sind nicht ergangen, sondern wurden nur vertagt: Die Schuldengrenze wurde bis zum 7. Februar 2014 ausgesetzt, und es wurde ein Übergangshaushalt bis zum 15. Januar 2014 beschlossen.

1. Seit Ausbruch der weltweiten Finanzkrise hat die EU ihre wirtschafts- und finanzpolitische Steuerung erheblich gestärkt und ist somit besser gegen externe wirtschaftliche und finanzielle Schocks gewappnet.
 2. Die Kommission kommentiert keine individuellen Bewertungen durch Rating-Agenturen.
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(English version)

Question for written answer P-011655/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: US debt crisis

The USA is running out of money. On 17 October it will reach the maximum legal limit for national debt. If the Democrats and Republicans do not come to an agreement about raising the debt ceiling, the government will no longer be able to fulfil all its obligations — and will be at least partially insolvent. This could in turn lead to economic difficulties worldwide. At 16 trillion dollars, the USA's debt amounts to more than 30 times the market value of Lehman Brothers shortly before its collapse. And this collapse had enormous repercussions worldwide. Around half of US debt is owned by foreign governments and central banks, US bonds being considered to be one of the safest investments in the world today. A default would cast serious doubt on these stocks and the dollar as a global currency.

Furthermore, in the eventuality of a collapse, the US government would not even have enough money to support the banks following the financial market upheaval. But even if the US government manages to fulfil its obligations and service its bonds, it could lead to severe financial market shocks. If the debt ceiling is not raised, the US government will be forced to drastically cut spending. Experts say that the USA would plunge into a deep recession — and, as the largest consumer, would bring down many other countries' economies.

During the euro crisis, credit ratings agencies often downgraded countries for far slighter reasons. With every day of the budget dispute there is an increasing danger that USA may no longer be able to service its debt, and yet the US credit ratings agencies remain surprisingly calm. Meanwhile the US national debt is rising because of the additional costs of the crisis.

1. Does the EU have any contingency plans for the impending chaos which threatens even if the USA can once more reach another agreement in the short term?
2. What is Commission's reaction to the fact that France, for example, which has a national debt of barely 90% of GDP, was stripped of the top rating by US ratings agencies while the USA still enjoys the maximum rating with a debt ratio of more than 103%?

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

On 16 October 2013 the US Congress passed a bill raising the debt ceiling and reopening the federal government following a 16-day-long shutdown. Crucial decisions related to both issues were postponed rather than resolved: the debt limit was suspended until 7 February 2014, while the funding for the federal government was extended through 15 January 2014.

1. Since the global financial crisis, the EU has significantly strengthened its economic and financial governance. As a result, it is in a better position to withstand external economic and financial shocks.
 2. The Commission does not comment individual rating decisions of rating agencies.
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(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-011656/13
aan de Commissie
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)
(14 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Mogelijk Russisch importverbod op Nederlandse tulpen en zuivelproducten

Tegen de achtergrond van de gespannen betrekkingen tussen Nederland en Rusland naar aanleiding van de arrestatie van Greenpeace-activisten die protesteerden tegen olieboringen in de poolcirkel, en een incident met een Russische diplomaat in Nederland, hebben Russische ambtenaren op 9 oktober 2013 gesuggereerd dat Rusland een verbod op de invoer van Nederlandse tulpen en zuivelproducten overweegt.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van Russische aankondigingen over een mogelijk importverbod op Nederlandse producten?
2. Wat is volgens de Commissie, gezien de geldende bilaterale akkoorden tussen de EU en Rusland en de verantwoordelijkheden van Rusland die voortvloeien uit de toetreding tot de WTO, de rechtsgrond voor een mogelijk invoerverbod op Nederlandse tulpen en zuivelproducten?
3. Wat vindt de Commissie van de bewering dat een mogelijk importverbod op Nederlandse producten in de huidige omstandigheden in wezen een politiek drukmiddel is ter bestraffing van een lidstaat?
4. Welke maatregelen zal de Commissie nemen om Nederlandse exporteurs te beschermen tegen de nadelige gevolgen van een mogelijk verbod op hun producten?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(15 november 2013)

De Commissie is op de hoogte van berichten in de media dat Rusland een invoerverbod op sommige Nederlandse producten zoals tulpen en zuivelproducten overweegt. Tot dusverre is echter geen informatie van de zijde van de Russische of de Nederlandse autoriteiten ontvangen.

Net als voor alle andere Russische handelsbeperkingen geldt ook hier dat, mocht Rusland maatregelen ten aanzien van de betrokken producten nemen, de Commissie de kwestie eerst bilateraal met Rusland zal opnemen. Als er geen oplossing wordt gevonden, zullen die maatregelen aan een verder grondig onderzoek worden onderworpen en zal de Commissie niet aarzelen de kwestie aan te kaarten bij de Wereldhandelsorganisatie.

(English version)

**Question for written answer P-011656/13
to the Commission**

Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Possible Russian import ban on Dutch tulips and dairy products

Against the background of strained relations between the Netherlands and Russia, sparked by the arrest of Greenpeace activists protesting against Arctic oil drilling and an incident with a Russian diplomat in the Netherlands, Russian officials hinted on 9 October 2013 that Russia may ban the import of Dutch tulips and dairy products.

1. Is the Commission aware of Russian announcements about a possible import ban on Dutch products?
2. In light of the bilateral agreements in force between the EU and Russia, and Russia's responsibilities stemming from its accession to the WTO, how would the Commission assess the legal basis for a possible import ban on Dutch tulips and dairy products?
3. How would the Commission assess the claim that, in the current circumstances, a possible import ban on Dutch products would, in essence, be a political pressure tool with which to punish a Member State?
4. What steps will the Commission take to protect Dutch exporters from the negative consequences of a possible ban on their products?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission

(15 November 2013)

The Commission is aware of media reports that Russia was considering banning some Dutch products, such as tulips and dairy products. However, no information has so far been received from the Russian or the Dutch authorities.

Like with all the other Russian trade restrictive measures, should Russia take any measures against the products in question, the Commission will first raise the issue bilaterally with Russia. If no solution can be found, a further in-depth analysis will be conducted of any such measure and the Commission will not hesitate to raise the matter in the World Trade Organisation.

(English version)

**Question for written answer P-011657/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**

Charles Tannock (ECR)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Presidential elections in the Maldives

The 2008 Maldivian Presidential Elections saw the end of Maumoon Gayoom's thirty-year presidency with the election of Moahmed Nasheed — a result that was hailed as a triumph of democracy at the time. Just four years later President Nasheed was removed from office by his Vice-President, Mohammed Waheed Hassan, in what has been widely described and accepted as a coup.

In response to the political turmoil, elections were held last month — elections which were declared by international observers, including the UN, to have been 'fair' and 'democratic'. Mohammed Nasheed of the Maldivian Democratic Party was a clear winner, with 45.5% of the vote. The main opposition candidate (and brother of former President Maumoon Gayoom), Abdullah Yameen, came second with 25.3%, closely followed by Gasim Ibrahim with 24.1%.

The necessity for a candidate to receive 50% of the popular vote prompted plans for a run-off between the two leading candidates — elections which constitutionally should have occurred by 28 September 2013. This process was derailed, however, by accusations from Gasim Ibrahim that there were voting irregularities, claims which the Supreme Court agreed to investigate.

It is alleged that these claims are false and are being used as a means to undermine the democratic process in the Maldives, with a view to establishing a more autocratic, controlled democracy, reminiscent of Gayoom's tenure. The claims have gained greater currency since the Supreme Court announcement of 7 October 2013 that the September elections are to be annulled, with new elections to be held on 20 October 2013. The possibility for elections to be held so soon has been questioned by many observers and commentators, sparking suggestions that the Maldives may once again lapse into turmoil, as previously happened in 2011/2012.

1. What action is the Vice-President/High Representative prepared to take to ensure that the elections scheduled for 20 October 2013 are free and fair?
2. Will the VP/HR suspend, in total or in part, the financial aid provided by the EU to the Maldivian Government, in the event of that government failing to uphold proper and legitimate democratic processes?
3. What discussions has the VP/HR held with the Maldivian Government with regard to the current situation?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission

(12 November 2013)

The HR/VP is following closely developments regarding the election process in the Maldives. She issued statements on 8 October and on 20 October in response to the Supreme Court's recent ruling to annul the first round of presidential elections (7 September) and the intervention of the police to halt the re-vote scheduled for 19 October:
http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131008_04_en.pdf
http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131020_02_en.pdf

The EU's assistance to the Maldives has already been reduced, and what remains (EUR 4 million) is targeted on the effects of climate change. As of 31 December the Maldives will, as an upper middle income country, no longer be eligible for trade preferences.

The HR/VP has not discussed the matter with the outgoing government. But the EU Delegation in Colombo, together with representatives of the Member States, is closely liaising with all stakeholders in the Maldives. The EU has also sent to Maldives a mission of two experts in electoral issues who have been following the elections since 13 August and preparing an independent assessment of the process.

The EU will consider what action should be taken in the event of any further delay of the new dates announced by the Elections Commission (9 November for a first round and 16 November for any second round) or if it is considered that the elections are not credible, transparent and inclusive.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-011659/13

an die Kommission

Andreas Mölzer (NI)

(14. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Weitergabe niedriger Strompreise an Privatkunden

Nachdem sie den Preisverfall an der Börse drei Jahre lang ausschließlich an Industriekunden weitergereicht hatten, haben die österreichischen Energiekonzerne Anfang Herbst endlich — auf massives Drängen der Regulierungsbehörde hin — auch einmal für die Privatkunden die Tarife minimal gesenkt. Dabei ist der Börsenpreis für Strom seit Mitte 2008 um über 40 % gefallen. Weil sich die Versorger zudem seit zwei Jahren weigern, ihre Kalkulationen offenzulegen, kann die E-Control die Gewinnmargen nur schätzen. Sie geht davon aus, dass die Energieunternehmen ihre Margen zuletzt auf bis zu 50 % verdoppeln konnten.

1. Wie ist die Situation EU-weit?
2. Wo konnten mit der Stromliberalisierung die meisten Fortschritte erzielt werden?
3. Wo gibt es noch Probleme?
4. Sind auf EU-Ebene in diesem Zusammenhang weitere Schritte geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission

(13. Dezember 2013)

In mehreren Mitgliedstaaten war trotz der in den vergangenen Jahren sinkenden Großhandelspreise ein Anstieg der Endenergiekosten vieler Haushalte zu verzeichnen. Dies ist u. a. darauf zurückzuführen, dass die Stromrechnung privater Haushalte aus mehr als nur der Komponente Strom besteht, der auf dem Großhandelsmarkt gehandelt und dessen Preis durch den Wettbewerb auf dem Markt in Grenzen gehalten wird. Die Übertragungs- und Verteilernetzentgelte machen einen erheblichen Teil des Gesamtbetrags aus ebenso wie Steuern und Abgaben, die alle auf Ebene der Mitgliedstaaten festgesetzt werden. Die Kommission bereitet eine detaillierte Vergleichsanalyse der Energiepreise und ihrer treibenden Faktoren in der EU vor und kommt damit einer Forderung des Europäischen Rates nach. Der für Februar 2014 geplante Bericht wird Informationen über die Weitergabe von Großhandelspreisen an die Endkunden enthalten.

Die Kommission hat im November 2012 ⁽¹⁾ die Defizite bei der Vollendung des EU-Energiebinnenmarktes aufgezeigt. Die Mitteilung der Kommission vom November 2012 wird von detaillierten Länderberichten über die Fortschritte bei der Integration und Liberalisierung des Energiemarkts in einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten flankiert und enthält auch einen umfassenden 22-Punkte-Aktionsplan mit weiteren Maßnahmen, die in der EU benötigt werden, um zu einem integrierten, vernetzten und wettbewerbsgeprägten Energiebinnenmarkt zu gelangen, der der Wirtschaft und den Verbrauchern in der EU zugute kommt.

⁽¹⁾ Weitere umfassende Informationen zu den Maßnahmen sind dem Aktionsplan im Anhang der Mitteilung „Ein funktionierender Energiebinnenmarkt“, KOM(2012)663, zu entnehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011659/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Passing on lower electricity prices to private customers

Having passed on the fall in prices on the stock exchange to industrial customers only for three years, at the beginning of the autumn Austrian energy companies finally — after a great deal of pressure from the regulatory authority — marginally reduced the tariffs for private customers, too. The stock exchange price for electricity has fallen by more than 40% since the middle of 2008. On account of the fact that suppliers have also been refusing to disclose their calculations for the last two years, E-Control can only estimate the profit margins. It believes that the energy companies could ultimately have doubled their margins to up to 50%.

1. What is the situation like throughout the EU?
2. Where has it been possible for most progress be made through the liberalisation of the electricity market?
3. Where are there still problems?
4. Are any further steps planned at EU level in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

Increases in the final energy bill paid by many households notwithstanding the decrease in wholesale prices in the past years have been observed in a number of Member States. These are among others due to the fact that the household bill consists of more than just its energy component traded on the wholesale market and kept in check by the competition in the market. Transmission and distribution networks charges make up a substantial part of the total bill, as do taxes and levies, which are all determined at Member States level. The Commission is preparing a detailed comparative analysis of energy prices and their drivers in the EU in response to the request by the European Council. The report in preparation for February 2014 will include information on the pass-through of wholesale to retail prices.

The Commission identified in November 2012 ⁽¹⁾ the shortcomings in the completion of the internal energy market in the EU. The November 2012 Commission document is accompanied by a set of detailed country reports showing the progress of energy market integration and liberalisation in individual Member States, and also includes a comprehensive 22-point action plan of further steps needed in the EU in order to achieve an integrated, interconnected and competitive internal market benefitting EU economy and consumers.

⁽¹⁾ For more comprehensive information of the measures: See Action plan annexed to the communication on Making the internal energy market work, COM(2012) 663.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011660/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Το δημόσιο χρέος μετά το τέλος του Μνημονίου

Σύμφωνα με την έκθεση «Το δημόσιο χρέος μετά το τέλος του Μνημονίου» του Γραφείου Προϋπολογισμού του Κράτους ⁽¹⁾ που έχει συσταθεί στην Ελληνική Βουλή, η οποία δόθηκε στη δημοσιότητα στις 9 Οκτωβρίου, μία μέρα πριν από την έναρξη της συζήτησης επί του Σχεδίου του Προϋπολογισμού 2014 στην αρμόδια Επιτροπή Οικονομικών Υποθέσεων:

- Μια νέα δανειακή σύμβαση για το κλείσιμο του δημοσιονομικού κενού δίνει μόνο προσωρινή λύση για ένα ή δύο χρόνια.
- Το χρέος δεν πρόκειται να τεντρί σε τροχιά μείωσης και να γίνει βιώσιμο έως το 2022 αποκλειστικά με εθνικές προσπάθειες αποταμίευσης.
- Είναι ψευδαίσθηση να αναμένουμε ότι η χώρα θα επιστρέψει στις αγορές μετά το 2014 για να καλύψει με λογικούς όρους τις ανάγκες αναχρηματοδότησης του χρέους, συν τυχόν έκτακτες ανάγκες. Η αριθμητική του χρέους είναι εναντίον μας.

Με δεδομένο ότι όπως διαπιστώνει η προαναφερθείσα έκθεση αλλά και άλλες εκθέσεις ειδικών, «η χώρα είναι σε χειρότερη θέση να αντιμετωπίσει το πρόβλημα του δημοσίου χρέους της, αφού έχει καταρρεύσει η παραγωγική της βάση» και αφού αυξάνεται για άλλη μια χρονιά η αδυναμία των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων αλλά και των πολιτών να ανταποκριθούν στην βαριά φορολογία αλλά και στην πληρωμή των ασφαλιστικών εισφορών που οδηγεί σε αύξηση των ελλειμμάτων των ασφαλιστικών ταμείων πάνω από 1,5 δις ευρώ. Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς απαντάει στην έκθεση του Γραφείου Προϋπολογισμού του Κράτους που διαπιστώνει επί της ουσίας ότι η ακολουθούμενη πολιτική δεν οδηγεί σε αντιμετώπιση των δημοσιονομικών προβλημάτων και θεωρεί ότι δεν θα επιτευχθεί μόνο με ελληνικές προσπάθειες η βιωσιμότητα του ελληνικού χρέους μέχρι το 2022;
2. Σκοπεύει να συζητήσει με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, τους επαγγελματικούς και κοινωνικούς φορείς ένα ολοκληρωμένο εναλλακτικό σχέδιο για την ανασυγκρότηση της παραγωγικής βάσης της χώρας και τη δημιουργία βιώσιμων θέσεων απασχόλησης, που θα χρηματοδοτηθεί με επιπλέον πόρους την περίοδο 2014-2020, αφού οι πόροι από τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά και επενδυτικά ταμεία, αν και σημαντικοί, δεν προβλέπεται να βγάλουν τη χώρα από τη βαθιά κρίση;

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

1. Ο ελληνικός δείκτης του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ προβλέπεται να ακολουθήσει και πάλι πτωτική τροχιά το 2014 και να μειωθεί σε επίπεδα χαμηλότερα του 120% το 2021, με την παραδοχή ότι το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής εξακολουθεί να υλοποιείται στο ακέραιο. Για λεπτομερή ανάλυση της δημοσιονομικής κατάστασης της Ελλάδας και ανάλυση της βιωσιμότητας του χρέους της, η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει τον κ. βουλευτή στην έκθεση συμμόρφωσης ⁽²⁾ η οποία δημοσιεύτηκε μετά το πέρας της προηγούμενης επανεξέτασης.
2. Ο στόχος των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων που υλοποιούνται στο πλαίσιο του προγράμματος είναι ακριβώς να δημιουργηθεί η βάση για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη, καθώς και νέες θέσεις απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα. Η χώρα αναμένεται να λάβει σημαντική χρηματοδότηση από τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά και επενδυτικά ταμεία την επόμενη περίοδο προγραμματισμού, η οποία, εφόσον επενδυθεί σωστά, θα συμβάλει σημαντικά στην επίτευξη ευημερίας στο μέλλον για την Ελλάδα.

Οι πόροι που χορηγούνται στην Ελλάδα από τα διαρθρωτικά και επενδυτικά ταμεία για την περίοδο 2014-2020 πρέπει να διοχετευτούν σε μικρό αριθμό επενδυτικών προτεραιοτήτων ώστε να μεγιστοποιηθούν τα αποτελέσματά τους στην έξυπνη και βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας. Έχουν καθοριστεί ορισμένες προϋποθέσεις ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί η αποτελεσματική και αποδοτική αξιοποίηση των εν λόγω πόρων. Μία εξ αυτών είναι η ενεργός συμμετοχή όλων των σχετικών φορέων στη χάραξη της αναπτυξιακής πολιτικής της χώρας.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.naftemporiki.gr/cmsutils/downloadpdf.aspx?id=713049>

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_el.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011660/13
to the Commission**

Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Public debt after the Memorandum

According to the report by the Hellenic Parliament State Budget Office entitled 'Public debt after the Memorandum' ⁽¹⁾ published on 9 October, one day before the start of the debate on the 2014 draft budget in the Committee on Economic Affairs:

- A new loan agreement to plug the fiscal gap will only provide a temporary solution, for one or two years.
- The debt is unlikely to decline and become sustainable by 2022 solely as a result of national efforts to make cutbacks.
- It is unrealistic to expect that the country will be able to return to the markets after 2014 in order to meet its debt refinancing requirements plus any emergency requirements on reasonable terms. The figures for this debt do not add up.

According to the aforementioned report and other specialist reports, the country is now in a worse position in terms of addressing the problem of its public debt, as its productive base has collapsed, and, once again, small and medium-sized enterprises and private individuals are unable to service their heavy tax liability and pay their social security contributions, as a result of which the social security funds have a deficit of over EUR 1.5 billion. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What is its response to the report by the State Budget Office, which basically concludes that the policy being applied is not addressing the fiscal problems and considers that the public debt will not become sustainable by 2022 through national efforts alone?
2. Does it intend to discuss with the Greek Government and professional and social agencies an alternative plan to restructure the country's productive base and create sustainable jobs financed with additional resources between 2014 and 2020, as resources from the European structural and investment funds, although considerable, are not expected to get the country out of its deep recession?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission

(4 December 2013)

1. The Greek debt-to-GDP ratio is forecast to resume a declining path in 2014 and should become lower than 120% by 2021, assuming that the economic adjustment programme continues to be fully implemented. For a detailed analysis of Greece's fiscal situation and debt sustainability analysis the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the compliance report ⁽²⁾ published at the end of the previous review.
2. The objective of the structural reforms which are being implemented under the programme is precisely to create the basis for sustainable growth and employment creation in Greece. The country is set to receive substantial funding from European structural and investment funds in the upcoming programming period which, if adequately invested, will strongly contribute to a prosperous future for Greece.

The allocations of the Structural and Investment funds for Greece for the 2014-2020 period should be focused on few investment priorities in order to maximise their impact for smart and sustainable growth and jobs. Some preconditions are set to ensure such effective and efficient implementation of these resources. Active involvement of all relevant stakeholders in designing the growth policy for the country is one of these preconditions.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.naftemporiki.gr/cmsutils/downloadpdf.aspx?id=713049>

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/pdf/ocp159_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011661/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Απορρόφηση του Προγράμματος Διανομής Τροφίμων σε Απόρους

Το πρόγραμμα διανομής τροφίμων στους άπορους (ΠΔΤΑ) ⁽¹⁾ αποτελεί, από το 1987, σημαντική πηγή εφοδίων για οργανώσεις που εργάζονται σε άμεση επαφή με τα αναξιοπαθούντα μέλη της κοινωνίας, παρέχοντάς τους τρόφιμα. Σήμερα διανέμει περίπου 500 000 τόνους τροφίμων ετησίως για τους άπορους. Δημιουργήθηκε με σκοπό την επωφελή χρησιμοποίηση των τότε γεωργικών αποθεμάτων. Λόγω της αναμενόμενης εξάντλησης και του υψηλού βαθμού αβεβαιότητας των αποθεμάτων παρέμβασης την περίοδο 2011-2020, ως αποτέλεσμα των αλληπάλληλων μεταρρυθμίσεων της Κοινής Γεωργικής Πολιτικής, το ΠΔΤΑ θα διακοπεί στο τέλος του 2013. Το Ταμείο Ευρωπαϊκής Βοήθειας προς τους Απόρους θα αντικαταστήσει και θα βελτιώσει το ΠΔΤΑ. Ερωτάται η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή:

1. Πόσους πόρους του ΠΔΤΑ αξιοποίησαν τα έτη 2009, 2010, 2011 και 2012 κάθε ένα από τα κράτη μέλη;
2. Πόσοι πολίτες επωφελήθηκαν από τη βοήθεια του ΠΔΤΑ σε κάθε ένα από τα κράτη μέλη αντιστοίχως τις χρονιές αυτές;
3. Υπήρξε ιδιαίτερη μέριμνα για τα κράτη μέλη που βιώνουν πιο έντονα τη δημοοικονομική κρίση (π.χ. Ελλάδα, Πορτογαλία και Ισπανία); Αυτά τα κράτη μέλη αξιοποίησαν στο μέγιστο βαθμό τα διαθέσιμα κονδύλια του ΠΔΤΑ;
4. Ποιες είναι οι κυριότερες αιτίες για την δυσκολία ορισμένων κρατών μελών να αξιοποιήσουν πλήρως τους διαθέσιμους πόρους παρά την αύξηση της φτώχειας και τις ανάγκες των πολιτών σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Cíelos εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(25 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή θα αποστείλει στον κ. βουλευτή και στη γραμματεία του Κοινοβουλίου τα απαιτούμενα στοιχεία για την αξιοποίηση των πόρων, καθώς και τον αριθμό των δικαιούχων του προγράμματος για τους άπορους της ΕΕ.

Η κατανομή των διαθέσιμων πόρων μεταξύ των δικαιούχων κρατών μελών βασίζεται σε αντικειμενικά κριτήρια, δηλαδή στον αριθμό των πολιτών της ΕΕ που ζουν κάτω από το όριο της φτώχειας και στο κατά κεφαλήν ΑΕΕ μετά τις κοινωνικές μεταβιβάσεις, σύμφωνα με τα τελευταία στατιστικά δεδομένα που έχει δημοσιεύσει η Eurostat. Ως εκ τούτου, τα κράτη μέλη που πλήττονται εντονότερα από την οικονομική κρίση λαμβάνουν μεγαλύτερα μερίδια από τους διαθέσιμους πόρους, κατ' αναλογία προς την επιδείνωση, σε σύγκριση με τα υπόλοιπα δικαιούχα κράτη μέλη.

Οι δυσχέρειες αξιοποίησης των διαθέσιμων πόρων είναι πολύ σπάνιες και, κατά τα περισσότερα έτη, το ποσοστό απορρόφησης των πόρων αυτών σε ενωσιακό επίπεδο προσεγγίζει το 100%. Αναφέρθηκαν ορισμένες δυσχέρειες, όταν ορισμένα κράτη μέλη δεν κατόρθωσαν να ολοκληρώσουν ορισμένες διαδικασίες σύναψης δημοσίων συμβάσεων εντός των 11-12 περίπου μηνών που προβλέπονται για τον σκοπό αυτό. Έχει συμβεί επίσης, τα δικαιούχα κράτη μέλη να έχουν υπερεκτιμήσει τις ικανότητες διανομής των τοπικών φιλανθρωπικών οργανώσεων και, κατά τη διάρκεια της υλοποίησης του εθνικού προγράμματος, οι απροσδόκητα περιορισμένες ικανότητες τα εμπόδισαν να αξιοποιήσουν όλους τους διαθέσιμους πόρους.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/most-deprived-persons/index_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011661/13
to the Commission**

Nikos Chrysogelos (Verts/ALE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Take-up of food distribution programme for deprived persons

Since 1987, the food distribution programme for the most deprived persons ⁽¹⁾ has been an important source of provisions for organisations working in direct contact with and distributing food to the least fortunate people of society. Today it distributes approximately 500 000 tonnes of food a year to deprived persons. It was set up with the aim of making good use of the agricultural stocks that existed at the time. As these are expected to run out and, as a result of successive reforms of the common agricultural policy, there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding intervention stocks for 2011 to 2020, the food distribution programme will be cut at the end of 2013. The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived will replace it and will improve the food distribution programme. In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. What food distribution programme resources were taken up in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 by each of the Member States?
2. How many citizens benefitted from the food distribution programme in each of the Member States in each of those years?
3. Was particular attention paid to Member States experiencing the worst of the financial crisis (such as Greece, Portugal and Spain)? Did those Member States take up most of the programme's available resources?
4. What were the main reasons why certain Member States had difficulty taking up all the available resources, despite the increase in poverty and the needs of the citizens in numerous EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Ciolos on behalf of the Commission

(25 November 2013)

The Commission will send the Honourable Member and the Parliament secretariat the requested details on the use of resources as well as the number of beneficiaries of the Most Deprived Programme of the EU.

The allocation of the available resources between the beneficiary Member States is based upon objective criteria, i.e. the number of EU citizens living below poverty threshold and the GNI per capita after social transfers, according to the latest Member State statistics published by Eurostat. Therefore, Member States experiencing the worst of the economic crisis receive higher shares from the available resources, in proportion to the deterioration compared to the other beneficiary Member States.

Difficulties to use the available resources are very rare, in most years the take up ratio was near to 100% at EU level. Some difficulties were reported, where Member States failed to close some of their public procurement tenders within the approximately 11-12 months available for this purpose. It also happened that the distribution capacities of local charitable organisations were overestimated by the beneficiary Member States and, during the implementation of the national programme, the unexpectedly scarce capacities prevented them to use all allocated resources.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/most-deprived-persons/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011662/13
a la Comisión**

Carmen Romero López (S&D)

(14 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Fondos de Cohesión

España quiso establecer en el Programa Operativo del Fondo de Cohesión 2007-2013 una red ferroviaria de altas prestaciones, conforme con la Directiva 96/48/CE relativa a la interoperabilidad del sistema ferroviario transeuropeo de alta velocidad, traspuesta a la normativa nacional por el Real Decreto 1191/2000. La Comisión fijó sus prioridades en las actuaciones en materia de transporte y en las ayudas destinadas a las redes transeuropeas de transporte (RTE-T), en particular los proyectos prioritarios de interés europeo. En este contexto las metas estratégicas del Marco Estratégico Nacional de Referencia de España 2007-2013 (MENR) fijaron intervenciones en alta velocidad ferroviaria con diversas actuaciones. Asimismo, el 7 de diciembre de 2007 la Comisión aprobó un Programa Operativo del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) con arreglo al objetivo de convergencia en las comunidades autónomas de Andalucía, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura y Galicia, y al amparo del Fondo de Cohesión, en todo el territorio español.

Estando muy cercano (31 de diciembre de 2013) el final del periodo acordado para la completa planificación de los grandes proyectos de alta velocidad ferroviaria aprobados y siendo obligatoria la finalización de su construcción al 31 de diciembre de 2015 y su puesta en funcionamiento en marzo de 2017, resulta de gran interés conocer el grado de ejecución de los grandes proyectos presentados por España y los fondos económicos utilizados, así como los proyectos que, por no cumplir los plazos acordados en la reglamentación correspondiente, deben replantearse o han supuesto la pérdida de las ayudas comunitarias acordadas.

¿En qué estado de planificación, de ejecución y de cumplimiento financiero se encuentran todos y cada uno de los grandes proyectos de alta velocidad ferroviaria que se presentaron por España y cuya inclusión en el Marco Comunitario de Apoyo 2007-2013 acordó la Unión Europea? ¿Cuáles de ellos se encuentran en riesgo evidente de incumplimiento de los plazos acordados en la normativa europea?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión

(13 de diciembre de 2013)

El sector del transporte es destinatario de aproximadamente la mitad de las ayudas aprobadas para España con cargo al Fondo de Cohesión. A fin de mejorar el equilibrio entre los diferentes modos de transporte, cerca de tres cuartas partes del presupuesto asignado al transporte se ha destinado a los proyectos del sector ferroviario, en consonancia con las directrices sobre redes transeuropeas de transporte de la Comisión. La ejecución de los proyectos ferroviarios, según la información enviada a la Comisión por las autoridades españolas, se adjunta en anexo.

El Estado miembro puede certificar los gastos relativos a estos proyectos antes de su aprobación. Si tales proyectos no se aprobaran, debería retirarse la certificación de los gastos.

De cualquier forma, los gastos para el período 2007-2013 son subvencionables hasta el 31 de diciembre de 2015.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011662/13
to the Commission**

Carmen Romero López (S&D)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Cohesion Funds

As part of the operational programme of the Cohesion Fund 2007-2013, Spain wished to create a high-capacity rail network, in accordance with Directive 96/48/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European high-speed rail system, transposed into national law by Royal Decree No 1191/2000. The Commission established its priorities for action regarding transport and aid for the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T), and in particular the priority projects in terms of European interest. Against this background, the strategic goals of Spain's National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 (NSRF) set out various actions for high-speed rail interventions. On 7 December 2007, the Commission also approved an operational programme of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in accordance with the convergence objective in the autonomous communities of Andalusia, Castile-La Mancha, Extremadura and Galicia, and under the Cohesion Fund for the entire territory of Spain.

Being very close to the end of the agreed period for finalising the complete plan for approved major high-speed rail projects, 31 December 2013, and with its construction having to be completed by 31 December 2015 and the service put into operation in March 2017, it is very important to find out what stage has been reached in the implementation of the major projects submitted by Spain and the funds used, as well as which projects, having failed to meet the deadlines agreed in the corresponding regulation, have to be reconsidered or have lost the Community aid agreed.

What is the state play with regard to the planning, implementation and financial compliance of each and every one of the high-speed rail major projects that were submitted by Spain and whose inclusion in the Community support framework 2007-2013 was agreed by the European Union? Which of these are blatantly at risk of failing to meet the deadlines agreed in European regulations?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission

(13 décembre 2013)

Le secteur des transports constitue environ la moitié du total de l'aide approuvée du Fonds de Cohésion pour l'Espagne. Afin d'améliorer l'équilibre modal, près de ¾ du budget consacré aux transports a été destiné aux projets du secteur ferroviaire, en ligne avec les orientations en matière de réseaux transeuropéens de transport de la Commission. D'après les informations transmises à la Commission par les autorités espagnoles l'exécution des projets ferroviaires est jointe en annexe.

L'État membre peut certifier des dépenses relatives à ces projets avant leur approbation. Au cas où ces projets ne seraient pas approuvés, la certification de dépenses devra être retirée.

En tout état de cause, les dépenses, pour la période 2007-2013, sont éligibles jusqu'au 31 décembre 2015.

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011663/13
a la Comisión**

Carmen Romero López (S&D)

(14 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: AVE Antequera-Granada

La Comisión Europea, por decisión de 24.3.2011, aprobó el gran proyecto «Línea de Alta Velocidad Antequera-Granada. Plataforma. Fase I», que forma parte, en el marco del objetivo de convergencia, del programa operativo de intervención estructural del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional para las comunidades autónomas de Andalucía, Castilla la Mancha, Extremadura y Galicia, y del Fondo de Cohesión en todo el territorio, en España.

La Comisión, según respuesta E-005706/2013 del Comisario Hahn, no ha recibido la solicitud de ayuda para la fase II del gran proyecto Antequera-Granada, aunque ya se ha certificado el 42 % de los gastos totales. El periodo de programación finaliza el 31 de diciembre de 2013 y es sabido que si la Comisión determina que el proyecto no es subvencionable, habría que retirar la certificación a dichos gastos.

Esta respuesta del Comisario de Política Regional sobre la situación de la fase II de este gran proyecto Antequera-Granada nos alarma sobremedida por la cercanía del plazo tope para presentar la planificación y por haber dado a conocer el Ministerio de Fomento del Gobierno de España su intención de cambiar esencialmente las características del trazado y la plataforma de esta línea de alta velocidad a su paso por Loja (Granada) en un tramo de 18 km y a su llegada a la ciudad de Granada, donde estaba previsto el soterramiento y la llegada a la ciudad en los terrenos de la actual estación de ferrocarriles.

¿Ha remitido España la planificación de la Fase II del Gran Proyecto de alta velocidad Antequera-Granada a la Comisión Europea para poderse acoger a la cofinanciación prevista en el Marco Comunitario de Apoyo 2007-2013?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión

(10 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión no ha recibido aún ninguna solicitud de ayuda relativa a la fase II de ese gran proyecto.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011663/13
to the Commission**

Carmen Romero López (S&D)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: AVE Antequera-Granada High-Speed Line

The Commission, by means of a decision of 24 March 2011, approved the major project 'Antequera-Granada High-Speed Line. Platform. Phase I', which, within the framework of the convergence objective, forms part of the operational programme for structural intervention of the European Regional Development Fund for the autonomous communities of Andalusia, Castile-La Mancha, Extremadura and Galicia, and of the Cohesion Fund for the entire territory of Spain.

According to Commissioner Hahn's answer to Question E-005706/2013, the Commission has not received the aid application for phase II of the Antequera-Granada major project, even though 42% of the total expenditure has already been certified. The programming period ends on 31 December 2013 and it is understood that if the Commission decides that the project cannot be subsidised, the certification for this expenditure would have to be withdrawn.

This answer from the European Commissioner for Regional Policy regarding the status of phase II of the Antequera-Granada major project is exceedingly alarming given how close the deadline is for submitting the plans and considering that the Spanish Ministry of Development has announced its intention to make significant changes to this high-speed line's route and platform over an 18 km stretch passing through Loja (Granada) and to its terminus in the city of Granada, where underground works and the route's arrival into the site of the current railway station were planned.

Has Spain submitted the plans for Phase II of the Antequera-Granada high-speed line major project to the European Commission, so that it can receive the co-financing provided for in the Community support framework 2007-2013?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission

(10 décembre 2013)

La Commission n'a toujours pas reçu de demande d'aide concernant la phase II de ce grand projet.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011664/13
to the Commission
David Martin (S&D)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Tar sands and the Fuel Quality Directive

Can the Commission advise me as to the present situation regarding the greenhouse gas emission value of tar sands in relation to the Fuel Quality Directive?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(22 November 2013)

The Commission has established, during the course of its consultation process, an average life cycle greenhouse gas intensity of oil sands in the context of Article 7a of Directive 98/70/EC. This value is based on a Commission study ⁽¹⁾ which concluded that fuels derived from oil sands are, on average, more greenhouse gas intensive than fuels derived from conventional crude oil. However the Commission has not yet adopted legislation in respect of the article 7a fossil fuel greenhouse gas calculation methodology.

⁽¹⁾ <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/9e51b066-9394-4821-a1e2-ff611ab22a2d>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011666/13
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(14 October 2013)**

Subject: Female genital mutilation

The British Arab Federation is running a campaign to bring an end to female genital mutilation (FGM) in the UK and will be hosting a conference in my constituency.

Further to the response given to Written Question E-005613-13, can the Commission outline in more detail what action is being taken to help Member States combat FGM?

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

As the Honourable Member has suggested, Member States face the challenge of combating female genital mutilation (FGM), an unacceptable violation of fundamental rights which affects thousands of women and girls living in Europe. Fighting all forms of violence against women, including harmful practices such as FGM, has long been a priority of the European Commission, as illustrated in the action plan implementing the Stockholm Programme, the Women's Charter and the strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015.

The Commission has implemented a series of activities focusing on FGM over the last year. On 6 March 2013, the Commission hosted a high-level Round-Table on FGM in which a number of MEPs were involved. The results of a public consultation launched the same day have contributed to the Commission's policy development on FGM.

Through the Progress programme, the Commission is also supporting Member States' information and communication activities aimed at ending violence against women including FGM. Under the Daphne programme, the Commission is funding projects led by grass-roots organisations addressing FGM and other harmful practices.

The Commission intends to continue developing effective initiatives to support Member States in this area, making full use of EU competences and has adopted a Commission Communication on FGM on 25 November ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/gender_based_violence/131125_fgm_communication_en.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011667/13
to the Commission**

Phil Bennion (ALDE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Property in Cyprus

Further to the Commission's response to Written Question E-011456-2012, I am still receiving correspondence from constituents who face difficulties with property in Cyprus. In light of its answer to the abovementioned question, could the Commission provide an update as to what, if any, recent action it has taken to ensure that the national authorities in Cyprus investigate any potential misleading practices by banks, developers or agents operating on the island?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission

(6 December 2013)

Following a number of complaints and also drawing on information obtained from the Cypriot authorities through a structured dialogue engaged in 2011, the Commission has recently opened infringement proceedings against Cyprus under Article 258 TFEU with regard to certain aspects of the transposition and application of EU consumer law.

In its letter of formal notice, the Commission raises different concerns related to the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive and the Unfair Contract Terms Directive.

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011668/13
alla Commissione**

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Lo Jugendamt tedesco e la Beistandschaft

Nella risposta all'interrogazione E-007711/2013 la Commissione afferma che «L'esercizio di tali competenze non rientra nell'applicazione del diritto dell'Unione europea e la Commissione non è pertanto in grado di valutarne la compatibilità», ma, com'è noto, esistono strumenti comunitari — quali lo stesso regolamento (CE) n. 4/2009 del Consiglio del 18 dicembre 2008 — che si occupano proprio di queste tematiche rendendo evidente una relativa competenza. L'affermazione pone in luce un inammissibile paradosso. Potrebbe chiarire definitivamente la Commissione se, a suo avviso, la competenza delle istituzioni comunitarie nelle menzionate materie davvero non sussista, soprattutto in presenza di violazione di diritti fondamentali riconosciuti invece negli altri Paesi dell'Unione?

Poiché la Commissione nella citata risposta afferma ammesso che possa [lo Jugendamt] prendere «decisioni unilaterali», desideriamo precisare che l'articolo di legge relativo al provvedimento di Beistandschaft prevede che detto provvedimento venga emesso solo su richiesta del genitore che si trova con il minore (in mancanza, in accordo o in violazione di una sentenza di affido) in territorio tedesco e senza nessun tipo di consultazione dell'altro genitore (non di raro vittima della sottrazione di suo figlio) e ne prevede inoltre l'immediata esecutività. Chiediamo pertanto il consenso della Commissione nel definire il provvedimento di Beistandschaft una «decisione unilaterale».

Poiché la Commissione nella citata risposta afferma: «lo Jugendamt non è assimilato a una giurisdizione ai sensi del suddetto regolamento; pertanto, ammesso che possa prendere “decisioni unilaterali”, queste non fruirebbero delle norme previste dal regolamento sulle obbligazioni alimentari in materia di riconoscimento e di esecuzione, in particolare dell'abolizione dell'exequatur (articolo 17) e della procedura di riesame (articolo 19)», potrebbe chiarire se è corretto quanto inteso, che le decisioni dello Jugendamt denominate Beistandschaft, nonché i provvedimenti del Tribunale familiare che pedissequamente le recepiscono nella sostanza, non vanno sottoposti all'applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 4/2009 del Consiglio del 18 dicembre 2008 e quindi in particolare non beneficiano dell'abolizione dell'exequatur e dell'abolizione della procedura di riesame, di cui agli articoli 17 e 19, e di conseguenza devono e possono essere riesaminati nel merito dalle Autorità giudiziarie nazionali?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

In merito alle competenze in materia di consulenza giuridica («Beistandschaft») concessa allo «Jugendamt» (l'Ufficio di assistenza dei minori tedesco), la Commissione rimanda gli onorevoli deputati alle risposte fornite alle interrogazioni scritte E-007539/2012 ed E-003342/2013.

La Commissione desidera inoltre precisare che il regolamento (CE) n. 4/2009 ⁽¹⁾ e le sue disposizioni che aboliscono l'exequatur e prevedono la procedura di ricorso si applicano solo a decisioni giurisdizionali, transazioni giudiziarie e atti pubblici in materia di obbligazioni alimentari. Il regolamento (CE) n. 4/2009 non riguarda misure che concedono allo «Jugendamt» competenze in materia di consulenza giuridica.

Nel caso delle obbligazioni alimentari, la Commissione desidera sottolineare che in generale, una decisione giurisdizionale, una transazione giudiziaria o un atto pubblico, compreso un accordo sugli alimenti, concluso con le autorità amministrative o da queste autenticato, che soddisfi le condizioni di cui al regolamento (CE) n. 4/2009, godono, in un altro Stato membro, dell'abolizione dell'exequatur prevista dal regolamento.

È altresì importante informare gli onorevoli deputati che, come regola generale, un ente pubblico di uno Stato membro, che in virtù del diritto nazionale ha il diritto di agire per conto di una persona cui siano dovuti alimenti o di chiedere il rimborso di prestazioni erogate al creditore in luogo degli alimenti, può chiedere l'esecuzione in un altro Stato membro, senza una previa procedura di exequatur, di una decisione giudiziaria emessa nei confronti del debitore su domanda di un ente pubblico o di una decisione giudiziaria emessa tra il creditore e il debitore a concorrenza delle prestazioni erogate al creditore in luogo degli alimenti.

La Commissione rinvia infine gli onorevoli deputati anche alla risposta fornita all'interrogazione scritta E-011669/2013.

⁽¹⁾ GUL 7 del 10.1.2009, pag. 1.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011668/13
to the Commission**

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: The German 'Jugendamt' (child welfare office) and the 'Beistandschaft'

In its answer to Question E-007711/2013, the Commission states that '[t]he exercise of these powers does not form part of the application of European Union law and the Commission is therefore not able to assess its compatibility with EC law', but it is common knowledge that there are EU instruments, such as Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 of 18 December 2008, that are concerned with precisely these issues, so there clearly is competence in this sphere. The Commission's statement highlights an unacceptable paradox. Could the Commission provide definitive clarification on whether, in its view, the EU institutions do not in fact have any jurisdiction on the said subjects, particularly where fundamental rights are being infringed, and where these are protected in other EU countries?

In its answer, the Commission says 'assuming that it [the Jugendamt] may take unilateral decisions'. We would therefore like to make it clear that the article of law concerning Beistandschaft provisions stipulates that such a provision shall be issued only at the request of the parent who is with the child (whether in the absence of, in accordance with or in contravention of a custody ruling) on German territory and without any kind of consultation with the other parent (from whom, not infrequently, the child has been abducted) and, in addition, provides that the provision shall be immediately enforceable. We therefore ask for the Commission to confirm that Beistandschaft provisions may be characterised as unilateral decisions.

In its answer, the Commission also states that 'the Jugendamt is not equivalent to a court within the meaning of the said regulation; therefore, since it may take unilateral decisions, these decisions are not covered by the rules laid down in the regulation on maintenance obligations regarding recognition or enforcement, and in particular the abolition of exequatur (Article 17) and the review procedure (Article 19)'. In view of this, could the Commission explain whether I have correctly understood that the decisions of the Jugendamt referred to as Beistandschaft provisions, and the orders issued by the family court which transpose them to the letter, are not subject to the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 of 18 December 2008 and thus, specifically, do not benefit from the abolition of exequatur or the abolition of the review procedure, referred to in Articles 17 and 19 of the regulation, and therefore must and can be reviewed by the national courts?

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

With regard to the legal advisership (Beistandschaft) granted to the German Youth Welfare (Jugendamt), the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its replies to the written questions E-007539/2012 and E-003342/2013.

In addition, the Commission would like to specify that the regulation (EC) No 4/2009⁽¹⁾ and its rules abolishing the exequatur and providing for a review procedure apply only to court decisions, courts settlements or authentic instruments, relating to maintenance obligations. Regulation (EC) No 4/2009 does not concern measures granting the Jugendamt powers of Beistandschaft.

As far as maintenance matters are concerned, the Commission would like to emphasise that in general, a court decision, a court settlement or an authentic instrument, including a maintenance arrangement concluded with administrative authorities or authenticated by them, which meets the conditions set forth under the regulation (EC) No 4/2009 shall benefit, in another Member State, from the abolition of exequatur provided by that regulation.

It is also important to inform the Honourable Members that as a general rule, a public body of a Member State, which under its national law has the right to act in place of an individual to whom maintenance is owed or to seek reimbursement of benefits provided to the creditor in place of maintenance, may claim enforcement in another Member State, without prior exequatur, of a court decision given against a debtor on the application of the public body or of a court decision given between a creditor and a debtor to the extent of the benefits provided to the creditor in place of maintenance.

Finally, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Members to its reply to the Written Question E-011669/2013.

⁽¹⁾ OJ, L 7, 10.1.2009, p.1.

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011669/13
alla Commissione**

Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: La Beistandschaft dello Jugendamt

Nella risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-007711/2013 del 20 agosto 2013, la Commissione ha fatto riferimento ad «informazioni di cui dispone la Commissione».

Potrebbe indicare specificamente in cosa consistono le informazioni di cui dispone la Commissione? Si tratta di informazioni provenienti esclusivamente dalla Germania, Paese del quale si contestano i provvedimenti?

Ha la Commissione verificato gli articoli del Codice tedesco citati nella Petizione Beistandschaft, dichiarata ricevibile nel novembre 2012 ed alla quale è stato attribuito il numero 0979-2012?

Nella citata risposta, la Commissione ha affermato che lo Jugendamt opera «in veste di consigliere giuridico del minore».

Potrebbe chiarire cosa si deve intendere con detta qualifica di «consigliere giuridico» e in che misura viene «giuridicamente consigliato» un minore ad agire contro il suo proprio genitore per ricevere dei soldi?

E come si spiega che detto «consigliere giuridico» ottenga il pagamento degli anticipi sugli alimenti attraverso il Bundesland, prima ancora che il giudice competente abbia sentenziato sull'affido?

Come si concilia questo ruolo con il divieto di esercitare il ruolo di consigliere giuridico per chi giurista non è, e tantomeno lo sono gli impiegati dello Jugendamt?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione assicura agli onorevoli deputati di aver attentamente verificato tutti gli atti legislativi correlati all'interrogazione scritta E-007711/2013 e alla petizione 00979/2012 citate nell'interrogazione.

Al riguardo, la Commissione coglie l'occasione per precisare che i compiti dello «Jugendamt» (l'Ufficio di assistenza dei minori tedesco), in quanto consigliere giuridico («Beistand») del minore in materia di obbligazioni alimentari, devono essere definiti ai sensi del diritto nazionale tedesco, in particolare della sezione 1712 del codice civile tedesco (BGB).

Inoltre, la Commissione desidera sottolineare che il suo principale obiettivo nel campo delle obbligazioni alimentari nei confronti del minore è promuoverne il rapido recupero nei casi transfrontalieri all'interno dell'Unione europea. È tuttavia responsabilità degli Stati membri sviluppare regimi specifici per fornire assistenza finanziaria o giuridica in materia di obbligazioni alimentari ai minori che ne hanno bisogno. La messa a punto di questi regimi è una questione di competenza del diritto nazionale. In particolare, il diritto di un ente pubblico di agire per conto di una persona cui siano dovuti alimenti o di chiedere il rimborso di prestazioni erogate al creditore in luogo degli alimenti è disciplinato dalla legislazione cui l'ente è soggetto.

Per ragioni di completezza, la Commissione desidera infine segnalare che, secondo le informazioni a sua disposizione, in caso di contenzioso relativo a un credito alimentare secondo il diritto tedesco è competente il giudice e non lo «Jugendamt».

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011669/13
to the Commission**

Niccolò Rinaldi (ALDE), Cristiana Muscardini (ECR), Roberta Angelilli (PPE), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Erminia Mazzoni (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: The 'Beistandschaft' of the 'Jugendamt' (child welfare office)

In its answer to Written Question E-007711/2013 dated 20 August 2013, the Commission referred to 'information available to the Commission'.

Could it state exactly what the information available to the Commission consists of? Is this information solely from Germany, the country whose provisions are being challenged?

Has the Commission checked the articles of the German Code quoted in the Beistandschaft petition, which was declared admissible in November 2012 and given reference number 0979-2012?

In the abovementioned answer, the Commission stated that the Jugendamt acts 'as legal adviser to the minor'.

Could it clarify how this description of 'legal adviser' should be understood, and to what extent a minor is 'legally advised' to act against his or her own parent to receive money?

What is the explanation for the 'legal adviser' obtaining advances of maintenance payments through the Federal State, even before the relevant court has ruled on custody?

How can this role be reconciled with the prohibition on those who are not legal experts exercising the role of legal adviser, and particularly when they are employees of the Jugendamt?

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

The Commission would like to assure the Honourable Members that it has carefully examined the relevant pieces of legislation related to the Written Question E-007711/2013 and the petition 00979/2012, referred to in the question.

In this regard, the Commission takes this opportunity to specify that the tasks of the German Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) as legal adviser (Beistand) of a child in maintenance matters are to be understood within the meaning of the German national law i.e. Section 1712 of the German Civil Code (BGB).

In addition, the Commission would like to emphasise that in the area of child maintenance, its main objective is to promote the swift recovery of child maintenance in cross-border cases within the European Union. However, it remains the responsibility of Member States to develop specific schemes so as to provide children in need with financial or legal assistance in maintenance matters. That internal organisation remains a matter of national law. In particular, the right of a public body to act in place of an individual to whom maintenance is owed or to seek reimbursement of benefits provided to the creditor in place of maintenance is governed by the law to which the body is subject.

Finally, for the sake of completeness, the Commission would signal that, according to the information available, German law provides that in case of disputes relating to maintenance matters, the maintenance issue is to be determined by a court and not by the Jugendamt.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor P-011670/13

za Komisijo

Tanja Fajon (S&D)

(14. oktober 2013)

Zadeva: Privatizacija v Albaniji po zakonu iz leta 1995 ter za ta namen izdani privatizacijski boni (vavčerji)

Po zakonu o privatizaciji državnega premoženja je Albanija leta 1995 med svoje državljane po določeni formuli razdelila privatizacijske bone. Namen njihove uporabe je bil jasen: sodelovanje državljanov pri privatizaciji državnega premoženja po zgledu večine držav, ki so konec dvajsetega stoletja izšle iz komunistične ureditve, torej za njihovo zamenjavo za delnice in deleže v podjetjih v državni lasti ter ostalo državno premoženje. Republika Albanija je tako izdala prenosljive materializirane vrednostne papirje, katerih skupna nominalna vrednost je znašala okoli 74 milijard albanskih lekov (ALL). Od tega naj bi jih bilo med državljane po nekaterih podatkih razdeljenih okoli 68,3 %, dejansko uporabljenih pa zgolj 17,6 %. Glede na te podatke bi današnja nominalna obveznost Republike Albanije (brez faktorja revalorizacije za obdobje 18 let) do imetnikov privatizacijskih bonov znašala okoli 266 milijonov EUR. V tem zakonu iz leta 1995 naj bi Albanija določila metodologijo izvedbe v treh fazah, česar žal nikoli ni v celoti uresničila, do sedaj pa sta bili izvedeni zgolj dve. Veljavnost kuponov je vlada že trikrat podaljšala – nazadnje do 31. 12. 2014 – iz tega izhaja, da se Vlada Republike Albanije sicer zaveda svojih obveznosti, ne najde pa prave volje in motiva, da bi obljubljeni in v zakonu zapisano tudi uresničila. Z dopolnitvijo zakona o privatizaciji je bila podana zakonska možnost, da privatizacijske bone kupijo tudi tuji državljani, vendar niso bili nikoli uvrščeni na kakršenkoli organizirani trg (npr. borza) ampak potisnjeni v območje „sivega trga“. V procesu nakupov privatizacijskih bonov so sodelovali številni državljani EU v želji po sodelovanju v privatizaciji albanskega premoženja – glede na s tem povezano pozitivno zakonodajo in dejstvo, da za obveznosti iz izdaje privatizacijskih bonov jamči Republika Albanija, pa so bili razumljeni kot atraktivna naložbena priložnost, vendar so številni ob tem utrpeli ogromne izgube. Privatizacijski boni ostajajo obveznost Republike Albanije. Vlada Republike Albanije bi morala nemudoma pristopiti k temu, da se omogoči njihova ustrezna uporaba bodisi za delnice uspešnih državnih podjetij bodisi za ostalo premoženje po vrednostih iz časa izdaje.

Zanima me, ali je bila o tem obveščena tudi Komisija ter ali zadevo spremlja, zlasti glede na mednarodnopravne obveznosti Republike Albanije do tujih državljanov v tej zadevi, zlasti tistih iz EU?

Ali Komisija sodeluje z Vlado Republike Albanije glede razrešitve vprašanja privatizacije, saj je Albanija v procesu pridobivanja statusa kandidatke za članstvo Evropske unije, ter kakšne ukrepe je Komisija sprejela v tej smeri?

Odgovor Štefana Füleja v imenu Komisije

(22. november 2013)

Evropska komisija tesno spremlja gospodarski razvoj v Albaniji. Poročilo o napredku Albanije iz leta 2013 ⁽¹⁾ obravnava dosedANJI napredek Albanije na področju gospodarskih meril. Vanj sta vključeni vprašANJI javnega dolga in privatizacije.

Pomembno je, da vlada izpolnjuje svoje obveznosti in obvladuje dolgove. To je jasno opredeljeno v programu nove albanske vlade, ki je nastopila mandata septembra 2013. Kar zadeva vprašanje uporabe privatizacijskih kuponov za privatizacijo državnega premoženja, Komisija na tej stopnji ni seznanjena s kakršnimi koli vladnimi instrumenti ali načrti. V okviru namenjanja večje pozornosti ekonomskemu upravljanju in dialogu z albanskimi organi namerava Evropska komisija to vprašanje še naprej spremljati.

Učinkovita in pregledna politika privatizacije ter obvladovanje javnega dolga sta bistvenega pomena za ohranitev zaupanja vlagateljev in utrditev albanskega gospodarstva.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer P-011670/13
to the Commission**

Tanja Fajon (S&D)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Privatisation in Albania under the 1995 law and privatisation vouchers issued for that purpose

Under its 1995 law on the privatisation of state-owned property, the Albanian government distributed privatisation vouchers to its citizens according to an agreed formula. Their purpose was clear: to involve citizens in the privatisation of state-owned assets along the lines of the model applied by most of the countries which emerged from Communism at the end of the 20th century, i.e. by exchanging vouchers for shares and stakes in state-owned companies and other state-owned assets. For this purpose the Albanian government issued transferable 'materialised' (i.e. physical) securities with a total nominal value of around 74 billion Albanian lek. Some 68.3% of the vouchers should have been distributed to the country's citizens, but just 17.6% were actually used. Based on these figures, the Albanian state's current nominal liability to holders of privatisation vouchers (excluding the impact of revaluation over a period of 18 years) should be around EUR 266 million. In the 1995 law Albania set out a three-phase implementation method, which unfortunately it has never fully carried out, as so far only two phases have been implemented. The government has extended the validity of the vouchers three times already (most recently to 31 December 2014), indicating that it recognises its obligations. However, it has found neither the genuine will nor the motivation actually to carry out what it promised and what is stipulated in the law. An amendment to the privatisation law made it legal for foreign citizens to buy the privatisation vouchers, but they have never been listed on any organised market (such as a stock exchange) and have been pushed instead into a 'grey market'. Many EU citizens, wanting to take part in the privatisation of Albanian assets, subsequently bought privatisation vouchers, encouraged by the positive legislation and the fact that the liabilities stemming from the issue of the vouchers were guaranteed by the Albanian state. They were seen as an attractive investment opportunity. However, many investors suffered huge losses. The privatisation vouchers remain a liability of the Republic of Albania. The government should immediately set about making it possible to actually use them, either for shares in successful state-owned companies or for other assets at the values pertaining at the time of issue.

Has the Commission been informed of this matter? If so, is it monitoring the situation, particularly in view of Albania's obligations under international law to the foreign nationals concerned, especially those from the EU?

Is the Commission working together with the Albanian government to resolve the privatisation issues, given that Albania is in the process of obtaining EU candidate country status? What measures has the Commission adopted in this respect?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission

(22 November 2013)

The European Commission follows closely the economic developments in Albania. The 2013 Progress Report on Albania ⁽¹⁾ addresses Albania's progress made so far in the field of economic criteria. Issues of government's debts and privatisation were included.

It is important that the government is meeting its own obligations and debts. This point is clearly addressed in the programme of the new Albanian government which took office in September 2013. Regarding the issue of the use of privatisation vouchers for the privatisation of state owned assets, the Commission is not aware of any relevant government instrument or plan at this stage. In the context of its increased focus on economic governance and its dialogue with the Albanian authorities, the European Commission intends to further monitor this issue.

An effective and transparent policy on privatisation and addressing government's debts is essential to sustain investors' confidence and to consolidate Albanian economy.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011671/13
a la Comisión**

Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)

(14 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Aumento de la pobreza energética en España

Entendemos como pobreza energética la incapacidad por parte de la población de pagar la cantidad mínima de los servicios energéticos para cubrir las necesidades básicas. En Europa afecta a más de 50 millones de personas (Proyecto europeo *European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency*, 2009) y en España, actualmente, un 15 % de los hogares se encuentran en situación de pobreza energética.

La Directiva 2009/72/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 13 de julio de 2009, sobre normas comunes para el mercado interior de la electricidad reconoce la existencia de la pobreza energética y obliga a los Estados miembros afectados que todavía no hayan tomado medidas al respecto a desarrollar planes de acción nacionales u otros marcos adecuados para luchar contra la pobreza energética, con el fin de reducir el número de personas que padecen dicha situación. En cualquier caso, esta Directiva obliga a los Estados miembros a garantizar el suministro de energía necesario y una protección adecuada de los clientes vulnerables.

Los precios de la electricidad en España han subido un 80 % desde el año 2004, siendo actualmente el tercer país de la UE con la electricidad más cara por detrás de Chipre y Malta. La Directiva 2009/72/CE contempla la prohibición de la desconexión de la electricidad a los clientes vulnerables en «períodos críticos», y la situación actual del Estado español, con 4 724 355 millones de parados, puede considerarse un «periodo crítico»; al mismo tiempo, la reforma energética aprobada por el Gobierno de España el pasado mes de julio permite a las eléctricas cortar la luz por impago a usuarios y a servicios públicos considerados esenciales como los hospitales.

Considerando todo lo anterior:

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre el aumento de la pobreza energética en España y sobre la erradicación de este grave problema?
2. ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para garantizar que, por parte de los órganos competentes y responsables, se exija el cumplimiento de la normativa comunitaria en relación al abastecimiento energético?
3. ¿Cree la Comisión que la UE debería definir el término «pobreza energética» y disponer de una política y de unas obligaciones europeas a los Estados sobre este problema para solucionarlo?
4. ¿Considera la Comisión Europea la propuesta del Comité Económico y Social Europeo por una acción europea coordinada para prevenir y combatir la pobreza energética (septiembre de 2013) y la elaboración de un Compromiso Europeo de Seguridad y Solidaridad Energéticas?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión

(6 de diciembre de 2013)

1. La pobreza energética constituye un motivo de seria preocupación que los Estados miembros deberían abordar tomando en consideración las disposiciones pertinentes de la legislación europea en materia energética ⁽¹⁾, tal y como se indica en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta escrita E-4799/13 de la Sra. Dodds.
2. La Comisión está llevando a cabo controles del cumplimiento de las directivas ⁽²⁾ a fin de comprobar la exhaustividad y la calidad de la transposición en los Estados miembros. Cuando la Comisión detecta una inconformidad de la legislación de los Estados miembros con el acervo de la UE, se incoa un procedimiento de infracción, en los casos en que esté justificado.

⁽¹⁾ En particular el artículo 3, apartados 7 y 8, de la Directiva 2009/72/CE; el artículo 3, apartados 3 y 4, de la Directiva 2009/73/CE; y el artículo 7, apartado 7, letra a), de la Directiva 2012/27/UE.

⁽²⁾ Directivas 2009/72/CE y 2009/73/CE.

3. La Comisión ha analizado, en colaboración con las partes interesadas, la posibilidad práctica y la conveniencia de establecer una definición común del término «pobreza energética». En un futuro informe, se presentarán los resultados del trabajo realizado por un grupo de expertos constituido en el marco del Foro de los Ciudadanos y la Energía ⁽³⁾, y estos se integrarán en el proceso de reflexión sobre nuevas formas de proteger a los clientes vulnerables frente a la pobreza energética.

4. En efecto, la Comisión está considerando esta propuesta y su posible incidencia presupuestaria. Además, algunas de sus acciones ya se han aplicado en la legislación adoptada recientemente ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/forum_citizen_energy_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/eed_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011671/13
to the Commission**

Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Rise in energy poverty in Spain

Energy poverty means people being unable to afford the bare minimum to cover their basic energy needs. This is an issue that affects over 50 million people in Europe (European Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Project, 2009) and 15% of Spanish households are currently in energy poverty.

Directive 2009/72/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity recognises that energy poverty is an issue and requires the Member States to develop national action plans or other appropriate frameworks to tackle energy poverty, with the aim of reducing the number of people in that situation. In any event, this directive requires Member States to ensure the necessary energy supply and adequate safeguards to protect vulnerable customers.

Electricity prices in Spain have gone up by 80% since 2004, and Spain now has the third most expensive electricity in the EU behind Cyprus and Malta. Directive 2009/72/EC prohibits disconnecting the electricity of vulnerable customers in 'critical times', and the current situation in Spain, with 4 724 355 out of work, can be regarded as a 'critical time'. At the same time, the energy reform adopted by the Spanish Government in July 2013 allows electricity companies to cut off users and essential public services, such as hospitals, for not paying their bills.

1. What does the Commission think about the rise in energy poverty in Spain and the eradication of this serious problem?
2. What action can the Commission take in order to determine whether the competent bodies insist on compliance with EC law on energy supply?
3. Does the Commission think that the EU should define the term 'energy poverty' and come up with a policy and European obligations for Member States with regard to this problem, in order to resolve it?
4. Is the Commission considering the proposal of the European Economic and Social Committee for coordinated European measures to prevent and combat energy poverty (September 2013) and a European energy security and solidarity commitment?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission

(6 December 2013)

1. Energy poverty is a serious concern that Member States should address taking into account the relevant provisions in European energy legislation ⁽¹⁾ as described in Commissions answer to Written Question E-4799/13 by Ms Dodds.
2. The Commission is conducting compliance checks of the directives ⁽²⁾ to verify the completeness and quality of transposition in the Member States. Where the Commission identifies non-conformity of the Member States' legislation with EU *acquis*, infringement proceedings are launched when justified.
3. The Commission has analysed, in cooperation with stakeholders, the practical possibility and opportunity for a common definition of energy poverty. The results of the work undertaken by an expert group set up under the Citizens' Energy Forum ⁽³⁾ will be presented in a forthcoming report and will feed in the reflection on further ways to protect vulnerable consumers against energy poverty.
4. Yes, the Commission is considering this proposal and its potential budgetary effects. Moreover, some of its actions have already been implemented in recent legislation ⁽⁴⁾.

⁽¹⁾ particularly Articles 3.7 and 3.8 of Directive 2009/72/EC; Articles 3.3 and 3.4 of Directive 2009/73/EC; Article 7.7(a) of Directive 2012/27/EU.

⁽²⁾ Directives 2009/72/EC and 2009/73/EC.

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/forum_citizen_energy_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/eed/eed_en.htm

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011672/13
a la Comisión**

Esther Herranz García (PPE)

(14 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Carne de pollo

Desde hace algunos meses, los productores españoles de carne de pollo se vienen quejando de la situación insostenible a la que se enfrentan debido a supuestas prácticas desleales realizadas por grandes superficies comerciales, que podrían estar pactando precios a la baja para mantener esta carne como producto reclamo. Muchos productores apenas pueden cubrir sus costes de producción debido al hundimiento de los precios, lo que dificulta enormemente su actividad empresarial.

— ¿Tiene la Comisión conocimiento de la situación que afronta el sector avícola español?

— ¿Conoce la Comisión otros casos similares en otros Estados miembros?

— Dado que es una cuestión que afecta a las normas de la competencia, ¿qué medidas piensa adoptar la Comisión para ayudar a este sector?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión

(17 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión está al corriente de las denuncias sobre prácticas comerciales desleales (PCD) en la cadena de suministro de alimentos de varios Estados miembros. No obstante, es importante distinguir entre PCD y prácticas que infringen las normas sobre competencia. Un acuerdo entre los supermercados para fijar precios plantearía un problema de competencia y tendría que ser investigado por las autoridades con responsabilidades en materia de competencia.

Las PCD son comportamientos que se desvían de la buena conducta comercial, contrarios a la buena fe y lealtad en las transacciones y que unos socios comerciales imponen a otros. Las PCD no constituyen un problema de competencia si no perjudican a los consumidores. Varias autoridades nacionales de competencia (ANC) han efectuado controles sobre las PCD en los últimos años ⁽¹⁾ y han llegado a la conclusión de que, a corto plazo, esas prácticas no parecen ir en detrimento de los consumidores. Dicho esto, un informe de la autoridad nacional de competencia española advierte de los riesgos de determinadas prácticas comerciales que, a corto plazo, podrían no suponer un problema de competencia, pero que pueden incidir negativamente a largo plazo en el bienestar de los consumidores debido a la disminución de las inversiones y la innovación o a la reducción de sus posibilidades de elección. Para abordar la existencia de las PCD, España adoptó en agosto de 2013 una disposición legislativa (Ley 12/2013).

La UE también se ha ocupado de las PCD. Las organizaciones empresariales han aprobado recientemente una iniciativa voluntaria contra las PCD. La Comisión ha publicado un Libro Verde sobre las prácticas comerciales desleales en la cadena de suministro alimentario y está realizando una evaluación de impacto de las diferentes opciones para hacerles frente.

⁽¹⁾ Puede encontrarse más información sobre estas investigaciones y medidas en la Red Europea de Competencia (REC): «ECN Activities in the Food Sector» (Actividades de la REC en el sector alimentario), mayo de 2012, especialmente los apartados 253-e54, que se puede consultar en <http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/documents.html#reports>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011672/13
to the Commission**

Esther Herranz García (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Poultrymeat

For several months, Spanish poultrymeat producers have been complaining about the unsustainable situation they are in as a result of alleged unfair practices by supermarkets, which may be agreeing to reduce prices so this meat remains a loss-leader product. Many producers can barely cover their production costs because prices have collapsed, making it very hard to stay in business.

— Is the Commission aware of the situation facing the Spanish poultry sector?

— Is it aware of similar situations in other Member States?

— Given that this is an issue concerning competition rules, what steps will the Commission take to help this sector?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission

(17 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of complaints about Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs) in the food supply chain in different Member States. However, it is important to distinguish between UTPs and practices breaching competition law. An agreement between supermarkets to fix prices would raise a competition concern and would have to be investigated by the relevant Competition Authorities.

UTPs are behaviours that deviate from good commercial conduct, are contrary to good faith and fair dealing and are unilaterally imposed by trading partners on others. UTPs are not a competition issue unless they harm consumers. A number of National Competition Authorities (NCAs) have carried out monitoring actions of UTPs in recent years ⁽¹⁾ and have found that in the short run UTPs do not seem to result in consumers' harm. This said, a report from the Spanish NCA alerted against the risks of certain commercial practices that in the short term may not suppose a competition concern but which may however in the long term entail negative effects on consumer welfare by decreasing investment and innovation or reducing consumer choice. To tackle the existence of UTPs, Spain adopted in August 2013 a legislative measure (Act 12/2013).

UTPs have also been the focus of action at EU level. Business organisations have just adopted a voluntary initiative against UTPs. The Commission launched a Green Paper on UTPs in the food supply chain and is currently undertaking an Impact Assessment of different options to address UTPs.

⁽¹⁾ More information on these investigations and actions can be found in a recent report from the European Competition Network: 'ECN Activities in the Food Sector' (May 2012), in particular paragraphs 253-54, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/competition/ecn/documents.html#reports>

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011673/13

alla Commissione

Aldo Patriciello (PPE)

(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Prospezioni petrolifere off-shore nel Mar Jonio

— Considerato che, per il tratto di mare denominato Mar Jonio, sono state presentate in Italia presso il Ministero dell'Ambiente numerose istanze di autorizzazione per attività di esplorazione di idrocarburi e che, nonostante tali richieste siano state rigettate nel 2010 dal MISE, con l'art. 35 del decreto «Cresci Italia» 83/2012 il governo italiano sanava il provvedimento, autorizzando de facto le richieste stesse;

— considerato che le istanze menzionate sono state presentate da numerose compagnie petrolifere omettendo di informare il pubblico interessato e impedendo la partecipazione dello stesso allo studio di pre-fattibilità;

— considerato che, a causa della peculiare conformazione del Mar Jonio, che rende tale specchio d'acqua un mare semichiuso, un incidente paragonabile a quello verificatosi nel Golfo del Messico nel 2010 potrebbe avere gravi conseguenze ambientali transfrontaliere sui fragili ecosistemi marini e costieri del Mediterraneo;

— considerato inoltre che attività di ricerche petrolifere e di eventuale estrazione di idrocarburi potrebbero trasformare il Golfo di Taranto da oasi turistica ricca di siti di interesse ambientali, quali l'Area marina protetta di Porto Cesareo e la Secca di Amendolara, in una discarica marina;

— considerata la decisione 2013/5/UE sulla protezione del Mar Mediterraneo dall'inquinamento;

— considerato che, in base a evidenze scientifiche emerse in studi condotti dal WWF, le tecniche di prospezione che si intendono utilizzare, basate sul sistema «air-guns», generano un inquinamento acustico che provoca seri danni agli ambienti marini, con conseguente diminuzione delle catture di pescato fino al 50 %;

— considerati, inoltre, i rischi di sversamento non solo durante le attività di estrazione, ma anche durante le mere attività di ricerca, come verificatosi durante la fase esplorativa del Progetto Ombrina Mare in Abruzzo;

— considerato che la ricerca di idrocarburi nel Golfo di Taranto renderebbe vani gli ingenti finanziamenti erogati dall'UE nell'ambito dei fondi regionali per la valorizzazione delle regioni interessate;

— considerati il principio di precauzione (art. 191 TUE) e le disposizioni in materia di sicurezza ambientale delle attività di perforazione per gas e petrolio approvate dal Parlamento europeo lo scorso maggio;

non ritiene la Commissione che le attività di ricerca e di estrazione di idrocarburi nel Mar Mediterraneo e i conseguenti rischi ambientali in un mare semichiuso come il «Mare Nostrum» appaiano in contrasto con le disposizioni elencate? Non ritiene che l'art. 35 del decreto legislativo 83/2012 disattenda il principio di precauzione?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione

(29 novembre 2013)

Le attività di esplorazione o sfruttamento di idrocarburi in particolari condizioni o aree geografiche non sono vietate né dalla decisione 2013/5/UE del Consiglio, relativa all'adesione dell'UE al protocollo offshore della convenzione di Barcellona, né dalla direttiva recentemente approvata sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare nel settore degli idrocarburi (direttiva sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare) ⁽¹⁾. Spetta agli Stati membri decidere se sfruttare o meno le risorse naturali di cui dispongono, ma garantendo il rispetto delle pertinenti normative UE in materia di ambiente e sicurezza.

In particolare, la direttiva sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare stabilisce norme chiare su come prevenire incidenti gravi e rispondervi in modo efficace, al contempo migliorando e rendendo più chiare le disposizioni dell'UE in materia di responsabilità. L'approccio seguito dalla direttiva sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare si basa sul principio della precauzione e sui principi dell'azione preventiva e della correzione, in via prioritaria alla fonte, dei danni causati all'ambiente nonché sul principio «chi inquina paga».

⁽¹⁾ Direttiva 2013/30/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 12 giugno 2013, sulla sicurezza delle operazioni in mare nel settore degli idrocarburi e che modifica la direttiva 2004/35/CE.

La direttiva prevede inoltre che sia assicurata una tempestiva ed effettiva partecipazione del pubblico riguardo agli effetti sull'ambiente delle operazioni esplorative in mare programmate nel settore degli idrocarburi. Gli Stati membri sono tenuti ad adottare le disposizioni legislative, regolamentari ed amministrative necessarie per conformarsi alla direttiva entro il 19 luglio 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011673/13
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Off-shore oil exploration in the Ionian Sea

Numerous applications for authorisation for hydrocarbon exploration have been submitted in Italy to the Ministry of the Environment in relation to the Ionian Sea, and, despite the fact that these requests were rejected in 2010 by the Ministry of Economic Development, under Article 35 of the 'Cresci Italia' Decree 83/2012 (decree for economic growth in Italy) the Italian Government has restored the order, thus in practice authorising the applications.

The abovementioned applications were submitted by numerous oil companies without the relevant public being informed, thus hindering public participation in the pre-feasibility study.

Because of the particular topography of the Ionian Sea, which makes this area of water a semi-closed sea, an accident similar to that in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 could have serious cross-border environmental consequences for the fragile marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mediterranean.

In addition, oil exploration activities and possible hydrocarbon extraction could change the Gulf of Taranto from a tourist oasis rich in sites of environmental interest, such as the marine protected area of Porto Cesareo and the sandbank of Amendolara, into a marine dumping ground.

Decision 2013/5/EU lays down measures on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution.

Scientific evidence from studies conducted by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) shows that the exploration techniques to be used, which are based on the air-guns system, produce noise pollution that causes serious damage to marine environments, with a resulting reduction in fish catches of up to 50%.

In addition, there are risks of discharge, not only during extraction activities but also during exploration activities, as seen during the exploration stage of the Ombrina Mare project in Abruzzo.

The search for hydrocarbons in the Gulf of Taranto would negate the huge amounts of financing granted by the EU from the regional funds for upgrading the regions concerned.

Article 191 TEU sets out the precautionary principle, and in May 2013 the European Parliament adopted provisions on the environmental safety of gas and oil drilling activities.

In view of all the above, does the Commission not believe that hydrocarbon exploration and extraction activities in the Mediterranean Sea and the resulting environmental risks in a semi-closed sea such as the Mediterranean appear to be in conflict with the provisions listed? Does it not believe that Article 35 of Legislative Decree 83/2012 ignores the precautionary principle?

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

Neither Council Decision 2013/5/EU, on EU accession to the Barcelona Convention Offshore Protocol, nor the recently-adopted Directive on the safety of offshore oil and gas operations (Offshore safety directive) ⁽¹⁾ prohibit exploration or exploitation of hydrocarbons in any particular conditions or geographical areas. While it is within the competence of the Member State to decide or not to exploit their natural resources, these activities shall comply with all relevant EU safety and environmental legislation.

In particular, the Offshore safety directive sets clear rules for effective prevention and response of a major accident, while also improving and clarifying existing EU liability provisions. The approach followed by the Offshore safety directive is based on the precautionary principle, and on the principles that preventive action needs to be taken, that environmental damage needs as a matter of priority to be rectified at source and that the polluter must pay.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas operations and amending Directive 2004/35/EC.

Moreover, the Offshore safety directive provides that early and effective public participation relating to the effects of planned offshore oil and gas exploration operations on the environment shall be ensured. Member States shall bring into force the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the directive by 19 July 2015.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011674/13

alla Commissione

Barbara Matera (PPE)

(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Riforme del governo turco

Il 30 settembre il premier turco ha annunciato una riforma legislativa che focalizza la propria attenzione su diversi punti. Verrà introdotto l'insegnamento del curdo nelle scuole private, ma non in quelle pubbliche. Si prevede anche una revoca del divieto di indossare il velo islamico per le dipendenti pubbliche. Il bando sul velo nelle istituzioni pubbliche sarà rimosso ad eccezione di alcune professioni: giudici, procuratori, funzionari di polizia e i membri dell'esercito. Tali soggetti hanno infatti un loro specifico codice per l'abbigliamento.

Il premier ha inoltre promesso di abbassare la soglia del 10 %, necessaria per l'accesso di qualsiasi gruppo politico in parlamento. Ciò garantirebbe al partito curdo Bdp la possibilità di entrare in parlamento. Vi sarà un aumento da uno a tre anni delle pene per i reati di odio, al fine di combattere la discriminazione, nonché una modifica delle discipline dei reati di odio commessi su base religiosa, nazionale o etnica. Vi saranno anche pene per chi cercherà di impedire a gruppi religiosi di praticare la loro fede. Nel pacchetto di riforme sono state inserite anche nuove regole per consentire una maggiore libertà di assemblea, estendendo alla mezzanotte il diritto a manifestare che prima era limitato al tramonto.

Il pacchetto dispone anche misure a favore delle minoranze religiose, tra cui i rom, i cristiani, e la comunità sciita degli aleviti.

La differente disciplina fra scuole private e pubbliche in merito all'insegnamento del curdo influirà negativamente sul rapporto che la Commissione pubblicherà il prossimo 16 ottobre?

Affinché sia rispettata l'agenda della Turchia sui diritti umani, la Commissione ritiene che l'abolizione dell'obbligo di indossare il velo debba essere estesa a tutte le professioni?

Risposta data da Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione

(2 dicembre 2013)

Come sottolineato dall'onorevole parlamentare, il 30 settembre 2013 il governo turco ha annunciato l'adozione di un pacchetto di misure di democratizzazione. La Commissione ha illustrato il contenuto del pacchetto nella relazione del 2013 sui progressi compiuti dalla Turchia ⁽¹⁾. Nella relazione si specificava che le misure previste avrebbero affrontato importanti preoccupazioni e che era fondamentale che venissero attuate in collaborazione con le parti in causa e in linea con gli standard europei.

Per quanto riguarda la questione del velo, la Commissione ha sottolineato in varie occasioni che esistono norme e pratiche diverse in Europa e che non esistono standard unici in questo senso. Già in passato la Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo ha statuito che si tratta di una questione sulla quale ciascuno Stato membro del Consiglio d'Europa deve decidere per sé. La Commissione non esprime pertanto osservazioni su questo tema per quanto riguarda la conformità con i criteri politici: spetta alla società turca trovare la propria via di compromesso sull'argomento. La Commissione accoglie con favore il crescente consenso sulla questione in Turchia. È importante che in tale contesto di consenso si continui a garantire la libera scelta delle donne turche, a prescindere dal loro credo e dalle loro opinioni, senza pressioni di qualsiasi genere, compresa la pressione da parte delle altre donne.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011674/13
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Turkish Government's reform

On 30 September 2013 the Turkish Prime Minister announced a legislative reform which focuses on various issues. Teaching of Kurdish will be introduced in private schools, but not in state schools. Also planned is a repeal of the prohibition on wearing the Islamic veil for public employees. The ban on the veil in public institutions will be removed, with the exception of certain professions: judges, prosecutors, police officers and members of the army. These individuals have their own specific dress codes.

The Prime Minister has also promised to lower the 10% threshold currently required for any political group to have access to parliament. That would offer the Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) the possibility of entering parliament. The penalties for hate crimes will increase from one to three years, with the aim of combating discrimination, and the rules on hate crimes committed on religious, national or ethnic grounds will be amended. There will also be penalties for anyone seeking to prevent religious groups from practising their faith. New rules have also been added to the reform package to allow greater freedom of assembly, extending the right to demonstrate until midnight, where previously demonstrations were only permitted before dusk.

The package also contains measures in favour of religious minorities, including Roma, Christians, and the Shia Muslim community of Alevis.

Will the different rules for private and state schools for the teaching of Kurdish have an adverse effect on the report the Commission is to publish on 16 October 2013?

Does the Commission believe that the abolition of the obligation to wear the veil should be extended to all professions, to ensure that Turkey's human rights agenda is adhered to?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

As the Honourable Member has noted, the Turkish government announced a democratisation package on 30 September 2013. The Commission outlined the content of the package in the Turkey 2013 Progress Report. ⁽¹⁾ The report indicated that the measures included in it hold out the prospect of addressing important concerns, and that implementation in cooperation with stakeholders and in line with European standards is key.

Regarding the question of headscarves, the Commission has pointed out, on several occasions, that there are different rules and practices across Europe and that there is no unified standard on the issue. The European Court of Human Rights has in the past ruled that the issue of headscarves is one for each Member State of the Council of Europe to decide for itself. It is for this reason that the Commission does not comment on this issue in relation to compliance with the political criteria. It is up to Turkish society to find its own compromise on this subject. The Commission welcomes the growing consensus on this issue in Turkey. It is important that this consensus continues to ensure the free choice of Turkish women, whatever their beliefs and opinions, free from pressures of any kind, including peer pressure.

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011675/13

à la Commission

Gaston Franco (PPE)

(14 octobre 2013)

Objet: Secteur européen du bois et de l'ameublement face à la concurrence chinoise

En raison d'un taux de croissance élevé et d'une main-d'œuvre bon marché, conjugués à une pénurie de ressources intérieures en bois, la Chine a acquis une importance grandissante dans le commerce mondial du bois, devenant ainsi le principal importateur de bois industriel et de produits forestiers et un important exportateur de produits bois transformés, très compétitifs en termes de prix et de qualité, principalement dans le secteur du meuble, mais aussi dans celui du contreplaqué. Comme le constatait le CESE dans son avis du 26.10.2011 «*Opportunités et défis pour un secteur européen du travail du bois et du mobilier plus compétitif*», les prix du contreplaqué et du mobilier sont soumis à une forte pression de la concurrence chinoise. Les rondins exportés vers la Chine retournent en Europe sous forme de produits finis ou semi-finis. Depuis de nombreuses années, la Chine est le plus important fournisseur étranger de l'Union en mobilier. Depuis 2008, plus de 50 % des importations totales en Europe proviennent de la Chine. Les importations européennes de mobilier en provenance de Chine sont actuellement supérieures de 46,9 % à celles de 2005, alors que les importations totales de mobilier n'ont augmenté que de 12,6 % en valeur, ce qui démontre la prédominance de la Chine.

Les scieurs européens déplorent que la matière première bois européenne soit captée massivement par la Chine au détriment d'une valorisation sur le territoire européen, l'industrie européenne du meuble ne pouvant concurrencer les faibles coûts de production, de réglementation, de transport et d'accès aux marchés des produits transformés par les Chinois. Le secteur européen du meuble fait en outre face à des problèmes structurels (main-d'œuvre vieillissante) et a été sévèrement touché par les récentes crises, qui ont conduit à une baisse significative du nombre d'entreprises, de l'emploi et du chiffre d'affaires. La Commission a pris conscience de l'ampleur de ces défis dans la nouvelle stratégie forestière européenne du 20 septembre 2013.

Comment la Commission compte-t-elle concrètement garantir des conditions de concurrence équitables pour les producteurs européens (face à leurs concurrents chinois) et renforcer leur compétitivité sur les marchés internationaux? Comment compte-t-elle soutenir le processus d'innovation du secteur européen du meuble (sur le plan de la technologie, de la fonctionnalité et de l'esthétique), à même de le différencier de ses concurrents chinois? Quels instruments financiers mettra-t-elle à la disposition des PME du secteur? Comment compte-t-elle encourager la valorisation de la ressource bois sur le territoire européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission

(6 décembre 2013)

L'UE soutient un commerce ouvert et équitable entre les producteurs nationaux et étrangers. Dans ce contexte, les accords commerciaux et les instruments de défense commerciale sont des éléments essentiels pour assurer, au niveau mondial, l'égalité des conditions de concurrence nécessaire pour que l'industrie de l'UE soit compétitive.

Les PME des secteurs de l'ameublement et de la menuiserie pourront profiter des instruments de financement par l'emprunt et les capitaux propres proposés pour la prochaine période de programmation (2014-2020) dans le cadre du programme COSME pour les PME ainsi que du programme Horizon 2020 pour les PME axées sur la RDI et les petites entreprises à capitalisation moyenne (jusqu'à 500 salariés) innovantes.

De plus, le plan d'action pour l'innovation axée sur la conception [(SWD(2013)380)] comporte des mesures visant à promouvoir l'innovation axée sur la conception dans les industries afin de renforcer la compétitivité de l'Europe, tandis que l'action de l'UE dans le domaine de la fabrication avancée vise à promouvoir l'adoption de nouvelles techniques de production dans tous les secteurs, y compris celui de l'ameublement.

Pour relever le défi de l'accès durable au bois et aux autres matières premières, la Commission a lancé le partenariat d'innovation européen concernant les matières premières. Le plan de mise en œuvre stratégique adopté le 25 septembre 2013 comporte des actions concrètes dans ce domaine. La nouvelle stratégie forestière de l'UE [COM(2013)659] reconnaît aussi le besoin d'évaluer l'approvisionnement potentiel en bois et de faciliter l'exploitation durable du bois.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011675/13
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(14 October 2013)**

Subject: European timber and furniture sectors in the face of Chinese competition

A high growth rate and cheap labour market, coupled with a shortage of domestic timber resources, has meant that China has become an increasingly important player in the global timber trade. It has become the largest importer of industrial wood and forest products and a major exporter of processed timber products, and is extremely competitive in terms of price and quality, primarily in the furniture sector, but also in the plywood industry. As the EESC noted in its own-initiative opinion of 26 October 2011 'Opportunities and challenges for a more competitive European woodworking and furniture sector', the prices of plywood and furniture are subject to enormous pressure from Chinese competition. The logs exported to China return to Europe as finished or semi-finished products. For many years, China has been the largest foreign supplier of furniture to the European Union. Since 2008, more than 50% of all imports in Europe have come from China. European furniture imports from China are currently 46.9% greater than in 2005, whilst furniture imports overall have only increased by 12.6%, highlighting China's predominance.

European sawyers lament the fact that European wood as a raw material has been harnessed to such an extent by China to the detriment of its exploitation in Europe, with the European furniture industry unable to compete with the low costs in terms of production, regulation, transport and access to markets of the products processed by the Chinese. The European furniture industry is also facing structural problems such as an ageing workforce, and was severely affected by the recent crises, which have led to a significant decrease in turnover and the number of businesses and jobs. The Commission became aware of the extent of these challenges in the new EU forest strategy of 20 September 2013.

How does the Commission specifically intend to guarantee fair competition for European producers (in the face of their Chinese competitors) and strengthen their competitiveness on international markets? How will it support the process of innovation in the European furniture industry (in terms of technology, functionality and aesthetics) so that it can differentiate itself from its Chinese competitors? What financial instruments will it make available to SMEs in the sector? How will it encourage the exploitation of timber resources in Europe?

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

The EU supports open and fair trade between domestic and foreign producers. In this context, trade agreements and trade-defence instruments are essential tools to provide a global level playing field required for the competitive position of the EU industry.

SMEs from the furniture and woodworking sectors will be able to benefit from debt and equity financial instruments proposed for the next programming period (2014-2020), under the COSME Programme for SMEs as well as under the Horizon 2020 Programme for RDI-driven SMEs and small midcaps (up to 500 employees).

In addition, the action plan on Design-Driven Innovation (SWD(2013) 380) includes measures to promote design-driven innovation in industries to strengthen Europe's competitiveness. While the EU action on advanced manufacturing aims at fostering the uptake of new production technologies in any industry, including the furniture industry.

In response to the challenge of sustainable access to wood and other raw materials, the Commission has launched the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials. The Strategic Implementation Plan adopted on 25 September 2013 contains concrete actions in this area. The new EU Forest Strategy (COM(2013) 659) also recognises a need to assess potential wood supply and facilitating increased sustainable wood mobilisation.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011677/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)**

Fiona Hall (ALDE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Karen rights in Burma

In recent years, the EU has provided funding to assist vulnerable populations in Burma/Myanmar, as well as for Burmese refugee camps in Thailand. Despite steps to improve social and economic development and human rights in Burma, there have been reports of continued human rights abuses against Burma's Karen community and ongoing conflict and displacement in ethnic states.

In light of this, what is the European External Action Service (EEAS) doing to assist the Karen community in Burma?

What steps is the EEAS taking to encourage the Burmese Government to address human rights violations and the displacement of ethnic Karen refugees?

How will the EEAS encourage the Burmese Government to move towards a permanent ceasefire agreement with groups in the Karen state?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission

(11 December 2013)

The EU is providing both humanitarian and development assistance for all disadvantaged groups in Myanmar/Burma regardless of ethnicity or religion. In the eastern border areas, including Karen state, support is provided for shelter and livelihoods, human rights, demining and strengthening civil society.

The EU is also the largest donor for peace projects in Myanmar/Burma. It not only supports the Myanmar Peace Centre, which has played an important role in the ethnic peace process, but also non-state actors and initiatives which include ceasefire monitoring. A new EUR 25 million programme to support peace, reconciliation and development will start in early 2014.

In addition to assistance projects, the EU regularly raises its concerns about the human rights situation with the Government of Myanmar. The EU-Myanmar Task Force on 13-15 November 2013 led by the HR/VP, discussed human rights not only with civil society and development partners, but also with Government, both Houses of Parliament and with the local business community.

The Joint Statement by the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission and the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 'Building a Lasting EU-Myanmar Partnership' of 5 March 2013 includes the agreement to promote human rights and the rule of law for all people living in Myanmar. A human rights dialogue is being established to help Myanmar/Burma to fulfil its commitments.

Finally, the EU has been over the last few years the main sponsor of the UN General Assembly human rights resolution on Myanmar, which on 19 November 2013 for the second consecutive year was adopted by consensus in close cooperation with the country concerned.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011678/13

προς την Επιτροπή

Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)

(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Γυναίκες και ανισότητα

Σύμφωνα με μία πρόσφατη έκθεση σχετικά με την ανισότητα των φύλων, η οποία δημοσιεύθηκε από την Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα, οι γυναίκες σε 15 χώρες αντιμετωπίζουν ακόμη ανισότητες λόγω φύλου στο νομικό και επιχειρηματικό πεδίο, καθώς οι σύζυγοί τους μπορούν νομίμως να τις παρεμποδίσουν να εργαστούν. Από τη δεκαετία του 1960, πάνω από είκοσι οικονομίες σε διάφορες χώρες, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της Ινδονησίας και του Μαρόκο, έχουν σημειώσει πρόοδο, περιορίζοντας τα νόμιμα δικαιώματα των ανδρών να θέτουν όρια στην εργασία των συζύγων τους. Τα τελευταία δύο χρόνια, η Ακτή Ελεφαντοστού, το Μαλί και η Γκάνα έχουν προβεί σε μεταρρυθμίσεις των νομοθεσιών τους προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση. Χώρες όπως η Ακτή Ελεφαντοστού, το Μαλί, οι Φιλιππίνες και η Σλοβακία έχουν εισαγάγει τον μεγαλύτερο αριθμό μεταρρυθμίσεων τα τελευταία χρόνια.

Η έκθεση ⁽¹⁾ επισημαίνει ότι το 90% των 143 οικονομιών του κόσμου εμπεριέχουν τουλάχιστον μία νομική διάκριση, η οποία περιορίζει τις οικονομικές ευκαιρίες που παρέχονται στις γυναίκες, σε σχέση με τους άνδρες, στη συγκεκριμένη χώρα, ενώ 28 από τις οικονομίες αυτές παρουσιάζουν τουλάχιστον 10 νομικές διακρίσεις μεταξύ των ανδρών και των γυναικών στον επιχειρηματικό κόσμο. 25 από τις χώρες αυτές βρίσκονται στη Μέση Ανατολή, Βόρεια Αφρική και στην υποσαχάρια Αφρική.

Επί του παρόντος, 79 χώρες θέτουν συνταγματικά όρια στο είδος των επαγγελματιών που δικαιούνται να ασκούν οι γυναίκες. Τέτοιου είδους περιορισμοί υφίστανται στην Ανατολική Ευρώπη και στην Κεντρική Ασία και προκαλούν αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στις επιχειρήσεις, στην ανταγωνιστικότητα της οικονομίας συνολικά, καθώς και στο ποσοστό συμμετοχής των γυναικών στο εργατικό δυναμικό. Η έκθεση υπογραμμίζει, επίσης, ότι εξακολουθούν να υφίστανται μισθολογικές αποκλίσεις εις βάρος των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας και υπο-εκπροσώπηση των γυναικών σε συνταγματικά δικαστήρια ή σε άλλα ανεξάρτητα όργανα δικαστικού χαρακτήρα σε 19 χώρες.

Δεδομένου ότι η ΕΕ μπορεί να διαδραματίσει αποφασιστικό ρόλο στις εξωτερικές σχέσεις και στις διμερείς συμφωνίες με τις χώρες αυτές:

α. Τι είδους δράση προτίθεται να αναλάβει η Επιτροπή, τόσο στις χώρες της ΕΕ, όσο και σε τρίτες χώρες, προκειμένου να διασφαλίσει την ίση μεταχείριση των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας και να τερματίσει περαιτέρω περιορισμούς τιθέμενους από τους συζύγους τους, λαμβανομένων υπόψη των ανωτέρω πορισμάτων της έκθεσης της Παγκόσμιας Τράπεζας;

β. Δύνатаι η Επιτροπή να παράσχει πληροφορίες για κοινές δράσεις που έχουν ήδη αναλάβει η ΕΕ και ο ΟΗΕ, σχετικά με την αλλαγή της νοοτροπίας και την καταπολέμηση στερεοτύπων εις βάρος της ισότητας των φύλων;

Απάντηση του κ. Piebalgs εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(12 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

1. Η χειραφέτηση των γυναικών προϋποθέτει μακροχρόνια αλλαγή της κοινωνίας και της πολιτισμικής παιδείας σε πολλούς τομείς. Για να αποδώσει και να είναι βιώσιμη πρέπει να είναι το αποτέλεσμα δέσμευσης και δυναμικών πρωτοβουλιών της κοινωνίας των πολιτών, παρά επιβολής από εξωτερικούς παράγοντες. Πάντως, σε χώρες εκτός της ΕΕ, η ΕΕ υποστηρίζει την κοινωνία των πολιτών και νομοθετικές μεταρρυθμίσεις με στόχο τη μείωση του χάσματος των φύλων όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση στις αγορές εργασίας και τις συνθήκες εργασίας.

Στην Ευρώπη, το άρθρο 23 του Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ ορίζει ότι «Η ισότητα γυναικών και ανδρών πρέπει να εξασφαλίζεται σε όλους τους τομείς, μεταξύ άλλων στην απασχόληση, την εργασία και τις αποδοχές». Η οδηγία 2006/54/ΕΚ ⁽²⁾ απαγορεύει τη διαφορετική μεταχείριση μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών όσον αφορά την πρόσβαση στην απασχόληση και την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση και σε σχέση με τους όρους εργασίας, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της αμοιβής. Η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί συνεχώς την εφαρμογή και την επιβολή της εν λόγω οδηγίας και βοηθά τα κράτη μέλη και άλλους εμπλεκόμενους παράγοντες για την ορθή επιβολή και εφαρμογή των ισχυόντων κανόνων.

⁽¹⁾ <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/FPDKM/WBL/Documents/Reports/2014/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2014-Key-Findings.pdf>

⁽²⁾ Οδηγία 2006/54/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 5ης Ιουλίου 2006, για την εφαρμογή της αρχής των ίσων ευκαιριών και της ίσης μεταχείρισης ανδρών και γυναικών σε θέματα εργασίας και απασχόλησης (αναδιατύπωση), ΕΕ L 204 της 26.7.2006, σ. 23-36.

2. Σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, η ΕΕ αναπτύσσει πλούσια δραστηριότητα στην προώθηση των κοινωνικοοικονομικών δικαιωμάτων των γυναικών. Το 2012, χρηματοδότησε 39 έργα σε όλο τον κόσμο, για να εξασφαλιστεί η ισότιμη πρόσβαση των γυναικών στους οικονομικούς πόρους και τις υπηρεσίες, ώστε να αυξηθεί η συμμετοχή τους στην οικονομική ανάπτυξη (30 εκατ. ευρώ). Έχει αναπτυχθεί πολύ καλά η συνεργασία με τον ΟΗΕ σχετικά με την ισότητα των φύλων. Πέρα από πλήθος έργων με οργανισμούς των Ηνωμένων Εθνών επί του ζητήματος αυτού, το 2012 υπεγράφη μνημόνιο συνεννόησης μεταξύ της ΕΕ και της Unwomen. Ένα επιτυχημένο έργο με την Unicef σε πέντε χώρες εστιάστηκε στην καταπολέμηση επιβλαβών κοινωνικών προτύπων, και ιδίως του ακρωτηριασμού των γυναικείων γεννητικών οργάνων και του πρόωρου γάμου. Επιπλέον, ένα έργο κόστους 20 εκατομμυρίων ευρώ πρόκειται να υλοποιηθεί με το UNFPA στη Λαϊκή Δημοκρατία του Κονγκό, με στόχο την υποκίνηση αλλαγής στην αντίληψη του ρόλου των γυναικών στην κοινωνία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011678/13
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Women and inequality

According to a recent gender inequality report published by the World Bank, women in 15 countries still face gender inequalities in the world of business and law, as their husbands can legally prevent them from working. Since the 1960s, over two dozen economies in various countries, including Indonesia and Morocco, have made progress by curtailing the legal rights of men to place restrictions on their wives working. In the last two years, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Ghana have reformed their laws to that effect. Countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Philippines and Slovakia have introduced the largest number of reforms in recent years.

The report ⁽¹⁾ shows that 90% of the world's 143 economies have at least one legal difference restricting economic opportunities available to women compared to those for men in that country, whereas 28 of these economies have at least 10 legal differences for men and women in the business world. 25 of these countries are located in the Middle East, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.

79 countries currently place constitutional limits on the kinds of jobs that women can do. Such restrictions exist in Eastern Europe and in Central Asia and have a negative impact on businesses, the competitiveness of the overall economy and on the female labour force participation rate. The report also highlights persisting wage gaps to the detriment of women in the labour market and the under-representation of women in constitutional courts or court-like bodies in 19 countries.

Given the pivotal role that the EU can play in foreign relations and bilateral agreements with these countries:

- (1) What action does the Commission intend to take, in both EU and non-EU countries, to ensure the equal treatment of women in the labour force, and to stop further hindrance by their husbands, in view of these findings in the World Bank report?
- (2) Can the Commission provide information on joint actions already undertaken by the EU and the UN on changing mentalities and combating stereotypes against gender equality?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)

1. Women's empowerment involves lengthy societal and cultural change in many areas. To be efficient and sustainable, it must be the result of civil society engagement and activism, rather than being imposed by external partners. Nevertheless, in non-EU countries, the EU supports civil society and legislative reforms aiming at reducing the gender gap in access to labour markets and working conditions.

In Europe, Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU provides that 'equality between women and men must be ensured in all areas, including employment, work and pay'. Directive 2006/54/EC ⁽²⁾ prohibits differential treatment of men and women in access to employment and vocational training and in relation to working conditions, including pay. The Commission is constantly monitoring the application and enforcement of this directive and assisting MS and other stakeholders in properly enforcing and applying the existing rules.

2. At global level, the EU is very active in promoting women's socioeconomic rights. In 2012, it funded 39 projects around the world, to ensure women's equal access to economic resources and to services in order to increase their participation in economic growth (EUR 30 million). Collaboration with the UN on gender equality is very well developed. Apart from many projects with UN agencies on this issue, a memorandum of understanding was signed in 2012 between the EU and UNWOMEN. A successful project with Unicef focused on fighting harmful social norms, notably female genital mutilation and early marriage in five countries. In addition, a EUR 20 million project is about to be implemented with UNFPA in the Democratic Republic of Congo aiming at initiating a change in perception of women's role in society.

⁽¹⁾ <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/FPDKM/WBL/Documents/Reports/2014/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2014-Key-Findings.pdf>

⁽²⁾ Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (recast), OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23-36.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011679/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclair (NI)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Progress Microfinance Facility

The Commission's report on the implementation of the European Progress Microfinance Facility (COM(2013)0562) states: 'Currently there are 26 participating institutions in 15 Member States using either or both of the Facility's windows. A contract with a UK-based provider (non-bank) was due to be completed by May 2013'.

Could the Commission inform me when this provider will become operational? When will British citizens be able to access funding through the Progress Microfinance Facility?

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

An agreement for the funding from the European Progress Microfinance Facility has been signed with Fair Finance. The agreement under the guarantee window of Progress Microfinance is fully financed by the European Union. A small ceremony was held in London on 7th of October 2013. The provider is already operational.

While Fair Finance is the first institution in the UK to receive support under this facility, British citizens are also able to benefit from microloans provided by Progress Microfinance intermediaries throughout the EU, subject to specific conditions of the providers.

Possibilities also exist to support microfinance development through Operational Programmes co-financed by the European Social Fund or the European Regional Development Fund, including by way of loan, equity or guarantee instruments.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011680/13
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclair (NI)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Welfare of pigs — illegal tail docking

The EU directive on the protection of pigs, which came into force in 2003, makes the docking of pigs' tails illegal.

The NGO Compassion in World Farming has revealed that this practice is still widespread ⁽¹⁾.

Has the Commission done anything to identify those Member States that are routinely flouting the law?

What steps has the Commission taken, or what steps does it envisage taking, to address this cruel and unnecessary practice?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

Routine tail-docking, which is contrary to the requirements of Directive 2008/120/EC ⁽²⁾, is widespread across the EU.

The Commission takes the implementation of animal welfare rules seriously. Thus several actions are foreseen in the EU Animal Welfare Strategy 2012-2015 ⁽³⁾ to improve the degree of enforcement across EU.

The Commission began to develop guidelines on the provision of manipulable material and avoidance of tail biting in 2013 and has already convened two meetings with the Member States and stakeholders. Such guidelines may assist both pig producers and Member States' authorities in their efforts to comply with Directive 2008/120/EC, and thus to abandon tail-docking.

Additionally, the Commission provides national officials with training programmes ⁽⁴⁾ to build a common understanding of the legislative requirements.

⁽¹⁾ http://www.ciwf.org.uk/news/pig_farming/pigs_in_europe_still_suffering.aspx

⁽²⁾ OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5-13.

⁽³⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm

⁽⁴⁾ Better Training for Safer Food; <http://www.sancotraining.izs.it/joomla/index.php/training-activities-2013-2014/training-calendar>

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-011681/13

aan de Commissie

Lucas Hartong (NI)

(14 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bizarre boete Urker visser

Afgelopen vrijdag blijkt Urker visser PW 447 in Noorwegen te zijn beboet ten bedrage van 16 000 euro ⁽¹⁾. Zijn overtreding? Het per ongeluk overboord glijden van een zevental scharretjes die bij het uitzetten van de netten weggleden. Inclusief visverlet, juridische bijstand en duurder vistransport vanuit Noorwegen een schadepost van 23 000 euro, becijfert de eigenaar. Toen hij de Noorse hoofdcontroleur meldde dat hij nog nooit zoiets had meegemaakt in zijn 35-jarige loopbaan, kreeg hij ten antwoord: „(Norway) We protect our waters”. De discardban wordt door de Noren kennelijk gebruikt om vissers uit EU lidstaten te weren. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Vindt de Commissie met de PVV dat dit optreden van het land Noorwegen jegens een visser uit een EU lidstaat volstrekt onacceptabel gedrag is?
2. Kan een visser uit een EU lidstaat meer van dit soort idiote boetes verwachten bij het per ongeluk overboord glijden van zeven scharretjes? Wat gaat uw Commissie doen om dat te voorkomen?
3. Wat gaat de Commissie doen om het land Noorwegen op het matje te roepen en ervoor te zorgen dat deze boete jegens PW447 per direct ongedaan wordt gemaakt?
4. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat de discardban nu al een volstrekt mislukte maatregel is?

Antwoord van mevrouw Damanaki namens de Commissie

(3 januari 2014)

Noorwegen voerde ruim tien jaar geleden een teruggooiverbod in om zijn hulpbronnen te beschermen. Noorwegen houdt intensief toezicht op de visserijactiviteiten in de wateren die onder zijn jurisdictie vallen en geeft systematisch zware boetes voor overtredingen van de visserijregelgeving. EU-vissers die regelmatig in de Noorse wateren vissen, zijn hier meestal goed van op de hoogte. Met de hervorming van het gemeenschappelijk visserijbeleid wordt een verplichting ingevoerd om ook in EU-wateren alle vangsten aan land te brengen. De Commissie is van mening dat de invoering van de aanlandingsverplichting een belangrijke stap is voor de bescherming van de visserijbronnen. Het Europees Parlement en de Raad treden dit standpunt bij.

De Commissie respecteert het Noorse teruggooiverbod en is van mening dat dit alleen kan slagen als het wordt nageleefd en gehandhaafd.

EU-vissers die zich niet aan de Noorse regels houden, kunnen een zware boete krijgen; bij herhaalde inbreuken kunnen zij hun vergunning om in Noorse wateren te vissen, kwijtraken.

De reder heeft de mogelijkheid om in beroep te gaan binnen het Noorse rechtstelsel.

⁽¹⁾ <http://visserijnieuws.punt.nl/content/2013/10/Noorse-boete-van-16000-euro-voor-een-paar-scharretjes#sthash.nEsTtowt.dpuf>.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011681/13
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(14 October 2013)**

Subject: Bizarre fine for Urk fisherman

Last Friday, it seems that Urk-based fishing vessel PW 447 was fined EUR 16 000 in Norway ⁽¹⁾. What was the offence? It was the accidental release overboard of seven dabs that fell out when the nets were put out. According to the owner, when lost fishing hours, legal bills and the increased costs in bringing the fish back from Norway are taken into account, this all amounts to a loss of EUR 23 000. When he told the Norwegian head inspector that he had never been involved in anything like it in his 35-year career, he was told, 'Norway: we protect our waters.' The Norwegians are evidently using the discard ban to keep fishermen from EU Member States away.

1. Does the Commission agree with the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) that this action on Norway's part against a fisherman from an EU Member State is completely unacceptable behaviour?
2. Can fishermen from EU Member States expect more of this kind of idiotic fines, should seven dabs accidentally slip overboard? What is the Commission going to do to prevent this?
3. What is the Commission going to do to call Norway to account and ensure that this fine against PW 447 is immediately reversed?
4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the discard ban should now be considered a completely failed measure?

**Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(3 January 2014)**

Norway established a discard ban in order to protect their resources more than a decade ago. Norway carries out extensive surveillance of fishing activities in the waters under its jurisdiction and systematically applies a deterrent level of fines for violations of its fisheries legislation. EU fishermen regularly operating in Norwegian waters are generally well aware of this. With the reform of the common fisheries policy, an obligation to land all catches is being introduced also in EU waters. The Commission believes that the introduction of the landing obligation is an important step towards conserving fisheries sources. The European Parliament and the Council have endorsed that view.

The Commission respects the Norwegian discard ban and believes it can only be successful if it is complied with and properly enforced.

EU fishermen not complying with Norwegian rules run a risk of being confronted with deterrent fines; in case of repeated offences they risk losing their license to fish in Norwegian waters.

The owner of the vessel has the possibility to lodge an appeal under the Norwegian judicial system.

⁽¹⁾ <http://visserijnieuws.punt.nl/content/2013/10/Noorse-boete-van-16000-euro-voor-een-paar-scharretjes#sthash.nEsTtowt.dpuf>

(Versión española)

**Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-011682/13
a la Comisión**

Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)

(14 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Nombramientos en la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia

Como sabe la Comisión, el Gobierno español ha creado la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC), en la que fusiona los distintos organismos reguladores y la Comisión Nacional de la Competencia. A pesar de las distintas cartas remitidas por la Comisión al Gobierno español manifestando su preocupación y advirtiéndole sobre la necesidad de que los nombramientos y ceses de los miembros de los consejos de las ANR con mandato en vigor sean conformes con los requisitos que se derivan de la legislación de la UE, el Gobierno español ha procedido al cese de los miembros de los organismos reguladores y de la competencia con mandato en vigor. Esta decisión del Gobierno español, que atenta gravemente contra la independencia de los organismos reguladores consagrada en la legislación de la UE, supone un precedente que, si la Comisión Europea no lo remedia, puede tener consecuencias nefastas para la eficiencia y la independencia de los organismos reguladores en España.

En base a estos hechos, deseo realizar las siguientes preguntas a la Comisión:

1. ¿Considera la Comisión que la independencia de las Autoridades Nacionales de Regulación (ANR) se ve comprometida por el cese de los miembros de sus consejos con mandato en vigor por motivos de reestructuración o fusión de los organismos reguladores?
2. ¿Cuáles son los indicios o criterios que, en ocasiones anteriores, ha utilizado el Servicio Jurídico de la Comisión para considerar que los ceses de los miembros de consejos de las Autoridades Nacionales de Regulación (ANR) por reestructuración o fusión de los organismos reguladores podrían socavar la independencia del regulador?
3. ¿Considera que el Gobierno español ha atendido las llamadas de atención recibidas a través de varias misivas de la Comisaria, Sra. Kroes, acerca del cese de los consejeros con nombramientos en vigor?
4. ¿Ha considerado la Comisión la oportunidad de aplicar a España medidas adoptadas con respecto a otros países, como Hungría o Polonia, por situaciones análogas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión

(10 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión confiere gran importancia a la independencia de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación, lo que incluye la independencia de los miembros de sus consejos. Si bien los Estados miembros disfrutaban de un considerable grado de autonomía, en virtud de la legislación de la UE, para decidir cómo establecer sus organismos de la competencia y de regulación sectorial, deben cumplir debidamente todos los requisitos impuestos por dicha legislación, en particular los relativos al cese de los presidentes y consejeros de esas autoridades.

La Comisión ha supervisado muy estrechamente la adopción y aplicación de la Ley 3/2013, de creación de la Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC), manteniéndose en contacto con las autoridades españolas al respecto. Tras la aprobación de la Orden ministerial ECC/1796/2013 ⁽¹⁾, que puso fin al periodo transitorio, la CNMC inició sus actividades el 7 de octubre de 2013. Los presidentes y consejeros de las autoridades previas que se fusionaron en la CNMC fueron cesados por sendos decretos reales publicados en el Boletín Oficial del Estado el 15 de octubre de 2013 ⁽²⁾.

La creación de la CNMC representa una reforma sustancial de los organismos de la competencia y de regulación sectorial de España, ya que ocho organismos se fusionan en una sola autoridad única. Ahora bien, una de las consecuencias de la aplicación de la reforma de la CNMC ha sido el cese de los presidentes y consejeros de las autoridades previas, por lo que los servicios de la Comisión están evaluando la compatibilidad de la legislación nacional pertinente con los requisitos aplicables en el marco de la legislación de la UE sobre las condiciones del cese de los presidentes y consejeros de las autoridades nacionales de reglamentación.

Los servicios de la Comisión concluirán su evaluación y adoptarán las medidas oportunas.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-10371.pdf>

⁽²⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/15/index.php?id=247&s=2>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011682/13
to the Commission**

Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Appointments to the National Commission for Markets and Competition

As the Commission is aware, the Spanish Government has set up a National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC), by merging individual regulators and the National Competition Commission. Despite several letters sent by the Commission to the Spanish Government expressing its concern and warning that serving board members of National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) should be appointed and dismissed in compliance with the requirements of EC law, the Spanish Government has dismissed serving members of the regulatory bodies and the competition commission. This decision by the Spanish Government, which seriously compromises the independence of regulatory bodies as enshrined in EU legislation, sets a precedent that, if the Commission does not remedy the situation, may damage the effectiveness and independence of regulatory bodies in Spain.

1. Does the Commission think that the independence of the National Regulatory Authorities is compromised by the dismissal of serving board members due to the restructuring or merging of regulatory bodies?
2. On previous occasions, on what grounds or criteria did the Legal Service of the Commission determine that the dismissal of NRA board members due to the restructuring or merging of regulatory bodies could undermine regulatory independence?
3. Does it think that the Spanish Government has heeded the warnings it has received in a number of letters sent by Commissioner Kroes, concerning the dismissal of serving board members?
4. Has the Commission considered whether it should apply to Spain measures taken against other countries such as Hungary or Poland, in similar situations?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission

(10 December 2013)

The Commission attaches great importance to the independence of national regulatory authorities, including the independence of their Board members. Whilst under EC law Member States have a considerable degree of autonomy in deciding how to set up their competition and sector regulatory bodies any requirements imposed by EC law shall be duly complied with, including those regarding the dismissal of Heads and Board Members of these authorities.

The Commission has been monitoring very closely the adoption and implementation of Law 3/2013 creating the National Commission for Markets and Competition (CNMC) and has been in contact with the Spanish authorities in this regard. Following the adoption of Ministerial Order ECC/1796/2013 ⁽¹⁾, ending the transitory period, the CNMC began its activities on 7 October 2013. The Heads and Board Members of the previous authorities merged into the CNMC were dismissed by Government Royal Decrees published in the Spanish Official Journal on 15 October 2013 ⁽²⁾.

The creation of the CNMC represents a fundamental reform of the competition and sector regulatory bodies in Spain, merging into a new single authority a total of eight bodies. However, as one of the consequences of the implementation of the CNMC reform has been the termination of the mandates of Heads and Board Members of the previous authorities, the Commission services are carrying out the assessment of the compatibility of this national legislation with the applicable requirements under EC law regarding the conditions for the dismissal of Heads and Board Members of national regulatory authorities.

The Commission services will finalise their assessment and take the necessary actions as appropriate.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/05/pdfs/BOE-A-2013-10371.pdf>

⁽²⁾ <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2013/10/15/index.php?d=247&s=2>

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011683/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Χάρτες υψηλής πιθανότητας συγκέντρωσης πληθυσμού που διατρέχει κίνδυνο φτώχειας

Η Επιτροπή, σύμφωνα με προηγούμενη απάντησή της (E-006404/2013) διερεύνησε, σε έργο που ξεκίνησε από κοινού με την Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα, τη δυνατότητα δημιουργίας χαρτών υψηλής πιθανότητας συγκέντρωσης πληθυσμού που διατρέχει κίνδυνο φτώχειας, δηλαδή με εισόδημα χαμηλότερο του 60% του εθνικού διάμεσου εισοδήματος. Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει για τα αποτελέσματα της έκθεσης; Ποια κράτη μέλη συμπεριλαμβάνει σε αυτό το πρώτο πιλοτικό πρόγραμμα; Προτίθεται να επεκτείνει την έρευνά της στο σύνολο των κρατών μελών της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Τα πορίσματα της μελέτης υπάρχουν μόνο ως χάρτες, οι οποίοι θα διατεθούν στο αξιότιμο μέλος χωριστά. Σε σύγκριση με τις στατιστικές EU-SILC ⁽¹⁾ (επίπεδο NUTS 2 ⁽²⁾), οι συγκεκριμένοι χάρτες εκτιμήσεων για μικρές περιοχές αποτυπώνουν μια πιο διαφοροποιημένη εικόνα όσον αφορά τη γεωγραφική κατανομή των πληθυσμών που διατρέχουν τον κίνδυνο φτώχειας στη Ρουμανία (NUTS 3 ⁽³⁾), στην Ουγγαρία (LAU 1 ⁽⁴⁾), στην Εσθονία (LAU 2 ⁽⁵⁾), στη Σλοβενία (LAU 2) και στη Λετονία (NUTS 3). Η Παγκόσμια Τράπεζα έχει σχεδιάσει χάρτες της Σλοβακίας στο πλαίσιο άλλου έργου, για την κυβέρνηση της Σλοβακίας σχετικά με το επίπεδο LAU 1.

Οι χάρτες για την Πολωνία, την Τσεχική Δημοκρατία και τη Λιθουανία αναμένονται έως τον Φεβρουάριο του 2014. Δεν θα υπάρξουν χάρτες για τη Βουλγαρία και την Κροατία, αφού οι χώρες αυτές δεν καλύπτονται από το συγκεκριμένο σχέδιο.

Δεν έχει ληφθεί ακόμα απόφαση σχετικά με πιθανές ενέργειες παρακολούθησης.

Το ESPON ⁽⁶⁾, χωριστό πρόγραμμα της Επιτροπής, παρέχει εκτιμήσεις για μικρές περιοχές της ΕΕ-15.

⁽¹⁾ European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

⁽²⁾ Ονοματολογία εδαφικών στατιστικών μονάδων, επίπεδο 2 — Βασικές περιφέρειες για την εφαρμογή των περιφερειακών πολιτικών.

⁽³⁾ Ονοματολογία εδαφικών στατιστικών μονάδων, επίπεδο 3 — Μικρές περιφέρειες για συγκεκριμένες διαγνώσεις.

⁽⁴⁾ Η τοπική διοικητική μονάδα επιπέδου 1, που ορίζεται για ορισμένες χώρες, αφορά μονάδες όπως κομητείες, επαρχίες, καντόνια κ.λπ.

⁽⁵⁾ Τοπική διοικητική μονάδα επιπέδου 2: δήμοι.

⁽⁶⁾ Ευρωπαϊκό δίκτυο παρατηρήσεων για την εδαφική ανάπτυξη και συνοχή (www.espon.eu).

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011683/13
to the Commission**

Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Maps indicating areas where there is a high probability that people at risk of poverty will be concentrated

In answer to a previous question (E-006404/2013) the Commission indicated that it was, in cooperation with the World Bank, investigating the possibility of drawing up maps indicating areas where there is a high probability that people at risk of poverty, that is to say whose income is below 60% of the national median, will be concentrated. Can the Commission outline the findings of this study? Which Member States are included in this first pilot programme? Does the Commission intend to extend its investigations to all EU Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(3 December 2013)

The findings of the study exist only as maps and will be made available to the Honourable Member separately. Compared with EU-SILC ⁽¹⁾ (NUTS2 ⁽²⁾ level), these small area estimation maps deliver a more differentiated picture of the spatial distribution of at-risk-of-poverty in Romania (NUTS3 ⁽³⁾), Hungary (LAU1 ⁽⁴⁾), Estonia (LAU2 ⁽⁵⁾), Slovenia (LAU2) and Latvia (NUTS3). The World Bank has prepared maps of Slovakia as part of a different project, for the Slovak government on the LAU1 level.

Maps for Poland, Czech Republic and Lithuania are expected by February 2014. No maps will be provided for Bulgaria and Croatia as these countries are not part of this project.

No decision has yet been taken about possible follow-up.

A separate Commission project, ESPON ⁽⁶⁾ delivers small area estimations for the EU-15.

⁽¹⁾ European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

⁽²⁾ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics, level 2 — basic regions for the application of regional policies.

⁽³⁾ Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics, level 3 — small regions for specific diagnoses.

⁽⁴⁾ Local Administrative Unit, level 1, defined for some countries, denote units such as counties, districts, cantons etc.

⁽⁵⁾ Local Administrative Unit, level 2, municipalities.

⁽⁶⁾ The European Observation Network for Territorial Development and Cohesion (www.espon.eu).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011684/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άμισθη μαθητεία

Η άμισθη μαθητεία, που είναι ευρέως διαδομένη στις ΗΠΑ και τα τελευταία έτη κερδίζει σημαντικό έδαφος και στην Ευρώπη, κατηγορείται συχνά για εκμετάλλευση νέων με προσόντα, με αφορμή, μεταξύ άλλων, τα υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας. Μετά από πολλές ομαδικές αγωγές μαθητευομένων εναντίον εταιριών, οι ΗΠΑ πρόσφατα αποφάσισαν να θέσουν σαφή πλαίσια στο καθεστώς των μαθητειών. Για παράδειγμα, το Υπουργείο Εργασίας των ΗΠΑ ορίζει ότι οι περίοδοι μαθητείας πρέπει αποδεδειγμένα να ωφελούν κατά κύριο λόγο τον μαθητευόμενο και όχι τις επιχειρήσεις, ενώ με δικαστικές αποφάσεις αμφισβητείται η άμισθη εργασία και προκρίνεται η έμμισθη με ελάχιστη αμοιβή τον βασικό μισθό. Παρόμοιος προβληματισμός αναπτύσσεται και σε αρκετά κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, με την Γαλλία να θεσπίζει μέτρο σύμφωνα με το οποίο οι μαθητευόμενοι που εργάζονται για περισσότερο από δύο μήνες θα πρέπει να λαμβάνουν τον βασικό μισθό.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Καθώς στις σχετικές εκδόσεις της κρίνει ότι θα πρέπει να δοθεί σαφέστερος ορισμός σχετικά με το ποιος είναι μαθητευόμενος και να ορισθούν υψηλότερα επίπεδα αποζημίωσης των μαθητευομένων, διαπιστώνει πρόοδο των κρατών μελών σε αυτόν τον τομέα;
2. Αναμένονται νέες πρωτοβουλίες, κατά το πρότυπο των ΗΠΑ, για μεγαλύτερη διασφάλιση και προστασία των δικαιωμάτων των μαθητευομένων στην ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Andor εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Οι πρωτοβουλίες που αναφέρει στην ερώτησή του ο κ. βουλευτής αποσκοπούν στην αντιμετώπιση καταχρήσεων στις περιπτώσεις πρακτικής άσκησης (γνωστές και ως μαθητείες), που έχουν επεκταθεί τα τελευταία χρόνια. Για να αντιμετωπιστεί το πρόβλημα της πρακτικής άσκησης χαμηλής ποιότητας, η Επιτροπή πρόκειται τον Δεκέμβριο να υποβάλει πρόταση για ένα πλαίσιο ποιότητας για την πρακτική άσκηση, με σκοπό να εξασφαλίζονται κατάλληλες συνθήκες εργασίας και ένα υψηλό επίπεδο μαθησιακού περιεχομένου για τους ασκούμενους.

Παράλληλα, στις 2 Ιουλίου 2013 η Επιτροπή καθιέρωσε την Ευρωπαϊκή Συμμαχία για θέσεις μαθητείας, για να ενισχυθούν η ποιότητα και το κύρος των μαθητειών. Αντίθετα με την πρακτική άσκηση, που έχει μικρή διάρκεια και δεν οδηγεί σε εθνικά αναγνωρισμένη πιστοποίηση, οι μαθητείες νοούνται ως μορφές της αρχικής επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης (ΑΕΕΚ) που συνδυάζουν επίσημα, και εναλλάσσονται με αυτήν, την κατάρτιση σε επιχειρήσεις (περίοδοι πρακτικής επαγγελματικής εμπειρίας στη θέση εργασίας) με τη σχολική εκπαίδευση (περίοδοι θεωρητικής/πρακτικής εκπαίδευσης στο πλαίσιο σχολείου ή κέντρου κατάρτισης). Η επιτυχής ολοκλήρωση της μαθητείας οδηγεί στην απόκτηση εθνικά αναγνωρισμένων τυπικών προσόντων ΑΕΕΚ ⁽¹⁾.

Στις 18 Οκτωβρίου 2013 τα κράτη μέλη, σε δήλωση του Συμβουλίου ⁽²⁾, τόνισαν ότι πρέπει να ενθαρρύνονται η αποτελεσματικότητα και η ελκυστικότητα των συστημάτων μαθητείας μέσω, μεταξύ άλλων, της εξασφάλισης κατάλληλων αμοιβών και κοινωνικής προστασίας για τους μαθητευόμενους.

⁽¹⁾ Βλ. τη μελέτη «Προσφορά μαθητείας στα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης», http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/forum12/supply_en.pdf
⁽²⁾ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/139011.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011684/13
to the Commission**

Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Unpaid apprenticeships

Unpaid apprenticeships, which are widespread in the US and are rapidly gaining ground in Europe, are often accused of exploiting skilled young people on the pretext, among other things, of high unemployment rates. Following numerous class actions brought by apprentices against companies, the US recently decided to introduce a clear framework for apprenticeship schemes. For example, the US Department of Labour has stipulated that apprenticeships must demonstrably primarily benefit the apprentice, not the company, and courts have passed judgments contesting unpaid work in favour of paid work at no less than the minimum wage. Similar concerns are emerging in several EU Member States; France has enacted a measure whereby apprentices who work for more than two months must be paid the basic wage.

1. As reports on the matter have concluded that a clearer definition is needed as to who qualifies as an apprentice and that high levels of remuneration are needed for apprentices, does the Commission believe that the Member States are making progress in this sector?
2. Does it anticipate new initiatives similar to those taken in the US, in order to provide greater safeguards and protection for the rights of apprentices in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(10 December 2013)

The initiatives mentioned in the question by the Honourable Member aim at tackling abuses in traineeships (known also as internships), which have grown more widespread in recent years. To address the problem of low quality traineeships, the Commission intends to make a proposal on a Quality Framework for Traineeships in December, with the aim of ensuring adequate working conditions and a high-level learning content for trainees.

In parallel, the Commission has launched the European Alliance for Apprenticeships on 2 July 2013 to strengthen the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships. In opposition to traineeships, which are usually of short duration and do not lead to a nationally recognised certification, apprenticeships are understood as those forms of Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET) that formally combine and alternate company based training (periods of practical work experience at a workplace) with school based education (periods of theoretical/practical education followed in a school or training centre), and whose successful completion leads to nationally recognised initial VET qualifications. ⁽¹⁾

On 18 October 2013 Member States have declared in a Council Declaration ⁽²⁾ that the effectiveness and attractiveness of apprenticeship schemes should be encouraged by, *inter alia*, ensuring adequate remuneration and social protection of apprentices.

⁽¹⁾ See study 'Apprenticeship Supply in the Member States of the European Union',

http://ec.europa.eu/education/vocational-education/doc/forum12/supply_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/139011.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011685/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Δημογραφική πορεία των κρατών μελών της Ευρώπης

Παράλληλα με την οικονομική κρίση, το δημογραφικό πρόβλημα εμφανίζεται, μεταξύ άλλων, και ως σημαντικός δυνητικός παράγοντας αρνητικών επιπτώσεων στην ευρωπαϊκή οικονομία. Τα στοιχεία είναι αποκαλυπτικά. Για να ανανεωθεί ομαλά ο πληθυσμός της γης, κάθε γυναίκα θα πρέπει να γεννάει 2,1 παιδιά. Στην Ευρώπη όμως, το ποσοστό αυτό είναι μόλις 1,52, με αποτέλεσμα ο αριθμός των θανάτων να ξεπερνά τον αριθμό των γεννήσεων.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει συγκριτικά στοιχεία για την εκτιμώμενη πορεία του δημογραφικού των κρατών μελών; Σε ποια ευρωπαϊκά κράτη παρατηρείται το εντονότερο πρόβλημα και σε ποια εκτιμάται ότι η πορεία του πληθυσμού δεν θα είναι ιδιαίτερα αρνητική στο μέλλον;
2. Καθώς σε διάφορα έγγραφα της Επιτροπής και ψηφίσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου έχει προταθεί ως μέτρο ανασχεσης της μείωσης του πληθυσμού στα κράτη μέλη, η πολιτική ενίσχυσης της αναπαραγωγής, διαπιστώνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή την ύπαρξη σχετικών πρόσφατων πολιτικών σε κράτη μέλη; Είναι σε θέση να μου παραθέσει καλές πολιτικές πρακτικές από ορισμένα από αυτά;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

1. Σε τακτά χρονικά διαστήματα, η Επιτροπή (Eurostat) συλλέγει δημογραφικές στατιστικές από τα κράτη μέλη και υπολογίζει, με βάση τα δεδομένα που συλλέγονται, διάφορους δημογραφικούς δείκτες.

Στις χώρες της ΕΕ, η γονιμότητα παρουσίασε σταθερή μείωση από τα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1960 έως το 2001. Σε γενικές γραμμές, κατά τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες οι Ευρωπαίοι αποκτούν λιγότερα παιδιά, γεγονός που εξηγεί εν μέρει την επιβράδυνση της αύξησης του πληθυσμού της ΕΕ. Ωστόσο, στην αρχή της προηγούμενης δεκαετίας, το συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας ⁽¹⁾ στην ΕΕ παρουσίασε κάποια σημάδια ανάκαμψης και, επί του παρόντος, είναι περίπου 1,6 γεννήσεις ζώντων ανά γυναίκα.

Ο δείκτης υποχώρησε απότομα μεταξύ 1980 και 2000-2002 σε πολλές χώρες, σε ποσοστό πολύ χαμηλότερο από το επίπεδο αντικατάστασης: το 2000, το ποσοστό ήταν κάτω από 1,3 στη Βουλγαρία, τη Δημοκρατία της Τσεχίας, την Ελλάδα, την Ισπανία, την Ιταλία, τη Σλοβενία και τη Σλοβακία. Αφού έφτασε στο κατώτατο όριο μεταξύ των ετών 2000 και 2002, το συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας αυξήθηκε ξανά στα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη στη διάρκεια των εννέα ετών έως το 2011 (το τελευταίο έτος για το οποίο υπάρχουν διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες), με τα ποσοστά όλων των χωρών της ΕΕ να υπερβαίνουν το 1,3, με εξαίρεση την Ουγγαρία (1,2 γεννήσεις ζώντων ανά γυναίκα), την Πολωνία και τη Ρουμανία (αμφότερες με 1,3 γεννήσεις ζώντων ανά γυναίκα) ⁽²⁾.

2. Η απάντηση στην ερώτηση E-011418/2013 ⁽³⁾ αναφέρεται σε αποτελεσματικές πολιτικές για την αντιμετώπιση του ζητήματος της γονιμότητας και στο ρόλο της Επιτροπής στην ενθάρρυνσή τους.

⁽¹⁾ Το συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας είναι ο μέσος αριθμός ζώντων παιδιών που θα αποκτούσε μια γυναίκα στη διάρκεια της ζωής της, εάν έπρεπε να συμμορφωθεί με τα ειδικά κατά ηλικία ποσοστά γονιμότητας για ένα δεδομένο έτος σε όλη την αναπαραγωγική ηλικία της. Ένα συνολικό ποσοστό γονιμότητας περίπου 2,1 γεννήσεις ζώντων ανά γυναίκα θεωρείται ως επίπεδο αντικατάστασης: δηλαδή, ο μέσος αριθμός γεννήσεων ζώντων ανά γυναίκα που απαιτείται για να διατηρηθεί το μέγεθος του πληθυσμού σταθερό, αν δεν υπάρχει εσωτερική ή εξωτερική μετανάστευση.

⁽²⁾ Βλ. τη Δημογραφική έκδοση του 2010 στην ιστοσελίδα <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=502&newsId=1007&furtherNews=yes> και το συμπλήρωμα για τη δημογραφία της Τριμηνιαίας επιθεώρησης του Μαρτίου 2013 στην ιστοσελίδα <http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?pager.offset=0&langId=en&mode=advancedSubmit&policyArea=0&subCategory=0&year=0&country=0&type=0&advSearchKey=quarterlyreview&orderBy=docOrder>

⁽³⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/el/parliamentary-questions.html>

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011685/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Demographic trends in EU Member States

Alongside the economic crisis, the demographic problem appears, among other things, to be an important potential factor in terms of its adverse impact on the European economy. The figures speak for themselves. If the earth's population is to renew at a normal rate, every woman will need to give birth to 2.1 children. However, in Europe, this rate is just 1.52; in other words, the number of deaths exceeds the number of births.

1. Is the Commission able to provide comparative statistics on demographic trends in the Member States? In which European countries is the problem most acute and in which is the trend considered to be most unfavourable in terms of their future demographic?
2. As various Commission documents and EP resolutions have proposed that a policy to support reproduction would help to reverse the decline in the population in the Member States, has the Commission noted any such policies recently in the Member States? Is it able to identify best political practices in any of them?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(2 December 2013)

1. The Commission (Eurostat) regularly collects demographic statistics from the Member States and calculates, based on the collected data, several demographic indicators.

Fertility steadily declined from the mid-1960s to the turn of the century in the EU countries. In recent decades Europeans have generally been having fewer children, which partly explains the slowdown in the EU's population growth. At the beginning of the last decade, however, the total fertility rate ⁽¹⁾ in the EU has shown some signs of rising again and it currently stands at around 1.6 live births per woman.

The indicator declined steeply between 1980 and 2000-2002 in many countries to far below the replacement level: in 2000 values had fallen below 1.3 in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Slovakia. After bottoming out between 2000 and 2002, the total fertility rate has increased again in most Member States in the nine years to 2011 (the latest year for which information is available), with all EU countries seeing rates above 1.3 with the exception of Hungary (1.2 live births per woman), Poland and Romania (both at 1.3 live births per woman) ⁽²⁾.

2. The reply to Question E-011418/2013 ⁽³⁾ addresses effective policies to address fertility and the Commission's role in fostering them.

⁽¹⁾ The total fertility rate is the mean number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if she were to conform to the age-specific fertility rates for a given year throughout her childbearing years. A total fertility rate of around 2.1 live births per woman is considered to be the replacement level: in other words, the average number of live births per woman required to keep the population size constant in the absence of inward or outward migration.

⁽²⁾ See the 2010 Demography Report at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=502&newsId=1007&furtherNews=yes> and the demography supplement to the March 2013 Quarterly Review at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?pager.offset=0&langId=en&mode=advancedSubmit&policyArea=0&subCategory=0&year=0&country=0&type=0&advSearchKey=quarterlyreview&orderBy=docOrder>

⁽³⁾ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html>

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011686/13

προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Διαχείριση ψηφιακών αρχείων μετά τον θάνατο πολίτη

Σήμερα δεν υπάρχει νομικό πλαίσιο που να διέπει τη διαχείριση των ψηφιακών αρχείων, μετά τον θάνατο ενός πολίτη στην ΕΕ, με αποτέλεσμα οι οικογένειες να χάνουν το δικαίωμα πρόσβασης στα αρχεία αγαπημένων τους προσώπων. Κάποιες εταιρίες ωστόσο προχωρούν σε ορισμένες προβλέψεις. Για παράδειγμα η google επιτρέπει στον χρήστη να προγραμματίσει τι θέλει να συμβεί στον λογαριασμό του σε ενδεχόμενο θανάτου, ενώ το facebook επιτρέπει στους συγγενείς να επιλέξουν αν θα κλείσουν τον λογαριασμό ή θα τον μετατρέψουν σε σελίδα μνήμης.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Προτίθεται να αναλάβει συγκεκριμένη πρωτοβουλία ώστε να θεσπιστούν στα κράτη μέλη σαφείς κανόνες για τα δικαιώματα πρόσβασης των οικογενειών στα δεδομένα των αγαπημένων τους προσώπων που έχουν αποβιώσει;
2. Υπάρχουν σήμερα παραδείγματα από κράτη μέλη που έχουν αναλάβει πρωτοβουλίες για τη ρύθμιση του συγκεκριμένου ζητήματος;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής

(13 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή παραπέμπει το αξιότιμο μέλος στην απάντηση που είχε δώσει στη γραπτή ερώτηση E-007232/2012.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011686/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 October 2013)**

Subject: Management of citizen's digital files after their death

There is currently no legal framework governing the management of an EU citizen's digital files after their death; as a result, families are losing the right to access their loved ones' files. However, some companies are making certain provisions. For example, Google allows users to programme what they want to happen to their account in the event of their death, while Facebook allows relatives to choose between closing the account or turning it into a memorial page.

1. Does the Commission propose to take a specific initiative in order to introduce clear rules in the Member States on families' right to access the data of their deceased loved ones?
2. Do the Member States which have taken initiatives on this particular matter have examples of how it can be regulated?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-007232/2012.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011687/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Πορεία εμβασμάτων από και προς την Ελλάδα

Είναι σε θέση να με ενημερώσει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή για τα πλέον πρόσφατα στοιχεία σχετικά με τα μεταναστευτικά εμβάσματα από και προς την Ελλάδα; Ποια είναι κατάσταση εισροής και εκροής εμβασμάτων σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(4 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Πληροφορίες σχετικά με τα εμβάσματα που εισέρχονται σε μια χώρα (πιστώσεις/εισαγωγές/εισροές) και εξέρχονται από μια χώρα (χρεώσεις/εξαγωγές/εκροές) συλλέγονται σε τακτική βάση και διαδίδονται από την Eurostat ως μέρος των στατιστικών για το ισοζύγιο πληρωμών.

Κατά την περίοδο 1999-2012 οι ροές των μεταναστευτικών εμβασμάτων παρουσιάζουν σταθερά αρνητικό υπόλοιπο, επειδή οι εκροές κεφαλαίων είναι πολύ μεγαλύτερες από τις εισροές. Τα εξερχόμενα εμβάσματα από την ΕΕ αυξάνονταν με ταχείς ρυθμούς έως το 2008, ενώ στη συνέχεια παρέμειναν σχετικά σταθερά, σε ποσό λίγο μεγαλύτερο από 40 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ.

Η Ελλάδα ήταν καθαρός αποδέκτης εμβασμάτων μέχρι το 2009 και κατόπιν έγινε καθαρός αποστολέας, ιδίως λόγω της μείωσης των εισροών από τους κύριους εταίρους της, τις Ηνωμένες Πολιτείες και τη Γερμανία. Οι κυριότεροι αποδέκτες εμβασμάτων από την Ελλάδα είναι η Αλβανία και η Γεωργία.

Μαζί με τα δεδομένα που αφορούν τα μεταναστευτικά εμβάσματα θα μπορούσαν να εξεταστούν και τα δεδομένα που σχετίζονται με τις αμοιβές των εργαζομένων. Ενώ η ΕΕ 27 είναι καθαρός αποδέκτης ροών που συνδέονται με τις αμοιβές των εργαζομένων (κυρίως λόγω των εισροών που προέρχονται από την Ελβετία), η Ελλάδα από το 2008 είναι καθαρός αποστολέας, κυρίως λόγω της απασχόλησης στον ελληνικό εμπορικό στόλο (οι Φιλιππίνες είναι ο μεγαλύτερος αποδέκτης) και της μεγάλης εποχιακής δραστηριότητας που συνδέεται με τον τουρισμό.

Παρά το γεγονός ότι, το 2010 και το 2011, η ΕΕ 27 ήταν καθαρός αποδέκτης μεταναστών, το 2011 στην Ελλάδα καταγράφηκε αύξηση του αριθμού των εξερχόμενων μεταναστών.

Μια επισκόπηση των ροών που συνδέονται με τα εμβάσματα της ΕΕ 27 και της Ελλάδας περιλαμβάνεται στο παράρτημα, το οποίο θα διαβιβαστεί απευθείας στον αξιότιμο βουλευτή.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011687/13
to the Commission
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 October 2013)**

Subject: Remittances to and from Greece

Is the Commission able to provide the most recent statistics on migrants' remittances to and from Greece? What is the situation in terms of incoming and outgoing remittances at European level?

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

Information on remittances entering a country (credits/imports/inward flows) and leaving a country (debits/exports/outwards flows) is regularly collected and disseminated by Eurostat as part of the Balance of Payments statistics.

In the period 1999-2012 EU-27 workers' remittances flows always show a negative balance due to the outflows of funds being much larger than the inflows. Outflows of remittances from the EU increased rapidly till 2008, and then remained rather stable, slightly above EUR 40 billion.

Greece was a net beneficiary of remittances up to 2009, and then became a net sender, mainly due to a decline in the inward flows from its main partners, United States and Germany. The main receivers of remittances from Greece are Albania and Georgia.

Together with the data related to workers' remittances, the data related to compensation of employees could also be considered. While the EU 27 is a net receiver of flows related to compensation of employees (mainly due to the flows arriving from Switzerland), Greece is a net sender, since 2008, mainly due to the employment in the Greek maritime fleet (with the Philippines being the biggest recipient) and the large seasonal activity related to tourism.

While in 2010 and 2011 the EU-27 was a net receiver of migrants, Greece in 2011 records an increase in the number of emigrants.

An overview of the flows related to remittances of the EU-27 and Greece is included in the annex, which will be transmitted directly to the Honourable Member.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011688/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)
(14 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ

Πρόσφατη έκθεση ⁽¹⁾ της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής που φέρει τον τίτλο «Φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ», ειδικά για την Ελλάδα προτείνει, μεταξύ άλλων, αλλαγές στον τρόπο φορολόγησης των ακινήτων με μείωση του φόρου μεταβίβασης και αύξηση των φόρων για την κατοχή ακινήτων. Σε έρευνα ωστόσο της Τράπεζας της Ελλάδος αποτυπώνεται ότι, εξαιτίας της οικονομικής κρίσης, η πτώση των αντικειμενικών αξιών των ακινήτων στην χώρα, από το τέλος του 2008 έως το β' τρίμηνο του 2013, υπολογίζεται κατά μέσο όρο σε 30,3%.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Οι προτάσεις της αφορούν και προσαρμογή των αξιών των ακινήτων στις νέες πραγματικές αντικειμενικές τους αξίες στην Ελλάδα;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012489/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Konstantinos Roupakis (PPE)
(5 Νοεμβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Άμεση αναπροσαρμογή των αντικειμενικών αξιών στην Ελλάδα και ευθυγράμμιση τους με τη σημερινή πραγματικότητα στην αγορά ακινήτων

Οι αντικειμενικές αξίες, σύμφωνα με το συνολικότερο πλαίσιο του φορολογικού συστήματος της Ελλάδας αλλά και τις ειδικότερες κατευθύνσεις για την επικείμενη θέσπιση του Ενιαίου Φόρου Ακινήτων, αποτελούν τη βάση για τον προσδιορισμό και την επιβολή των συντελεστών φορολόγησης (κατοχή και μεταβίβαση) των ακινήτων. Μολονότι η πολυεπίπεδη και παρατεταμένη κρίση που πλήττει τη χώρα μας έχει οδηγήσει σε κατακόρυφη πτώση τις τιμές των ακινήτων, οι αντικειμενικές αξίες παραμένουν αμετάβλητες από το 2007 δημιουργώντας ένα σημαντικό και διαρκώς αυξανόμενο «χάσμα» ανάμεσα στην πραγματική (εμπορική) και την αντικειμενική αξία των ακινήτων που αφενός προκαλεί δυσανάλογα μεγάλη επιβάρυνση για τους κατόχους και αφετέρου λειτουργεί ως «τροχοπέδη» για τις αγοραπωλησίες, εκτινάσσοντας το φόρο μεταβίβασης σε σχέση με την τιμή αγοράς. Σε αυτήν την κατεύθυνση ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει αυτή τη σοβαρή στρέβλωση που διαμορφώνεται στη φορολογική πραγματικότητα της Ελλάδας με συνέπεια την άδικη και υπέρ του δέοντος φορολόγηση της πλειονότητας των κατόχων ακινήτων;
2. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει την ανταλλαγή βέλτιστων πρακτικών προκειμένου να αναδειχθούν οι πλέον ενδεδειγμένοι τρόποι προσδιορισμού των αντικειμενικών αξιών των ακινήτων;
3. Ως μέλος της Τρόικας, προτίθεται να προωθήσει την άμεση αναπροσαρμογή και ευθυγράμμιση των αντικειμενικών αξιών με τις πραγματικές τάσεις που επικρατούν στην αγορά ακινήτων με δεδομένη και την εκπορευόμενη από τις Συμβάσεις Δανεισμού ανάγκη για αναθεώρηση των αντικειμενικών αξιών;

Κοινή απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η έκθεση σχετικά με τις φορολογικές μεταρρυθμίσεις στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ, στην οποία αναφέρεται ο κύριος βουλευτής, είναι ένα τεχνικό έγγραφο αναφοράς.

Όσον αφορά τις προτάσεις για τον νέο φόρο ακίνητης περιουσίας στην Ελλάδα αρμόδια είναι η ελληνική κυβέρνηση. Η Επιτροπή εξετάζει αυτές τις προτάσεις στο πλαίσιο των επισκοπήσεων εφαρμογής του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής που εκπονούνται από κοινού από την Επιτροπή, την ΕΚΤ και το ΔΝΤ. Οι τρέχουσες προτάσεις για τον νέο φόρο ακίνητης περιουσίας, όπως υποβλήθηκαν για δημόσια διαβούλευση, προτείνουν ένα σύστημα αποτίμησης ακίνητης περιουσίας που βασίζεται στις επανομαζόμενες αντικειμενικές αξίες που χρησιμοποιούνται από το 2005. Αυτό το καθεστώς αποτίμησης βάσει της αντικειμενικής αξίας έχει χρησιμοποιηθεί για άλλους πρόσφατους φόρους ακινήτων και φόρους κεφαλαίου στην Ελλάδα, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των τοπικών φόρων. Παρόμοιες μέθοδοι εφαρμόζονται σε άλλα κράτη μέλη, όπως στη Φινλανδία, την Πορτογαλία και την Ισπανία. Το μνημόνιο συμφωνίας του Ιουλίου 2013 περιλαμβάνει δέσμευση για ανάπτυξη μεθόδου η οποία θα επιτρέπει την αναθεώρηση των αντικειμενικών αξιών των ακινήτων ώστε να αντικατοπτρίζουν τις τιμές της αγοράς (τμήμα 2.2).

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_papers/taxation_paper_34_en.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011688/13
to the Commission**

Georgios Papanikolaou (PPE)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Tax reforms in EU Member States

A recent Commission report entitled 'Tax reforms in EU Member States' ⁽¹⁾ includes proposals, specifically for Greece, to change the way in which property is taxed, by reducing transfer tax and increasing real estate taxes. However, according to a survey by the Bank of Greece, property values in Greece fell by an average of 30.3% between the end of 2008 and the second quarter of 2013 due to the economic crisis.

Do the Commission's proposals involve adjusting the property values in line with their new market values in Greece?

**Question for written answer E-012489/13
to the Commission**

Konstantinos Poupakis (PPE)

(5 November 2013)

Subject: Immediate adjustment of rateable values of properties in Greece in line with current market values

Rateable values are the basis on which tax rates on the ownership and sale of properties are assessed and applied within the overall framework of the tax system in Greece and the specific guidelines on the single property tax which is to be introduced shortly. Although the multiple-faceted and extended crisis which has hit Greece has caused property prices to plummet, rateable values have not changed since 2007 and this is creating a large and ever-increasing 'gap' between real (market) values and the rateable values of properties, causing disproportionately high charges for owners and discouraging sales by inflating the transfer tax in relation to the purchase price. In view of this, will the Commission say:

1. What is its opinion of the serious distortion emerging in the tax system in Greece, which is resulting in unfair and overly high taxes for most property owners?
2. Does it intend to promote an exchange of best practices in order to highlight the most appropriate methods for determining the rateable value of properties?
3. As a member of the Troika, does it intend to promote an immediate adjustment of rateable values in line with actual trends on the property market, given that the loan agreements require rateable values to be revised?

Joint answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission

(20 December 2013)

The report on Tax Reforms in EU Member States as referred by the Honourable Member is a technical background paper.

The proposals on the new Property Tax in Greece are the responsibility of the Greek Government. The Commission examines such proposals in the context of the Economic Adjustment Programme implementation reviews carried out jointly by the Commission, the ECB and the IMF. The current proposals for the Property Tax as released for public consultation proposes a property valuation system based on so-called Objective Values used since 2005. This legal valuation system has been used for other recent property and capital taxes in Greece, including local taxes. Similar methodologies are used in other Member States, for example Finland, Portugal and Spain. The Memorandum of Understanding of July 2013 contains a commitment to develop a methodology to allow for the revision of legal values for real estate to better reflect market prices (Section 2.2).

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/resources/documents/taxation/gen_info/economic_analysis/tax_papers/taxation_paper_34_en.pdf

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011689/13
to the Commission**

Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Possible misuse of EU funds

On a recent visit to the occupied city of Famagusta in order to see first-hand the extent of the decay affecting homes and hotels belonging to Greek Cypriots in the fenced-off area of Varosha, I came across the Venetian Palace, the restoration of which received EU funding through the UNDP-implemented 'Partnership for the Future' (PFF) programme. I noticed, however, that most of the area covered by the Venetian Palace was being used as a car park.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether the purpose of the funding was to transform the remains of a sixteenth-century palazzo into a car park?
2. If this was not the purpose, will the Commission seek a refund from the Turkish Cypriot community for misusing EU funds?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission

(6 December 2013)

The renovation of the Venetian Palace Courtyard in Famagusta was carried out in 2005 as part of a wider modernisation support programme for that city. This included the modernisation of the water/sanitation system of Famagusta as well as urban upgrading, together with the revitalisation of the walled city and the conservation of the architectural and cultural heritage and improvement of the living environment of Famagusta residents. The programme was funded by the EU under the 2003 pre-accession funds and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) — Partnership for the Future.

For the Venetian Palace, the aim of the renovation was to decommission the old car park, identify a new parking space and provide illumination for the walls of the Palace courtyard. Since then a number of public events have taken place in this location, which is in good condition.

The Commission was recently informed that bollards were put in place to prevent the palace courtyard from being used as a parking space. The Commission will follow the application of this measure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011690/13

alla Commissione

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)

(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Scomparsa dei saperi manuali

Le associazioni della piccola impresa e dell'artigianato hanno lanciato l'allarme, che non emoziona più di tanto i cittadini utenti italiani. Falegnami, fabbri, sarti, idraulici, macellai, saldatori, ecc. sono sempre più difficilmente reperibili sul mercato del lavoro. A mano a mano che gli anziani scompaiono, nessuno, o ben pochi, li rimpiazzano. Sicché risulta sempre più arduo mantenere in vita certe attività artigianali e trasmettere quei saperi manuali che hanno rappresentato un'eccellenza artigianale in diversi settori. Chi dà la colpa alla scomparsa delle «botteghe» in cui i giovani, fin da ragazzi, imparavano un mestiere. Chi invece ritiene che l'eliminazione dell'apprendistato abbia allontanato i giovani dai mestieri manuali. Chi infine crede che la responsabilità sia del progresso, in nome del quale, con l'introduzione di nuove tecnologie, si elimina il lavoro manuale a vantaggio di quello meccanico ed automatico. Ma ci sono mestieri che non possono essere automatizzati. Per fare un violino, ad esempio, non è concepibile usare macchine automatiche. Così dicasi per certe opere dei fabbri o dei mosaicisti. La scomparsa degli artigiani è una tendenza che si potrebbe arrestare, anche se è correlata ad un atteggiamento culturale radicato che collega i mestieri ad intensità manuale a un disvalore. La scomparsa di certi saperi non è un danno solo per l'individuo, ma lo è dell'intera comunità umana. Come provvedere altrimenti? Andando culturalmente in controtendenza e allineare il sistema scolastico a quello delle aziende, riorientando la scuola tecnico-professionale sul mondo del lavoro, partendo dai contesti locali. A Cremona, per esempio l'orientamento professionale non può dimenticare il violino, oppure il settore dolciario (torrone e caramelle), o ancora il settore alimentare (salumi). Sono le eccellenze locali e la loro produzione abbisogna di giovani preparati in quei contesti. Il mercato del lavoro assicurerebbe posti certi e specializzati. E l'Europa?

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può dire se la diminuzione del lavoro artigianale si avverte anche in altri Paesi dell'Unione?
2. In caso affermativo, perché non prevedere un capitolo speciale dei Fondi di Coesione dedicato al sostegno delle professioni artigianali e delle scuole professionali idonee allo scopo?

Risposta di Laszlo Andor a nome della Commissione

(10 dicembre 2013)

Le preoccupazioni dell'on. parlamentare in merito al declino delle abilità manuali è confermato dalle ricerche sul mercato del lavoro effettuate dal CEDEFOP. Il numero di lavoratori specializzati nella meccanica di precisione, nell'artigianato, nella stampa e lavoratori assimilati ⁽¹⁾ è diminuito da 1,7 milioni a 1,2 milioni tra il 2000 e il 2010 nell'UE ⁽²⁾; un'ulteriore diminuzione del 17 % è prevista entro il 2020. In alcuni paesi (ad es. Finlandia, Ungheria e Lettonia) si prevede che i livelli d'occupazione aumenteranno mentre in altri tenderanno a decrescere (ad es. Irlanda, Italia e Regno Unito). ⁽³⁾ Il Consiglio europeo delle competenze settoriali tessile, pelletteria e abbigliamento ha a sua volta affrontato il problema di preservare le competenze rare consolidando geograficamente l'offerta di formazione per tali competenze ⁽⁴⁾.

L'Alleanza europea per l'apprendistato ⁽⁵⁾, varata il 2 luglio 2013, ha lo scopo di aumentare la disponibilità, la qualità e l'immagine degli apprendistati. L'esperienza dei paesi nei quali esistono regimi di apprendistato ben sviluppati mostra che tali strumenti di formazione sono offerti prevalentemente dalle PMI.

Inoltre il Fondo sociale europeo potrebbe finanziare la formazione professionale nell'artigianato nell'ambito dell'obiettivo tematico 10 del futuro regolamento recante disposizioni comuni. Tali azioni devono basarsi su elementi concreti riguardanti la domanda di queste competenze.

⁽¹⁾ I lavoratori di questa categoria fabbricano e riparano strumenti, articoli vari come gioielli, oggetti di metallo prezioso, ceramiche, porcellana e vetro, oltre a prodotti dell'artigianato in legno, tessuti, cuoio o materiali affini. Operano anche nei settori della stampa e della rilegatura di libri. Per ulteriori particolari si veda «EU Skills Panorama (2013) Precision, handicraft, craft printing and related trades workers Analytical Highlight», documento preparato da ICF GHK per la Commissione europea, [http://euskills Panorama.ec.europa.eu/docs/AnalyticalHighlights/73 %20PrecisionHandicraftPrintWorkers_en.pdf](http://euskills Panorama.ec.europa.eu/docs/AnalyticalHighlights/73%20PrecisionHandicraftPrintWorkers_en.pdf)

⁽²⁾ CEDEFOP, 2013, Skills Forecast Detailed data, strumento online, <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/projects/forecasting-skill-demand-and-supply/skills-forecasts/detailed-data.aspx>

⁽³⁾ EU Skills Panorama (2013) idem.

⁽⁴⁾ <http://europeanskills council.t-c-l.eu/eng/structure/general/results.html>

⁽⁵⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/apprenticeship/index_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011690/13
to the Commission**

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Disappearance of manual skills

Associations of small businesses and craft enterprises have sounded the alarm, but it is not exciting much interest among Italian consumers. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find joiners, blacksmiths, tailors, plumbers, butchers, welders, etc., on the labour market. As older tradesmen disappear, nobody, or very few individuals, are replacing them. It is therefore becoming increasingly hard to keep certain crafts alive and to pass on the manual skills that have characterised high-quality craftsmanship in various sectors. Some blame the disappearance of the workshops in which young people would learn a trade from childhood. Some believe that getting rid of apprenticeships has distanced young people from manual trades. Finally, some believe that progress, through the introduction of new technologies and the consequent elimination of manual work in favour of mechanical, automated work, is responsible. However, there are trades that cannot be automated. Using automated machines to make a violin, for example, is inconceivable. The same applies to certain work done by tailors or mosaicists. The disappearance of craftsmen is a trend that could be halted, although it is correlated to an entrenched cultural attitude that regards highly manual trades as being of no value. The disappearance of certain skills is damaging not only for individuals, but for humanity as a whole. How can we change the way we do things? We could go against the tide in cultural terms, and align the school system to that of businesses, reorienting the technical and trades schools towards the world of work, based on local conditions. In Cremona, for example, vocational training should not neglect the violin, or the confectionery sector (nougat and sweets), or the food sector (salted meats). These are the local quality products, and producing them requires young people who are trained in these sectors. The labour market would provide secure, specialised jobs: what about Europe, as a whole?

Could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can a decrease in skilled manual work be seen in other EU countries too?
2. If so, why not set up a special chapter of the Cohesion Funds dedicated to supporting the craft professions, and vocational schools that train craftsmen?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission

(10 December 2013)

The Honourable Member's concern regarding the decline in manual skills is supported by available labour market intelligence from Cedefop. The numbers of employed precision, handicraft, craft printing and related trades workers ⁽¹⁾ declined from 1.7 million to 1.2 million between 2000 and 2010 in the EU ⁽²⁾ while further decline by 17% is expected up to 2020. In some countries (e.g. Finland, Hungary, and Latvia), the levels of employment are expected to grow, while in others they are expected to decline (e.g. Ireland, Italy and the UK). ⁽³⁾ The European Sector Skills Council Textile Leather and Clothing also raised the issue of preserving rare skills by consolidating geographically the training offer in such skills ⁽⁴⁾.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships ⁽⁵⁾ launched on 2 July 2013 aims to increase the supply, quality and image of apprenticeships. Experience in countries with well-developed apprenticeship schemes shows that placements for apprenticeships are mostly offered by SMEs.

Moreover, the European Social Fund could finance vocational training in the craft industry under the thematic objective 10 of the future Common Provisions Regulation. Such actions should be based on evidence concerning the demand for such skills.

⁽¹⁾ Workers within this occupation make and repair instruments, various articles such as jewellery, precious metalware, ceramics, porcelain ware and glassware, as well as produce handicrafts from wood, textile, leather or related materials. They also work in printing and book-binding. For more details see EU Skills Panorama (2013) Precision, handicraft, craft printing and related trades workers Analytical Highlight, prepared by ICF GHK for the European Commission.

http://euskillspanorama.ec.europa.eu/docs/AnalyticalHighlights/73%20PrecisionHandicraftPrintWorkers_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ Cedefop, 2013, Skills Forecast Detailed data, online tool,

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/about-cedefop/projects/forecasting-skill-demand-and-supply/skills-forecasts/detailed-data.aspx>

⁽³⁾ EU Skills Panorama (2013) idem.

⁽⁴⁾ <http://europeanskillsCouncil.t-c-l.eu/eng/structure/general/results.html>

⁽⁵⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/education/apprenticeship/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

**Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-011691/13
alla Commissione**

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)

(14 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Progetto Transacqua (2)

Nella sua risposta all'interrogazione P-008774/13 dell'interrogante, la Commissione afferma che «è al corrente del progetto di trasferimento delle acque dell'Oubangui verso il lago Ciad (Transacqua)» e che «gli studi di fattibilità preliminare indicano tuttavia che il progetto comporterebbe notevoli rischi ambientali».

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quale progetto comporterebbe notevoli rischi ambientali? Il progetto Transacqua (dal fiume Congo al lago Ciad), o il progetto ridotto Oubangui?
2. Nel caso si trattasse di quest'ultimo progetto, significa che i lavori non sono nemmeno cominciati?
3. Perché la Commissione non ha comunque risposto da che cosa dipenda il fatto che Transacqua non sia stato nemmeno preso in considerazione?
4. Perché la Commissione dà l'impressione di non volersi interessare dei grandi progetti infrastrutturali, usando il pretesto della tutela dell'ambiente, e privilegiando le micro iniziative?
5. Sa la Commissione che negli Anni Cinquanta in Italia coloro che erano contrari alla realizzazione dell'Autostrada del Sole affermavano che non si doveva fare perché divideva il Paese in due, nuocendo all'ambiente?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione

(19 dicembre 2013)

Nel progetto di trasferimento delle acque dell'Oubangui verso il lago Ciad sono stati evidenziati rischi ambientali. Sono ancora in corso studi di fattibilità e di impatto socioambientale e i lavori per questo progetto non sono ancora iniziati. La Commissione non partecipa al finanziamento di questi studi.

Nella scelta dei suoi interventi, la Commissione prende in considerazione l'insieme delle strategie e dei progetti di sviluppo dei paesi partner. Il sostegno dell'Unione europea al Ciad si articola da un lato in funzione della strategia nazionale di lotta alla povertà del paese partner e dall'altro al livello dei piani regionali di sviluppo.

Il quadro delle azioni regionali prioritarie a breve, medio e lungo termine nelle infrastrutture (acqua, energia, trasporti e tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione) è stato definito nel programma per lo sviluppo delle infrastrutture in Africa (PIDA) da tutti i partner nazionali e regionali. Per il momento, il progetto Transacqua non è stato scelto tra i 51 progetti selezionati.

Il piano nazionale di sviluppo proposto dal Ciad, che individua le priorità per il paese nel periodo 2013-2015, non fa riferimento al progetto Transacqua.

Anche se la Commissione europea attribuisce un'importanza fondamentale alla questione dell'impatto ambientale dei programmi finanziati, ciò non intacca il suo forte impegno nei confronti delle grandi opere infrastrutturali, in particolare quelle stradali, idriche e dell'elettricità, in Ciad e nella regione.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011691/13
to the Commission**

Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: Transaqua project (2)

In its reply to Written Question P-008774/13, the Commission states that it is aware of the water-transfer project from the Ubangi River to Lake Chad (Transaqua) and that preliminary feasibility studies, however, indicate that the project 'would involve major environmental risks'.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Which project would have significant environmental risks? The Transaqua project (from the Congo River to Lake Chad), or the scaled-down Ubangi project?
2. Should it be the latter, does this mean that the work has not even begun?
3. Why did the Commission not reply to the question: why has Transaqua not even been taken into consideration?
4. Why does the Commission give the impression that, under the pretext of environmental protection, it is not interested in major infrastructure projects, and would rather support micro-initiatives?
5. Is the Commission aware that in the 1950s, in Italy, those who were against the construction of the Autostrada del Sole motorway claimed that it should not be built because it would split the country into two and harm the environment?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Piebalgs au nom de la Commission

(19 décembre 2013)

Des risques environnementaux ont été identifiés pour le projet de transfert des eaux de l'Oubangui vers le lac Tchad. Des études de faisabilité et d'impacts sociaux-environnementaux sont encore en cours et les travaux n'ont pas encore commencé pour ce projet. La Commission ne participe pas au financement de ces études.

Dans le choix de ses actions, la Commission prend en considération l'ensemble des stratégies et projets de développement des pays partenaires. Les appuis de l'Union européenne au Tchad sont définis d'une part en fonction de la stratégie nationale de lutte contre la pauvreté du pays partenaire d'autre part au niveau des plans régionaux de développement.

Le cadre des actions régionales prioritaires à court, moyen et long termes dans les infrastructures (Eau, Energie, Transport et Technologie de l'information et des communications) a été défini dans le Programme pour le Développement des Infrastructures en Afrique (PIDA), par l'ensemble des partenaires nationaux et régionaux. À ce stade, le Projet Transaqua n'est pas retenu parmi les 51 projets sélectionnés.

Dans le Plan National de Développement proposé par le Tchad qui identifie les priorités du pays pour la période 2013-2015, il n'est pas fait mention du projet Transaqua.

La question de l'impact environnemental des programmes financés est d'une importance capitale pour la Commission européenne. Cependant, cela ne limite pas le fort engagement de la Commission européenne dans les travaux de grandes infrastructures, au Tchad et dans la région notamment dans les infrastructures routières, de l'eau et de l'électricité.

(Wersja polska)

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011692/13
do Komisji**

Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)

(14 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Podwyższenie cen skupu zboża

Jak poinformował mnie poseł Kazimierz Ziobro z Podkarpacia, sytuacja rolników w południowo wschodnich regionach Polski staje się dramatyczna. Aktualne ceny zbóż spadły poniżej kosztów opłacalności produkcji. Aby uzyskać zwrot kosztów produkcji, przy średnim plonie pszenicy na poziomie 4 ton z hektara, cena powinna wynosić ok. 900 zł za tonę. Przy obecnych cenach (600 zł za tonę) strata na uprawie jednego hektara pszenicy wynosi 3,2 tys. zł. Przy cenie 600 zł za tonę, aby produkcja stała się opłacalna, rolnik musiałby uzyskać 8,3 tony z hektara, a to jest niemożliwe. Dalszy rozwój sytuacji grozi zapaścią wśród producentów zboża w Polsce i bankructwami gospodarstw rolnych. Sytuację na rynku zbóż można stabilizować wykorzystując m.in. unijny mechanizm skupu interwencyjnego. Powinien być on uruchamiany wtedy, gdy dochody rolników spadają poniżej kosztów produkcji. Niestety, jak wspomina poseł Kazimierz Ziobro, cena płacona za tonę, wyznaczona przez KE, 101,3 euro nie jest w stanie pokryć kosztów produkcji. Zdaniem polskich rolników ceny powinny wahać się między 160-165 euro za tonę.

Czy wobec powyższego Komisja planuje w trybie pilnym podwyższenie obowiązującej ceny skupu interwencyjnego zboża?

Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Komisja, aby wspomóc rolników uprawiających zboże, szczególnie w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej? Czy zostaną uruchomione dodatkowe-interwencyjne programy skupu?

Czy Komisja przewiduje wprowadzenie dodatkowych opłat dla importerów taniego zboża ze wschodu – Ukrainy i Rosji, co pozwoliłoby na ustabilizowanie cen zboża na giełdach w Europie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşu w imieniu Komisji

(26 listopada 2013 r.)

W ramach reformy wspólnej organizacji rynków produktów rolnych mechanizm zabezpieczający systemu interwencji w sektorze zbóż został sprowadzony do poziomu 101,31 EUR/t. Utrzymano również zasady automatycznego otwarcia przetargów na pszenicę zwyczajną powyżej 3 mln ton oraz otwarcia – w zależności od sytuacji rynkowej – przetargów na pszenicę durum, kukurydzę i jęczmień, począwszy od pierwszej tony.

Podniesienie ceny interwencyjnej byłoby sprzeczne z zapoczątkowanym wiele lat temu zorientowaniem wspólnej polityki rolnej na rynek.

Ponadto poziom wsparcia wynoszący 101,31 EUR/t należy oceniać wspólnie z mechanizmem przyznawania płatności bezpośrednich, który gwarantuje duży stopień stabilności dochodów producentów, zapewniając jednocześnie konkurencyjność rolnictwa europejskiego oraz jego dostosowanie do warunków rynkowych.

W ramach wspomnianej reformy rolnicy będą mieli możliwość zbiorowego negocjowania umów kontraktacji na dostawę oliwy z oliwek, wołowiny, zbóż i innych roślin uprawnych z zastrzeżeniem określonych warunków i gwarancji.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011692/13
to the Commission**

Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)

(14 October 2013)

Subject: The increase in the purchase price of wheat

I have been informed by my fellow Member Kazimierz Ziobro from the Subcarpathian region that the situation of farmers in the south-eastern regions of Poland is becoming quite dramatic. The current price of cereals has dropped below the costs of production, making it unprofitable. In order to obtain a return on the cost of production on an average wheat harvest at a level of 4 tonnes per hectare, the price should be around PLN 900 per tonne. At current prices (PLN 600 per tonne), the loss per hectare of wheat amounts to PLN 3 200. At a price of PLN 600 per tonne, in order for production to be profitable, a farmer would have to obtain 8.3 tonnes per hectare, but this is not possible. If the situation worsens there is a danger that cereal producers in Poland will collapse and their farms go into bankruptcy. The situation in the cereals market can be stabilised using the European Union intervention mechanism. It should be activated when farmers' incomes fall below the costs of production. Unfortunately, as my fellow Member Kazimierz Ziobro has mentioned, the intervention price set by the Commission of EUR 101.30 per tonne is not enough to cover the costs of production. In the opinion of Polish farmers, the prices should range from EUR 160 to EUR 165 per tonne.

In view of the above, does the Commission plan to increase the mandatory price of intervention purchases of cereals as a matter of urgency?

What action does the Commission intend to take in order to support farmers who produce cereals, in particular in central and eastern Europe? Will additional intervention purchase programmes be activated?

Does the Commission anticipate the introduction of additional fees for importers of cheap cereals from the East — Ukraine and Russia — which would allow the prices of cereals in European cereal markets to stabilise?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Ciolos au nom de la Commission

(26 novembre 2013)

Dans le cadre de la réforme de l'Organisation Commune des Marchés agricoles, le filet de sécurité du régime d'intervention dans le secteur des céréales a été reconduit au niveau de 101,31 euros/t. Les principes de l'ouverture automatique des adjudications pour le blé tendre au-delà de 3 millions de tonnes et de l'ouverture en fonction de la situation de marché, pour le blé dur, le maïs et l'orge, à compter de la première tonne ont été également maintenus.

Augmenter le prix d'intervention serait contraire à l'orientation de la Politique Agricole Commune vers le marché entamée depuis de nombreuses années.

Par ailleurs, le niveau de soutien de 101,31 euros/t doit être évalué conjointement avec le mécanisme d'octroi des paiements directs, lequel garantit un fort degré de stabilité aux revenus des producteurs tout en assurant la compétitivité de l'agriculture européenne et son adaptation aux conditions du marché.

Dans le cadre de ladite réforme, les agriculteurs auront la possibilité de négocier collectivement des contrats pour la fourniture d'huile d'olive et de viande de bœuf, de céréales et de certaines grandes cultures sous réserve de certaines conditions et garanties.

(Wersja polska)

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011693/13
do Komisji**

Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)

(14 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Przypadki importu ukraińskiej pszenicy z terenów Czarnobyla

Posłowie Kazimierz Ziobro i Mieczysław Golba z Podkarpacia poinformowali mnie o przypadkach importowania do Polski ukraińskiej pszenicy i rzepaku z terenów skażonych przez wybuch w Czarnobylu. W 2010 r. ukraiński minister ds. rolnictwa poinformował o rozpoczęciu zasiewów w rejonach objętych skażeniem. Jak stwierdził na prawie 1,3 mln hektarów rolnicy będą mogli rozpocząć uprawę zbóż oraz rzepaku. Decyzja ta pozwoliła zwiększyć areał uprawny, a co za tym idzie ilość zebranych plonów. Od ogłoszenia tej decyzji zbiory zbóż na Ukrainie wzrosły z ok 39,5 mln ton w 2010 do ok 57 mln ton w 2013. Pozwoliło to na większy eksport ukraińskiego zboża również do krajów UE. Jak informował poseł Kazimierz Ziobro w Polsce import taniego rzepaku oraz zboża z Ukrainy negatywnie wpływa na ceny skupu.

1. Czy Komisja otrzymała informację o uprawie na terenach skażonych przez wybuch w Czarnobylu? Czy monitoruje te uprawy?
2. Czy Komisja zgadza się z argumentami strony ukraińskiej potwierdzającymi bezpieczeństwo upraw położonych na terenach skażenia wybuchem w Czarnobylu dla ludzi i zwierząt? Kiedy i jakie przeprowadzono badania w tej sprawie?
3. Czy Komisja zamierza dokładniej monitorować uprawy oraz produkty rolne importowane do Unii z państw trzecich?
4. Jakie środki podjęła Komisja aby zapobiec importowi zboża i rzepaku uprawianych na skażonych terenach Ukrainy i Kazachstanu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonía Borga w imieniu Komisji

(4 grudnia 2013 r.)

Komisja nie została poinformowana o prowadzeniu upraw na obszarach do tej pory skażonych na skutek awarii w Czarnobylu.

Zgodnie z przepisami rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 733/2008 ⁽¹⁾ państwa członkowskie są zobowiązane do sprawdzania zgodności produktów rolnych pochodzących z państw trzecich, w tym z Ukrainy, z maksymalnym dozwolonym poziomem ustalonym dla sumy radionuklidów cezu-134 oraz cezu-137. Kontrole należy przeprowadzać z intensywnością, która uwzględni stopień skażenia kraju pochodzenia, właściwości przedmiotowych produktów, wyniki poprzednich kontroli i obejmować świadectwa wywozowe. Kontrole te muszą być przeprowadzane przed dopuszczeniem danych produktów do swobodnego obrotu. Szczegółowe zasady kontroli zostały określone w rozporządzeniu Komisji (WE) nr 1635/2006 ⁽²⁾.

Każdy przypadek nieprzestrzegania prawodawstwa UE wiążący się z poważnym zagrożeniem dla zdrowia spowodowanym przez żywność lub paszę musi być zgłaszany za pomocą RASFF ⁽³⁾. Jeśli chodzi o przypadki niezgodności z maksymalnymi poziomami promieniotwórczości, od 2003 r. zgłoszono 8 przypadków dotyczących produktów z Ukrainy (5 w odniesieniu do grzybów, 2 w odniesieniu do borówek i jeden w odniesieniu do soku z borówek) natomiast nie odnotowano żadnych przypadków w odniesieniu do produktów pochodzących z Kazachstanu.

Rozporządzenie (WE) nr 733/2008 pozostaje w mocy do dnia 31 marca 2020 r. i w związku z tym kontrole produktów rolnych pochodzących z państw trzecich przewidziane na mocy tego rozporządzenia powinny być nadal prowadzone.

⁽¹⁾ Rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 733/2008 z dnia 15 lipca 2008 r. w sprawie warunków regulujących przywóz produktów rolnych pochodzących z krajów trzecich w następstwie wypadku w elektrowni jądrowej w Czarnobylu (Dz.U. L 201 z 30.7.2008).

⁽²⁾ Rozporządzenie Komisji (WE) nr 1635/2006 z dnia 6 listopada 2006 r. ustanawiające szczegółowe zasady stosowania rozporządzenia Rady (EWG) nr 737/90 w sprawie warunków regulujących przywóz produktów rolnych pochodzących z państw trzecich w następstwie wypadku w elektrowni jądrowej w Czarnobylu (Dz.U. L 306 z 7.11.2006).

⁽³⁾ System wczesnego ostrzegania o niebezpiecznej żywności i paszach (RASFF).

Do tej pory nie odnotowano przypadków niezgodności z maksymalnym poziomem promieniotwórczości w odniesieniu do zbóż i rzepaku importowanych z Ukrainy i Kazachstanu. Dlatego też Komisja nie zamierza na razie podejmować dodatkowych działań w odniesieniu do tych produktów w związku z ewentualną obecnością promieniotwórczości.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011693/13
to the Commission
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: Cases of importing Ukrainian wheat from areas near Chernobyl

Fellow Members Kazimierz Ziobro and Mieczysław Golba from the Subcarpathian region have informed me of instances of Ukrainian wheat and rape being imported into Poland from areas contaminated by the Chernobyl accident. In 2010, the Ukrainian minister of agriculture reported that areas which had been contaminated were starting to be used to grow crops. He said that farmers would be able to commence sowing cereals and rape on an area of almost 1.3 million hectares. This decision allowed acreage under cultivation, and therefore the amount of crops harvested, to be increased. Since this decision was announced, the cereal harvest in Ukraine has grown from around 39.5 million tonnes in 2010 to around 57 million tonnes in 2013. This has allowed more Ukrainian cereals to be exported to European Union Member States, as well as to others. As my fellow member Kazimierz Ziobro has said, the import of cheap rape and cereals from Ukraine has had a negative impact on purchase prices in Poland.

1. Was the Commission informed about the growing of crops on areas previously contaminated by the Chernobyl accident? Is it monitoring these crops?
2. Does the Commission agree with the Ukrainian arguments which confirm the safety of crops grown in areas contaminated by the Chernobyl accident for people and animals? What tests have been carried out in this matter, and when were they conducted?
3. Does the Commission intend to continue to monitor crops and agricultural products imported into the European Union from third countries?
4. What measures has the Commission taken in order to prevent the import of cereals and rape grown in the contaminated areas of Ukraine and Kazakhstan?

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

The Commission has not been informed about the growing of crops on areas previously contaminated by the Chernobyl accident.

In accordance with the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 ⁽¹⁾, Member States have to check compliance of agricultural products originating in third countries, including Ukraine, with the maximum permitted level established for the sum of the radionuclides caesium -134 and -137. The intensity of the controls must take into account the degree of contamination of the country of origin, the characteristics of the products in question, the results of the previous checks and the export certificates. These controls must be performed before the release for free circulation of the products concerned. Detailed rules for the controls are laid down in Commission Regulation (EC) No 1635/2006 ⁽²⁾.

Every non-compliance with EU legislation involving a serious health risk deriving from food or feed has to be reported through the RASFF ⁽³⁾. As regards the findings of non-compliance with the maximum levels for radioactivity, there have been since 2003, 8 notifications on products from Ukraine (5 on mushrooms, 2 on blueberries and one on blueberry juice) and no notifications on products from Kazakhstan.

Regulation No (EC) No 733/2008 is in force until 31 March 2020 and consequently the controls on agricultural products from third countries provided for by this regulation should continue to be carried out.

No non-compliant findings with the maximum level of radioactivity have yet been reported on imports of cereals and rape from Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Therefore, the Commission has no intention for the time being to take additional measures for these products as regards possible presence of radioactivity.

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 of 15 July 2008 on the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station (OJ L 201, 30.7.2008).

⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EC) No 1635/2006 of 6 November 2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EEC) No 737/90 on the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power-station (OJ L 306, 7.11.2006).

⁽³⁾ Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF).

(Wersja polska)

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011694/13
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)**

Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)

(14 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zamachy ugrupowania Boko Haram w Nigerii

Islamska grupa Boko Haram zorganizowała atak terrorystyczny wymierzony w grupę studentów z Gujby. W wyniku strzelaniny śmierć poniosło co najmniej 40 osób.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się do Wysokiej Przedstawiciel z prośbą o udzielenie odpowiedzi na następujące pytania:

1. Jakie działania podjęła Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby wesprzeć rząd w Nigerii w walce z grupą Boko Haram?
2. Jakie działania podjęto dotychczas, aby monitorować i zapobiegać atakom terrorystycznym wymierzonym w ludność cywilną w Nigerii?
3. Głównym celem ataków islamskich terrorystów są nigeryjscy chrześcijanie. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel planuje specjalne programy pomocowe dla nigeryjskich chrześcijan?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton

w imieniu Komisji

(10 grudnia 2013 r.)

UE współpracuje zarówno z rządem, jak i ludnością Nigerii na rzecz położenia kresu panującej tam przemocy poprzez nieustający dialog polityczny dotyczący znalezienia odpowiednich rozwiązań istniejących problemów oraz ukierunkowane działania pomocowe w celu wspierania inicjatyw nigeryjskich i wyeliminowania przyczyn leżących u ich podstaw.

10. EFR wspiera szeroki zakres programów i działań związanych ze sprawowaniem rządów w dziedzinie wody, infrastruktury sanitarnej i zdrowia matek. Instrument na rzecz stabilności zapewnia ponadto konkretną pomoc w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa i praworządności.

Naczelnym celem ataków islamskich buntowników są instytucje państwowe i instytucje bezpieczeństwa publicznego. W ostatnim czasie, jak w przypadku opisanym przez Szanownego Pana Posła Parlamentu, zaatakowane zostały także obiekty edukacyjne. Ofiarami tych brutalnych zabójstw są zarówno chrześcijanie, jak i muzułmanie. Proponuje się zatem nie dokonywać jakiegokolwiek rozróżnienia na tle religijnym w reagowaniu UE na te ataki, gdyż takie rozróżnienie przyniosłoby efekty odwrotne do zamierzonych jeśli chodzi o ogólne starania zmierzające do ochrony życia wszystkich Nigeryjczyków przed tym zagrożeniem.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011694/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(14 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks by the Boko Haram group in Nigeria

The Islamic group Boko Haram was behind a recent terrorist attack on a group of students from Gujba. At least 40 people were killed as a result of the shooting.

In relation to the above, I would like to ask the High Representative the following questions:

1. What action has the High Representative taken in order to support the Nigerian Government in its fight against the Boko Haram group?
2. What action has been taken to date to monitor and prevent terrorist attacks aimed at civilians in Nigeria?
3. The main target of these attacks by Islamic terrorists are Nigerian Christians. Is the High Representative planning any special aid programmes for Nigerian Christians?

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

The EU is working with the government and people of Nigeria to help bring an end to the current cycle of violence through both continuous political dialogue on appropriate solutions to the problems, as well as targeted aid interventions in support of Nigerian initiatives and addressing the underlying root causes.

The 10th EDF is supporting a broad range of governance related programmes and interventions in the field of water, sanitation and maternal health. In addition, the Instrument for Stability is providing specific assistance in the area of security and rule of law.

The main target of the attacks by Islamist insurgents are state and security institutions. Lately, as in the case referred to by the Honourable Member of Parliament, education facilities have also been attacked. The victims of these brutal killings are both Christians and Muslims. It is not therefore proposed to draw any religious distinctions in the EU's response to these attacks on the grounds that these would be counter-productive to the overall efforts to protect the lives of all Nigerians from this threat.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011697/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή κανόνων κρατικών ενισχύσεων στις τράπεζες

Σύμφωνα με την ανακοίνωση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής (2013/C 216/01) για τις «κρατικές ενισχύσεις των τραπεζών», δηλώνεται με τον πλέον σαφή τρόπο ότι η «Επιτροπή δεν θα απαιτεί την καταβολή εισφοράς από τους κατόχους χρεωστικών τίτλων αυξημένης εξασφάλισης (ιδίως από κατόχους ασφαλισμένων καταθέσεων, ανασφάλιστων καταθέσεων, ομολόγων και κάθε άλλου χρεωστικού τίτλου αυξημένης εξασφάλισης) ως υποχρεωτικό στοιχείο του καταμερισμού των επιβαρύνσεων».

Με δεδομένα τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

- Έχει τη δυνατότητα ένα κράτος μέλος να προβεί σε πρόσθετα μέτρα, όπως η καταβολή εισφοράς (φορολογίας) από κατόχους ασφαλισμένων καταθέσεων, προς όφελος της κεφαλαιακής ενίσχυσης μιας τράπεζας, παρά το γεγονός ότι η Επιτροπή «δεν θα απαιτεί» τέτοιου είδους επιβαρύνσεις;
- Στα πλαίσια της ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας, ποια είναι η διαφορά, μεταξύ της εξασφαλισμένης και της μη εξασφαλισμένης κατάθεσης; Ποια είναι η διαφορά μεταξύ «ομολόγων και άλλων χρεωστικών τίτλων» αυξημένης και μη, εξασφάλισης;

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

Η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής (2013/C 216/01· «τραπεζική ανακοίνωση του 2013») θεσπίζει την ελάχιστη απαίτηση για τον καταμερισμό των επιβαρύνσεων. Σύμφωνα με αυτή, πριν τη χορήγηση ενίσχυσης αναδιάρθρωσης σε μια τράπεζα, τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να εξασφαλίσουν ότι οι ζημιές καλύπτονται πρώτα από τους μετόχους, και ότι οι κάτοχοι υβριδικού κεφαλαίου και οι κάτοχοι μετοχικών τίτλων μειωμένης εξασφάλισης θα συμβάλουν στη μείωση του κεφαλαιακού ελλείμματος στο μέγιστο δυνατό βαθμό, έτσι ώστε να ελαχιστοποιηθεί το κόστος για τους φορολογούμενους.

Η παράγραφος 42 της τραπεζικής ανακοίνωσης του 2013 ορίζει ότι η Επιτροπή δεν θα απαιτεί την καταβολή εισφοράς από τους κατόχους χρεωστικών τίτλων αυξημένης εξασφάλισης (ιδίως από κατόχους ασφαλισμένων καταθέσεων, ανασφάλιστων καταθέσεων, ομολόγων και κάθε άλλου χρεωστικού τίτλου αυξημένης εξασφάλισης) ως υποχρεωτικό στοιχείο του καταμερισμού των επιβαρύνσεων σύμφωνα με τους κανόνες για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις είτε με μετατροπή σε κεφάλαιο, είτε με μείωση της αξίας των μέσων.

Κάθε κράτος μέλος έχει την εξουσία να αποφασίσει εάν θα εφαρμόσει πρόσθετα μέτρα καταμερισμού των επιβαρύνσεων.

Ασφαλισμένες είναι οι καταθέσεις που καλύπτονται από συστήματα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων τα οποία προβλέπει το εθνικό δίκαιο σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 94/19/EK, και μέχρι του ποσού που ορίζει το άρθρο 7 της οδηγίας 94/19/EK. Ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις είναι εκείνες που δεν καλύπτονται από συστήματα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων σύμφωνα με τον νόμο.

Η παράγραφος 42 της τραπεζικής ανακοίνωσης του 2013 εξαιρεί από το πεδίο εφαρμογής του καταμερισμού των επιβαρύνσεων τις ασφαλισμένες καταθέσεις, τις ανασφάλιστες καταθέσεις, τα ομόλογα και κάθε άλλο χρεωστικό τίτλο αυξημένης εξασφάλισης. Η παράγραφος 42 διευκρινίζει ότι οι χρεωστικοί τίτλοι μειωμένης εξασφάλισης εμπίπτουν στο πεδίο εφαρμογής του καταμερισμού των επιβαρύνσεων που η Επιτροπή θα απαιτεί όταν τα κράτη μέλη της ζητούν να εγκρίνει ενίσχυση αναδιάρθρωσης σε τράπεζα βάσει των κανόνων για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις, αλλά όχι χρεωστικό τίτλο αυξημένης εξασφάλισης, οποιουδήποτε είδους κι αν είναι αυτός.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011697/13
to the Commission**

Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)

(15 October 2013)

Subject: Application of state aid rules to the banks

According to the communication from the Commission (2013/C 216/01) on 'support measures in favour of banks', it states very clearly that 'The Commission will not require contribution from senior debt holders (in particular from insured deposits, uninsured deposits, bonds and all other senior debt) as a mandatory component of burden-sharing'.

Given the above, will the Commission answer the following:

- Can a Member State proceed to additional measures, such as a contribution (taxation) from insured deposit holders, to boost the capital support of a bank, in spite of the fact that the Commission 'will not require' burdens of such kind?
- What is the difference, in a European context, between insured deposits and uninsured deposits? What is the difference between 'bonds and other debt', both senior and non-senior?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission

(5 December 2013)

The communication from the Commission (2013/C 216/01; 'the 2013 Banking Communication') establishes a minimum requirement for burden-sharing. Accordingly, before granting restructuring aid to a bank, Member States need to ensure that losses are first absorbed by shareholders, and that hybrid capital holders and junior capital holders contribute to reducing the capital shortfall to the maximum extent, in order to minimise the cost for taxpayers.

Paragraph 42 of the 2013 Banking Communication establishes that the Commission will not require contribution from senior debt holders (in particular from insured deposits, uninsured deposits, bonds and all other senior debt) as a mandatory component of burden-sharing under state aid rules, whether by conversion into capital or by write-down of the instruments.

If a Member State decides to apply additional burden-sharing measures, it would be a sovereign decision of that Member State.

Insured deposits are those deposits which are guaranteed by deposit guarantee schemes under national law in accordance with Directive 94/19/EC and up to the coverage level provided for in Article 7 of Directive 94/19/EC. Uninsured deposits are those that are not guaranteed by deposit guarantee schemes in accordance with the law.

Paragraph 42 of the 2013 Banking Communication excludes insured deposits, uninsured deposits, bonds and all other senior debt from the scope of burden-sharing. Paragraph 42 clarifies that subordinated debt comes within the scope of burden-sharing which the Commission would expect when asked by a Member State to approve restructuring aid to a bank under state aid rules, but not senior debt, whatever kind of senior debt it might be.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011698/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Καταπάτηση δικαιωμάτων πολιτών και ατόμων με αναπηρία στο Δήμο Αθηναίων

Δεκάδες είναι οι καταγγελίες κατοίκων του Δήμου Αθηναίων ότι η δημοτική αρχή με την πολιτική της στην αδειοδότηση τραπεζοκαθισμάτων επιχειρήσεων εστίασης και ψυχαγωγίας, εμποδίζει την ελεύθερη πρόσβαση των πολιτών στα πεζοδρόμια της πόλης.

Το Δεκέμβριο του 2006, ο Συνήγορος του Πολίτη στην Ελλάδα, μετά από αρκετές καταγγελίες και αναφορές πολιτών, εξέδωσε πόρισμα (Υπόθεση 984/11.2.1999) για την «παρακώλυση της ελεύθερης χρήσης και προσπέλασης πεζοδρομίων και διαβάσεων εντός των ορίων του Δήμου Αθηναίων», στο οποίο αναφέρεται, μεταξύ άλλων, στις επιπτώσεις που έχει η άνευ ορίων αδειοδότηση τραπεζοκαθισμάτων των δημοτικών αρχών στην ελεύθερη χρήση και προσπέλαση πεζοδρομίων και διαβάσεων από τους πολίτες και τα άτομα με ειδικές ανάγκες. Τα τελευταία χρόνια η κατάσταση έχει γίνει δραματικότερη, θέτοντας πια σε άμεσο κίνδυνο, την ελεύθερη και ασφαλή διάβαση όλων των πολιτών της Αθήνας και ιδιαίτερα των ατόμων με αναπηρία.

Με δεδομένα, τόσο τον Χάρτη των Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της ΕΕ (άρθρο 26), όσο και την Ευρωπαϊκή Στρατηγική για την Αναπηρία 2010-2020 και συγκεκριμένα τον Τομέα Δράσης της Προσβασιμότητας, καθώς, επίσης, και τη Διεθνή Σύμβαση για τα Δικαιώματα των Ατόμων με Αναπηρία του ΟΗΕ που έχει επικυρωθεί από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (23 Δεκεμβρίου 2010) και την Ελλάδα (11 Απριλίου 2012), ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

- Με δεδομένο ότι πολλά από τα πεζοδρόμια στο Δήμο Αθηναίων για τα οποία έχουν δοθεί άδειες τραπεζοκαθισμάτων και στα οποία εμποδίζεται η ελεύθερη πρόσβαση όλων των πολιτών, έχουν κατασκευαστεί και εκσυγχρονιστεί με κοινοτικούς πόρους (Ερώτηση E-006177/2009), ποιες είναι οι διαδικασίες που έχει η Επιτροπή στη διάθεσή της για τον έλεγχο της ορθής λειτουργίας υποδομών που έχουν λάβει κοινοτική χρηματοδότηση;
- Θεωρεί ότι η συγκεκριμένη κατάσταση έρχεται σε αντίθεση με την κοινοτική νομολογία σχετικά με τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία; Με ποιο τρόπο μπορεί να συμβάλει στην εξάλειψη των εμποδίων και των φραγμών στην προσβασιμότητα των ατόμων με αναπηρία και στην ουσιαστική προάσπιση των δικαιωμάτων τους;

Απάντηση της κ. Reding εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(20 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Η Επιτροπή έχει αρχίσει την εφαρμογή της σύμβασης του ΟΗΕ για τα δικαιώματα των ατόμων με αναπηρία (στην οποία συμμετέχει η ΕΕ από την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2011) μέσω των δράσεων της ευρωπαϊκής στρατηγικής για την αναπηρία 2010-2020 και στο πλαίσιο των αρχών του Χάρτη των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων. Οι δράσεις αυτές περιλαμβάνουν τόσο πρωτοβουλίες σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, όσο και τη στήριξη πρωτοβουλιών σε εθνικό, περιφερειακό και τοπικό επίπεδο.

Η διαχείριση των ευρωπαϊκών διαρθρωτικών ταμείων υπόκειται στους κανόνες της επιμερισμένης διαχείρισης και τα κράτη μέλη είναι υπεύθυνα για την επιλογή, την εφαρμογή, την παρακολούθηση, την υποβολή εκθέσεων, τον λογιστικό έλεγχο και την αξιολόγηση των συγχρηματοδοτούμενων προγραμμάτων και έργων, με την εξαίρεση των «μεγάλων έργων» (δηλ. έργων άνω των 50 εκατ. ευρώ) ⁽¹⁾. Το άρθρο 16 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) 1083/2006 ορίζει ότι «η δυνατότητα πρόσβασης για τα άτομα με αναπηρία αποτελεί ένα από τα κριτήρια που πρέπει να τηρούνται κατά τον καθορισμό επιχειρήσεων που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από τα ταμεία και που πρέπει να λαμβάνονται υπόψη κατά τις διάφορες φάσεις υλοποίησής».

Επί του παρόντος δεν υπάρχει νομοθεσία της ΕΕ στον συγκεκριμένο τομέα της δυνατότητας πρόσβασης στους δημόσιους χώρους. Συνεπώς, στην προκείμενη περίπτωση των αστικών/δημοτικών χώρων εφαρμόζεται η εθνική νομοθεσία και νομολογία.

Η Επιτροπή προωθεί ωστόσο την προσβασιμότητα του αστικού περιβάλλοντος μέσω μεγάλου αριθμού πρωτοβουλιών, όπως του βραβείου της φιλικής προς τα άτομα με αναπηρία πόλης (Access City Award) ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Κανονισμός (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006 του Συμβουλίου, της 11ης Ιουλίου 2006, περί καθορισμού γενικών διατάξεων για το Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινωνικό Ταμείο και το Ταμείο Συνοχής και την κατάργηση του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1260/1999 (ΕΕ L 210 της 31.7.2006, σ. 27).

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/award/index_en.htm

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011698/13
to the Commission**

Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)

(15 October 2013)

Subject: Violation of the rights of citizens and disabled people in Athens

Athenians have made several complaints that the municipal authority hinders free access to the city's pavements, through its practice of licensing seating areas for food and entertainment establishments.

In December 2006, the Greek ombudsman, following a sufficient number of complaints and statements from citizens, issued a finding (Case 984/11.2.1999) on the 'Hindering of the free use of and access to pavements and crossings within the boundaries of the Municipality of Athens', in which he makes reference, among other things, to the impact that the unrestricted licensing of seating areas by the municipality has on the free use of and access to pavements and crossings by citizens and people with special needs. Over recent years the situation has deteriorated, now directly jeopardising free and safe passage by all citizens, and particularly people with disabilities.

Given the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 26), and also the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, and specifically the Accessibility Action Sector, as well as the international UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, which has been ratified by the EU (23 December 2010) and by Greece (11 April 2012), will the Commission say:

- Given that many of the pavements in Athens licensed as seating areas — hindering the free access of all citizens — were constructed and modernised with Community funds (Question E-006177/2009) what process does the Commission have for checking the proper functioning of infrastructure that has received Community funding?
- Does it believe that the specific situation is contrary to Community jurisprudence relating to the rights of disabled persons? How can it contribute to the removal of barriers and obstacles to the accessibility of disabled persons, and to the substantive promotion of their rights?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission

(20 December 2013)

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

The management of the European Structural Funds is subject to the rules of shared management ⁽¹⁾ and the Member States are responsible for the selection, implementation, monitoring, reporting, audit and evaluation of the co-financed programmes and projects, with the exception of 'major projects' (i.e. projects over EUR 50 million). As Art 16 of 1083/2006 (EC) Regulation stipulates 'Accessibility for disabled persons shall be one of the criteria to be observed in defining operations co-financed by the Funds and to be taken into account during the various stages of implementation'.

At the moment there is no EU legislation in the specific area of accessibility of public spaces. National legislation and jurisprudence therefore apply in this urban/municipal case.

The Commission is however promoting the accessibility of urban environment through several initiatives such as the Access City Award ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 of 11 July 2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 27.

⁽²⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/award/index_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-011699/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(15 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Χρήση χρηματοοικονομικών εργαλείων τύπου swaps

Εντύπωση έχει προκαλέσει στην ευρωπαϊκή κοινή γνώμη μια σειρά από σκάνδαλα που έχουν να κάνουν με τη χρήση χρηματοοικονομικών εργαλείων τύπου swaps από τις κυβερνήσεις των κρατών μελών. Μετά την περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, με τη χρήση νομισματικών συναλλαγών currency swaps, αποκαλύφθηκε ότι και η κυβέρνηση της Πορτογαλίας έχει κάνει χρήση συναλλαγών επιτοκίου interest rate swaps.

Με δεδομένη την απάντησης της Επιτροπής (E-001021/2010), στην οποία αναφέρεται ότι «το 2007 η Eurostat έστειλε ερωτηματολόγιο στα κράτη μέλη, με σκοπό να ενημερωθεί για την ύπαρξη νομισματικών συναλλαγών και ιδιαίτερα νομισματικών συναλλαγών εκτός αγοράς», ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

- Ποια είναι τα αποτελέσματα των ερευνών της Eurostat σχετικά με την ύπαρξη νομισματικών συναλλαγών εκτός αγοράς; Μπορεί να κοινοποιήσει τη σχετική έρευνα;
- Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το ποια κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης έχουν κάνει χρήση χρηματοοικονομικών εργαλείων τύπου swaps, κατά την τελευταία δεκαετία;
- Γνωρίζει τις δύο εκδόσεις της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας («*The impact on government deficit and debt from off-market swaps. The Greek case*» και «*The Titlos transaction and possible existence of similar transactions impacting on the euro area government debt or deficit levels*») που αφορούν τις επιπτώσεις των χρηματοοικονομικών εργαλείων τύπου swaps στο κρατικό έλλειμμα και χρέος της Ελλάδας και των άλλων χωρών της Ευρωζώνης; Εάν ναι, μπορεί να τις κοινοποιήσει, ώστε να σπάσει επιτέλους ο «νόμος της σιωπής» της ΕΚΤ, σχετικά με το θέμα;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(7 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

1 & 2. Πολλές κυβερνήσεις της ΕΕ κάνουν χρήση χρηματοοικονομικών παραγώγων, όπως ανταλλαγές επιτοκίου και ανταλλαγές συναλλάγματος, για τους σκοπούς της διαχείρισης του δημόσιου χρέους τους. Οι συναλλαγές αυτές πραγματοποιούνται εν γένει με τους όρους της αγοράς, όπως στην περίπτωση της πορτογαλικής κυβέρνησης, και, ως εκ τούτου, η στατιστική καταγραφή είναι απλή. Οι ροές τόκων που σχετίζονται με τις εν λόγω συναλλαγές αναφέρονται σαφώς στο πλαίσιο των εκδιδόμενων γνωστοποιήσεων της διαδικασίας υπερβολικού ελλείμματος (ΔΥΕ) (ως η διαφορά μεταξύ των τόκων «EDP D41» και των τόκων «D 41» στον πίνακα 1).

Η περίπτωση των εκτός αγοράς χρηματοοικονομικών παραγώγων είναι αξιοσημείωτη διότι δημιουργούνται σημαντικές σχετικές ροές αξιών. Αυτός είναι ο λόγος για τον οποίο υπάρχουν στατιστικοί κανόνες που στοχεύουν να διασφαλίσουν ότι τα μέσα αυτά αντικατοπτρίζονται στο δημόσιο χρέος, και για τον οποίο η EUROSTAT παρακολουθεί τα μέσα αυτά και ζητεί από τα κράτη μέλη να την ενημερώνουν εφόσον υπάρχουν. Το ιστορικό των εκτός αγοράς συναλλαγών της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης με την Goldman Sachs περιγράφεται στην δημοσιευθείσα έκθεση της Eurostat για τις μεθοδολογικές επισκέψεις στην Ελλάδα κατά το 2010:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Greece%20-%202010%20methodological%20visits%20report.pdf

3. Η Επιτροπή σημειώνει ότι η πρόσβαση στα έγγραφα της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας διέπεται από το νομικό πλαίσιο της ΕΚΤ (απόφαση ECB/2004/3, όπως τροποποιήθηκε με την απόφαση ECB/2011/6). Το Αξιότιμο Μέλος καλείται συνεπώς να απευθύνει το αίτημά του στην ΕΚΤ.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011699/13
to the Commission**

Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)

(15 October 2013)

Subject: Use of financial instruments in the form of swaps

The use of swap-type financial instruments by Member State governments has impacted European public opinion following a series of scandals. Following Greece's use of currency swaps, it has been revealed that the Portuguese Government has made use of interest rate swaps.

Given the Commission's answer (E-001021/2010) stating that 'in 2007, Eurostat sent a questionnaire to the Member States seeking information on the existence of currency transactions and in particular off-market currency transactions', will the Commission say:

- What are the results of Eurostat's enquiries relating to the existence of off-market currency transactions? Can it publish the enquiries?
- Does it have any data as to which eurozone Member States have used swap-type financial instruments during the last 10 years?
- Is it aware of the two European Central Bank reports 'The impact on government deficit and debt from off-market swaps. The Greek case' and 'The Titlos transaction and possible existence of similar transactions impacting on the euro area government debt or deficit levels', which address the impact of swap-type financial instruments on Greek and other eurozone country government deficits and debts? If so, can it make them known, so that the ECB's silence in relation to this matter can finally be broken?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission

(7 January 2014)

1-2. Many EU governments make use of financial derivatives, such as interest rate swaps and foreign exchange swaps, for their debt management purposes. These transactions are generally undertaken on market terms, as in the case of the Portuguese Government, and therefore the statistical recording is straightforward. The interest flows relating to these transactions are clearly reported in Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP) published notifications (as the difference between Interest 'EDP D41' and Interest 'D41' in Table 1).

The case of off-market financial derivatives is notable because there are significant associated value flows at inception. This is why there are statistical rules to ensure that these instruments are reflected in government debt, and why Eurostat monitors these instruments and asks Member States to inform Eurostat if they exist. The background to the off-market transactions of the Greek Government with Goldman Sachs is described in Eurostat's published report on the methodological visits to Greece in 2010:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/government_finance_statistics/documents/Greece%20-%202010%20methodological%20visits%20report.pdf

3. The Commission notes that access to documents of the European Central Bank is governed by the legal framework of the ECB (Decision ECB/2004/3, as amended by Decision ECB/2011/6). The Honourable Member would therefore be invited to address his request to the ECB

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011700/13

lill-Kummissjoni

David Casa (PPE)

(15 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: L-effikaċja tal-ghajnuna mogħtija lir-Repubblika Demokratika tal-Kongo

Ir-Rapport Speċjali Nru 9 tal-Qorti Ewropea tal-Awdituri jiddikjara li l-allokazzjoni ta' EUR 1.9 biljun f'ghajnuna lir-Repubblika Demokratika tal-Kongo (RDK) mill-2003 'l hawn ma hallietx ir-riżultati maħsuba. Madankollu, il-Kummissarju għall-Iżvilupp isostni li għadu kmieni wisq biex naslu għal konkluzjonijiet ta' dan it-tip. In-nuqqas ta' infrastruttura soċjali fir-RDK jagħmilha diffiċli biex l-ghajnuna tissarraf f'servizzi li jikkontribwixxu għall-ghan tal-UE tal-"istabilizzazzjoni sostenibbli".

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika l-programmi li din l-ghajnuna qed tiffinanzja fir-RDK? X'inhuma s-sistemi li tista' tuża l-Kummissjoni biex tasal għall-effetti tal-ghajnuna u l-programmi tagħha fir-RDK? Il-Kummissjoni kif se tadatta l-programmi tagħha għall-isfidi li qed thabbat wiċċha magħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Piebalgs f'isem il-Kummissjoni

(17 ta' Diċembru 2013)

Ir-rapport tal-Qorti tal-Awdituri jintrabat ma' qasam ta' attività wiehed biss — il-governanza — li jirrappreżenta madwar 20 % taċ-ċifra kkwotata ta' EUR1,9 biljun. Ir-rapport eżamina 16-il proġett (li jirrappreżentaw madwar EUR 400 miljun) fil-qasam tal-governanza, xi whud minnhom fi stadju bikri ta' implimentazzjoni, filwaqt li oħrajn għadhom qed jiġu implimentati.

Il-proġetti kollha offruti mill-Kummissjoni jinsabu fuq il-sit elettroniku EuropeAid. ⁽¹⁾ L-Onorevoli Membru se jsib lista ta' proġetti ffinanzjati fil-qasam kopert mir-rapport mill-2003 sal-2011 fil-paġni 38 u 39 tad-dokument.

Rigward sistemi ta' monitoraġġ tal-Kummissjoni, kull sena numru ta' proġetti jiġu magħzula biex ikunu s-suġġett ta' misjonijiet ta' "monitaraġġ orjentat lejn ir-riżultati", imwettqa minn konsulenti indipendenti. Id-delegazzjoni tal-UE twettaq ukoll evalwazzjonijiet regolari ta' nofs il-perjodu u finali tal-proġetti kif ukoll evalwazzjonijiet ta' pajjiżi fuq livell usa'. Dawn jipprovdu lezzjonijiet għat-tfassil ta' proġetti fil-gejjieni. Fl-aħhar nett, id-Delegazzjonijiet tal-UE jwettqu wkoll żjarat tal-proġetti regolari u jagħmlu laqgħat mal-manijers tal-proġetti sabiex jittrattaw problemi ta' kongestjoni urġenti b'rabta mal-implimentazzjoni tal-proġett.

L-impatt ta' portafoll totali ta' ghajnuna fi kwalunkwe pajjiż partikolari jiġi evalwat matul ir-reviżjonijiet ta' nofs il-perjodu u tat-tmiem tal-perjodu tal-Programm Indikattiv Nazzjonali tiegħu. Id-dipartimenti tal-Kummissjoni qed jahdmu wkoll fuq metodoloġija mtejbja għall-kejl tar-riżultati u l-impatt tal-kooperazzjoni għall-iżvilupp.

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja li l-progress fil-qasam tal-governanza fir-RDK huwa kajman. Din hija konsegwenza partikolarment tal-ambjent diffiċli li fih tingħata assistenza għar-RDK. Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni hija konvinta li l-ghajnuna tagħha lir-RDK miexja f'direzzjoni pożittiva u li l-kooperazzjoni tal-UE qiegħda tissarraf f'impatti pożittivi fis-settur tal-governanza.

⁽¹⁾ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1384792329967&do=publi.welcome>

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011700/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(15 October 2013)**

Subject: Effectiveness of aid to the Democratic Republic of Congo

The European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 9 states that the allocation of EUR 1.9 billion in aid to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 2003 has not delivered the intended results. However, the Commissioner for development claims it is too early to come to such conclusions. The lack of social infrastructure in the DRC makes it difficult to transform the aid into services that will contribute to the EU's goal of 'sustainable stabilisation'.

Can the Commission list the programmes which this aid is funding in the DRC? What systems does the Commission have in place for tracing the effects of its aid and programmes in the DRC? How will the Commission adapt its programmes to the challenges that it is facing?

**Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2013)**

The Court of Auditors' report relates to only one area of activity — governance — which represents around 20% of the EUR 1.9 billion figure quoted. The report examined 16 projects (representing around EUR 400 million) in the area of governance, some of them being at an early stage of implementation, while others are still being implemented.

All projects tendered by the Commission can be found on the EuropeAid website. ⁽¹⁾ The Honourable Member will find a list of projects funded in the area covered by the report from 2003 to 2011 on pages 38 and 39 of the document.

Regarding the Commission's monitoring systems, each year a number of projects are selected to be the subject of 'results-oriented monitoring' missions, carried out by independent consultants. The EU Delegation also performs regular mid-term and final evaluations of projects as well as wider country evaluations. These provide lessons for future project design. Finally, EU Delegations also carry out regular project visits and hold meetings with project managers in order to deal with urgent bottlenecks and problems in project implementation.

The impact of the overall aid portfolio in any given country is assessed during mid-term and end-of-term reviews of its National Indicative Programme. The Commission's departments are also working on an improved methodology for measuring the results and impact of development cooperation.

The Commission is aware that progress in the area of governance in the DRC is slow. This is a consequence of the particularly difficult environment in which assistance to the DRC is provided. However, the Commission is convinced that its assistance to the DRC is moving in a positive direction and that EU cooperation is delivering positive impacts in the governance sector.

⁽¹⁾ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1384792329967&do=publi.welcome>

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011701/13

lill-Kummissjoni

David Casa (PPE)

(15 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: L-appoġġ tal-UE lil El Salvador

Fit-8 ta' Ottubru 2013, fl-istqarrija għall-istampa (IP/13/923), il-Kummissjoni habbret li ser tkompli tappoġġa l-isforzi ta' El Salvador biex jeqred il-faqar. Il-finanzjament li l-UE pprovdiet bejn l-2007 u l-2013 intefaq fit-trawwim tal-koeżjoni soċjali, it-tkabbir ekonomiku u l-integrazzjoni u l-kummerċ reġjonali.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tikkummenta b'mod aktar speċifiku dwar in-natura tal-appoġġ finanzjarju li qed tagħti lil El Salvador? X'fondi ġew allokat lil dan il-pajjiż bejn Ġunju 2012 u Ġunju 2013? Il-Kummissjoni wettqet xi valutazzjoni dwar l-effikaċja tal-finanzjament tal-UE fir-rigward tas-settur privat f'El Salvador? Jekk iva, tista' tipprovdi r-riżultati tal-valutazzjonijiet ikkonċernati?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Piebalgs fisem il-Kummissjoni

(6 ta' Diċembru 2013)

L-appoġġ finanzjarju tal-UE għal kooperazzjoni bilaterali ma' El Salvador huwa definit mid-Dokument ta' Strategija tal-Pajjiż (CSP) 2007-2013 b'portafoll ta' EUR 121 miljun. Kien totalment impenjat f'Ottubru 2011. Huwa implimentat prinċipalment permezz ta' appoġġ baġitarju settorjali (madwar 90%). L-implimentazzjoni miexxa mingħajr problemi, iffaċilitata minn korpi governattivi żviluppatti sew li huma motivati u interessati biex imexxu l-pajjiż "il quddiem.

Bejn Ġunju 2012 u Ġunju 2013 il-fondi allokat għal El Salvador kienu jikkonċernaw il-programmi tematiċi bħal Atturi Mhux Statali u Awtoritajiet Lokali (NSA/LA), l-Istrument Ewropew għad-Demokrazija u għad-Drittijiet tal-Bniedem (EIDHR) u l-programm ta' assistenza fil-qasam tal-migrazzjoni u l-asil (AENEAS). Il-kontribut tal-UE għal proġetti tematiċi kurrenti jammonta għal madwar EUR 14-il miljun. Il-fondi allokat għal El Salvador matul il-perjodu Ġunju 2012-Ġunju 2013 jammontaw għal EUR 6,7 miljun.

Il-Kummissjoni ma wettqitx valutazzjoni tal-impatt ta' appoġġ għall-iżvilupp tas-settur privat għax ma kienx settur ewlieni fid-Dokument ta' Strategija tal-Pajjiż tal-2007-2013. Il-programmazzjoni tal-UE għall-2014-2020 u l-qafas multiannwali għadhom ma ġewx adottati. Huwa prematur li l-Kummissjoni tiddeċiedi fuq azzjonijiet futuri.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011701/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(15 October 2013)**

Subject: EU support for El Salvador

On 8 October 2013 the Commission announced in a press release (IP/13/923) that it would continue to support El Salvador's efforts to eradicate poverty. EU funding provided between 2007 and 2013 was spent on fostering social cohesion, economic growth and regional integration and trade.

Can the Commission comment more specifically as to the nature of its financial support for El Salvador? What funds were allocated to that country between June 2012 and June 2013? Has the Commission carried out any assessments as to the effectiveness of EU funding with regard to the private sector in El Salvador? If so, can it provide the results of the assessments concerned?

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

The EU's financial support for bilateral cooperation with El Salvador is defined by the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) 2007-2013 with a portfolio of EUR 121 million. It was entirely committed in October 2011. It is implemented mainly through sector budget support (around 90%). Implementation is going smoothly, facilitated by well-developed governmental bodies which are motivated and interested in driving the country forward.

Between June 2012 and June 2013 the funds allocated to El Salvador concerned the thematic programmes such as Non State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA/LA), the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the programme of assistance in the area of migration and asylum (Aeneas). The EU's contribution to ongoing thematic projects amounts to approximately EUR 14 million. The funds allocated to El Salvador during the period June 2012-June 2013 amount to EUR 6.7 million.

The Commission has not carried out an impact assessment of support to private sector development because it was not a focal sector in the 2007-2013 Country Strategy Paper. The EU's programming for 2014-2020 and the multi-annual framework have not yet been adopted. It is premature for the Commission to decide on future actions.

(Verzjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-011702/13

lill-Kummissjoni

David Casa (PPE)

(15 ta' Ottubru 2013)

Suġġett: Żieda fil-produzzjoni tal-fertilizzanti

Skont in-NU, il-produzzjoni dinjija tal-fertilizzanti mistennija tizdied matul l-2014. Dan mistenni johloq problemi ambjentali minhabba li l-fertilizzanti jahlu l-enerġija filwaqt li jiġġeneraw it-tniġġis.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tikkumenta dwar l-effikaċja tar-regolamenti attwali tal-UE dwar il-fertilizzanti? Il-Kummissjoni bihsiebha twessa' l-ambitu ta' din il-leġiżlazzjoni bi tweġiba għax-xejriet previsti fil-produzzjoni tal-fertilizzanti? Jekk iva, x'miżuri bihsiebha tiegħu l-Kummissjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni

(11 ta' Diċembru 2013)

Skont l-industrija tal-fertilizzanti Ewropea, tul dawn l-aħħar 20 sena għet osservata xejra ta' tnaqqis fil-produzzjoni tal-fertilizzanti fl-UE minhabba tnaqqis tal-konsum Ewropew. It-titjib fl-effiċjenza tal-użu tal-fertilizzanti tippermetti lill-bidwi Ewropew jipproduċi aktar għelejjel b'inqas fertilizzant minn 20 sena ilu.

F'dan ir-rigward, il-Politika Agrikola Komuni (PAK) thegħġ lill-bdiewa biex jestendu l-produzzjoni tagħhom permezz ta' miżuri agroambjentali, taħriġ u s-servizz tal-lżvilupp Rurali. Mill-2005 "l hawn, l-integrazzjoni tal-interkundizzjonalità fil-PAK qed issaħħah il-limitazzjoni tal-użu tan-nitrat f'żoni vulnerabbli. Għall-ewwel darba, tliet prattiki ekoloġiki bil-pagamenti diretti se jiġu integrati taht il-PAK il-ġdid. ⁽¹⁾

Il-valutazzjoni ex-post tar-Regolament (KE) Nru 2003/2003 tal-2010 ⁽²⁾ wriet li l-koeżistenza bejn l-oqsfa regolatorji tal-fertilizzanti Ewropej u nazzjonali mhix qed tiffunzjona bl-aħjar mod. Hemm domanda dejjem tikber mill-awtoritajiet u l-partijiet interessati għal estensjoni tal-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tar-Regolament dwar il-Fertilizzanti tal-UE għal materjali fertilizzanti rregolati fil-livell nazzjonali kif ukoll għal dispożizzjonijiet aktar speċifiċi li jindirizzaw it-tħassib dwar is-sikurezza u l-ambjent.

Il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li tindirizza dawn il-problemi billi ttipproponi reviżjoni tar-Regolament dwar il-Fertilizzanti matul is-sena d-dieħla li se testendi l-kamp ta' applikazzjoni tiegħu għall-fertilizzanti organiċi, il-materjali li jtejbu l-hamrija, il-mezzi ta' tkabbir, il-bijostimulanti tal-pjanti u l-addittivi tal-fertilizzanti. Dan se jikkontribwixxi għal Ewropa aktar effiċjenti fl-użu tar-riżorsi u li tithegħġ l-innovazzjoni permezz tal-holqien ta' suq intern għall-irkupru ta' nutrijenti minn skart bijodegradabbli jew billi jiġi ffaċilitat it-tqegħid fis-suq ta' addittivi agronomiċi li jikkontribwixxu għal użu aktar effiċjenti tan-nutrijenti.

⁽¹⁾ Dawn il-miżuri huma "il-konservazzjoni tad-diversifikazzjoni tal-għelejjel", il-konservazzjoni tal-mergħat permanenti u ż-żoni ta' fokus ekoloġiku" li għandhom jippermettu aktar tnaqqis fl-użu tal-fertilizzanti.

⁽²⁾ Għal aktar tagħrif: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/chemicals/files/fertilizers/final_report_2010_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011702/13
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(15 October 2013)

Subject: Increased fertiliser production

According to the UN, world fertiliser production is expected to soar during 2014. This is expected to cause environmental problems as fertiliser wastes energy and generates pollution.

Can the Commission comment on the effectiveness of current EU fertiliser regulations? Does the Commission expect to extend the scope of this legislation in response to projected trends in fertiliser production? If so, what measures does the Commission plan to take?

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

According to the European fertiliser industry, a declining trend in fertiliser production in the EU has been observed over the last two decades as a result of a reduction of the European consumption. Improved efficiency in the use of fertilisers allows European farmers to produce more crops with less fertiliser than 20 years ago.

In this respect, the common agricultural policy (CAP) encourages farmers to intensifying their production through the agri-environmental measures, training and the service of Rural Development. Since 2005, the integration of cross-compliance in the CAP is strengthening the limitation of nitrate use in vulnerable zones. For the first time, three greening practices under direct payments will be integrated under the new CAP ⁽¹⁾.

The *ex-post* evaluation of Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003 of 2010 ⁽²⁾ has shown that the co-existence between European and national fertilisers regulatory frameworks is not functioning optimally. There is an increasing demand by authorities and stakeholders for an extension of the scope of the EU Fertiliser Regulation to fertilising materials regulated at national level as well as for more specific provisions addressing safety and environmental concerns.

The Commission is planning to address these problems by proposing a revised Fertiliser Regulation during the course of next year which will extend its scope to organic fertilisers, soil improvers, growing media, plant biostimulants and fertiliser additives. This will contribute to a more resource-efficient Europe and encourage innovation through the creation of an internal market for the recovery of nutrients from biodegradable waste or by facilitating the marketing of agronomic additives that contribute to a more efficient nutrient use.

⁽¹⁾ These measures are 'crop diversification, permanent pasture conservation and the ecological focus areas' which should allow a further reduction of fertilisers use.

⁽²⁾ More info on: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/chemicals/files/fertilisers/final_report_2010_en.pdf

(Wersja polska)

**Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-011703/13
do Komisji**

Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)

(15 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Kryzys związany ze zbiornikiem Sarsang

Zbiornik Sarsang jest zbiornikiem utworzonym w wyniku budowy zapory hydroelektrycznej usytuowanej de iure w Republice Azerbejdżanu. Zbudowano go, mając na względzie rozwój regionu oraz w celu dostarczania wody służącej do nawadniania oraz wody pitnej do sześciu obszarów administracyjnych – Ağcabadi, Ağdam, Barda, Goranboy, Tartar i Yevlax – zamieszkałych przez 400 tysięcy ludzi. Niemniej jednak w wyniku konfliktu o Górski Karabach zbiornik znajduje się obecnie na terenie nieuznawanej Republiki Górskiego Karabachu, której ludność stanowią głównie Ormianie.

Od 20 lat zbiornik Sarsang jest zaniedbywany, w wyniku czego zapora znajduje się w bardzo złym stanie. Hydrododzy obliczyli, że w razie sytuacji nadzwyczajnej powodzią byłoby zagrożonych 30 miejscowości. Co więcej, zły stan zapory ma konsekwencje dla całego regionu – w tym związane z jego gospodarką, rozwojem i ochroną środowiska, a także staraniami o eliminację ubóstwa na tym obszarze.

Czy Komisja jest świadoma potencjalnego zagrożenia, jakie zapora stanowi dla tego regionu?

Czy Komisja ma plan zajęcia się złym stanem zapory Sarsang i pomocy na rzecz mieszkańców regionu?

**Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton
w imieniu Komisji
(11 grudnia 2013 r.)**

UE zwraca szczególną uwagę na sytuację dotyczącą środowiska naturalnego w państwach partnerskich, ponieważ ma ona duży wpływ na jakość życia, a czasem nawet na kwestie transgraniczne. UE pomaga w rozwiązywaniu tego problemu przez finansowanie szeregu projektów w dziedzinie gospodarki wodnej ukierunkowanych między innymi na rzekę Kura.

O ile Unia Europejska może rozważyć udzielenie pomocy w związku z poważnymi obawami dotyczącymi obszaru rzeki Tartar, ciężko jest uzyskać dostęp do obiektywnych i możliwych do sprawdzenia danych dotyczących zagrożeń i niezbędnych działań w odniesieniu do regionów objętych konfliktami.

Unia Europejska wspiera wysiłki państw współpracujących Grupie Mińskiej Organizacji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie (OBWE), w tym poprzez działalność Specjalnego Przedstawiciela Unii Europejskiej w Regionie Południowego Kaukazu i ds. konfliktu w Gruzji, a także przez finansowanie projektów mających na celu budowę zaufania.

W tym kontekście EU nie wyklucza dokładniejszego zbadania tej kwestii i wykorzystania środków finansowych i projektowych do oceny obecnej sytuacji dotyczącej środowiska naturalnego. Jest to jednak zależne od spełnienia niezbędnych warunków przez osoby odpowiedzialne w regionie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-011703/13
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(15 October 2013)

Subject: Sarsang reservoir crisis

The Sarsang reservoir is formed by a hydroelectric dam located de jure in the Republic of Azerbaijan. It was built with a view to develop the region and to provide drinking and irrigation water for 400 000 inhabitants in six administrative areas: Aghjabadi, Agdam, Barda, Goranboy, Tartar and Yevlakh. However, subsequent to the Nagorno-Karabakh War, the reservoir is now situated in the mostly Armenian-populated territory of the unrecognised Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh.

For 20 years the Sarsang reservoir has been neglected, and as a result the dam is in a very poor state. Hydrologists have calculated that, in the event of an emergency, 30 villages would be at risk of flooding. What is more, the serious situation of the dam has implications for the whole region, not least as regards its economy, development and environmental protection, and efforts to eliminate poverty in the area.

Is the Commission aware of the potential danger the dam poses to this region?

Does the Commission have a plan to address the poor condition of the Sarsang dam and help the inhabitants living in the region?

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

The EU pays close attention to the ecological situation in its partner countries, as this has a great influence on the quality of life and sometimes even has trans-border implications. The EU helps address this issue through a number of EU-funded projects in the field of water management, targeting among other things the Kura River.

While the EU can consider assistance to address grave concerns in the Tartar River area, it is difficult to get access to objective and verifiable data on the risks involved and solutions needed with regard to the conflict areas.

The European Union supports the conflict resolution efforts by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chair countries, including through the activities of the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the conflict in Georgia and through the financing of confidence building projects.

In this context, the EU does not exclude looking more closely at this issue and mobilising financial and project resources to assess the current environmental situation; however, this is contingent upon the necessary conditions being put in place by those responsible in the region.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011706/13
to the Commission**

Charles Tannock (ECR)

(15 October 2013)

Subject: The extent of cooperation between Europol and Interpol

The European Police Office (Europol) assists cooperation between the EU's police forces in much the same way as Interpol assists cooperation between police forces worldwide, namely by facilitating information exchange between its members.

On 5 November 2001, Europol and Interpol concluded an agreement providing for the 'exchange of operational, strategic and technical information'. Europol and Interpol have recently agreed further cooperation arrangements, such as the opening of a secure line of communication.

However, it is unclear to what extent Europol circulates and/or records in its databases information received from Interpol in accordance with the agreement. In particular, it is not clear whether Europol issues alerts about 'wanted persons' on the basis of information received from Interpol.

It is also unclear to what extent Europol shares information, particularly personal information, with Interpol. This is important, given that many countries with access to Interpol's databases have ineffective data protection safeguards, and may retain indefinitely, or make inappropriate use of, information received.

The 2001 Agreement contains one provision, Article 5(2), which allows either party to refuse to process information received from the other party where this has clearly been obtained in obvious violation of human rights, including through abuse of due process or in politically motivated cases. It is not known whether Europol has had to rely on this provision, and, if so, how often.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether Europol circulates information on wanted persons received from Interpol? If so, how does Europol ensure that it does not target individuals being sought by an Interpol member state on political grounds or in the context of other clear violations of human rights?
2. Can the Commission confirm whether Europol shares personal information regarding EU citizens with Interpol, and for what purposes? What safeguards are in place to protect such data?
3. Can the Commission seek information from Europol as to how many times it has refused to process information on the grounds foreseen by Article 5(2) of the 2001 Agreement; namely, where the information has clearly been obtained in obvious violation of human rights?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission

(9 January 2014)

1 and 2. There is no added value for Europol to re-distribute Interpol information. EU Member States are already members of Interpol. Europol shares information with Interpol including personal data regarding EU citizens on the basis of the operational cooperation agreement between the two organisations. This takes place in the framework of distinct analysis projects. Europol may, for crime analysis purposes, need to process personal data deriving from Interpol Red Notices. Europol will do so in compliance with its protection regime ⁽¹⁾. Hence Europol has a legal obligation to reject information relating to individuals being sought on political grounds or in clear violations of human rights. Additional assurance is provided by annual inspections carried out by the Joint Supervisory Body (JSB) ⁽²⁾. Furthermore, the operational cooperation agreement between Europol and Interpol does not allow for the distribution of Europol information to all of Interpol's 190 members. Onward transfer of Europol information is restricted to those areas which the Council of the European Union has confirmed to provide for an adequate level of data protection. For information on the safeguards Interpol applies to prevent the abuse of its instruments, the Commission refers to its answer on Question E-011457/2013.

3. Europol does not have any record of the application of Article 5(2) of the 2001 Agreement in the course of the last 18 months, i.e. the term for which respective log-files are kept in accordance with the Europol Council Decision.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/publication/data-protection-europol-1721>

⁽²⁾ <http://europoljsb.consilium.europa.eu/about.aspx>

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-011708/13

à la Commission

Brice Hortefeux (PPE)

(15 octobre 2013)

Objet: Lutte contre la criminalité organisée — mesures concrètes

Dans ma question écrite E-011929/2011, j'avais attiré l'attention de la Commission sur l'explosion des attaques de bijouteries résultant de l'envolée de l'or, qui sont bien souvent perpétrées par des groupes criminels transfrontaliers.

Dans sa réponse, la Commission avait indiqué qu'un réseau informel de praticiens des États membres avait été mis en place et qu'elle avait proposé une aide financière à des projets précis de lutte contre ce type de criminalité.

Depuis des mois, nous observons en France une recrudescence de ce type d'attaques d'une extrême violence qui suscite l'exaspération des citoyens et de la profession. Ces mêmes groupes criminels itinérants recourent à d'autres formes de délits (cambriolages, vols de métaux sur les lignes de chemin de fer, etc.) tout aussi inacceptables.

La Commission peut-elle dresser un état des lieux des mesures qui ont été prises depuis fin 2011 pour lutter contre ces groupes?

La mise en place du réseau informel de praticiens soutenus par Europol a-t-elle donné des résultats satisfaisants?

La Commission peut-elle nous indiquer si les aides financières pour des projets éligibles ont été attribuées? Dans l'affirmative, peut-elle transmettre la liste de ces projets et nous indiquer les montants accordés?

La Commission peut-elle nous indiquer si des projets de législation pour renforcer la lutte contre la criminalité transfrontalière et renforcer Europol sont envisagés dans les prochains mois?

Réponse donnée par M^{me} Malmström au nom de la Commission

(11 décembre 2013)

Les atteintes à la propriété commises par des groupes criminels organisés itinérants sont l'une des priorités définies dans le cadre du cycle politique de l'Union européenne sur la grande criminalité et la criminalité organisée. Ce cycle politique, auquel participent les États membres, Europol et les autres agences de l'UE, en collaboration étroite avec la Commission, fixe les priorités de l'Union européenne jusqu'en 2017 en matière de coopération transfrontière entre les services répressifs.

La Commission a présenté, en mars 2013, une proposition de règlement relatif à Europol (COM/2013/173 final), dont l'un des objectifs est de renforcer le rôle joué par cette agence en tant que pôle central de l'échange d'informations entre les services répressifs des États membres aux fins de la lutte contre la criminalité transfrontière. La Commission espère que ce règlement sera adopté d'ici au printemps 2014.

Ces dernières années, le programme «Prévenir et combattre la criminalité» (ISEC) a financé divers projets ayant trait aux groupes criminels organisés itinérants, parmi lesquels:

- Serious Offending by Mobile European Criminals — SOMEK (Infractions graves commises par des auteurs itinérants européens). Montant de la subvention de l'UE: 740 163 euros;
- Police-Private Partnership to Tackle Metal Theft II. (Partenariat police-privé pour la lutte contre les vols de métaux II) Montant de la subvention de l'UE: 792 108 euros;
- An integral methodology to develop an information-led and community orientated policy to tackle domestic burglary (une méthode intégrale pour élaborer une politique guidée par l'information et orientée vers la communauté en vue de lutter contre les cambriolages d'habitations). Montant de la subvention de l'UE: 246 772 euros;
- Crime Prevention in the habitation — towards a European «secure» home (Prévention de la criminalité dans les habitations — vers un logement européen «sûr»). Montant de la subvention de l'UE: 42 728 euros.

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-011708/13
to the Commission
Brice Hortefeux (PPE)
(15 October 2013)**

Subject: Fight against organised crime — specific measures

In my written question E-011929/2011, I brought to the Commission's attention the sharp increase in the number of attacks on jewellers as a result of the massive increase in the price of gold, often carried out by cross-border criminal groups.

In its answer, the Commission indicated that an informal network of Member State practitioners had been set up and that it had offered financial aid to specific projects aimed at combating this type of crime.

For months we have seen a recrudescence of these kinds of extremely violent attacks in France, which exasperates citizens and members of the profession alike. These same cross-border criminal groups commit other types of crime (burglaries, metal theft on railway lines, etc.) which are equally unacceptable.

Can the Commission provide an inventory of the measures that have been taken since the end of 2011 to combat these groups?

Has the establishment of an informal network of practitioners supported by Europol produced satisfactory results?

Can the Commission state whether the financial aid for eligible projects has been allocated? If so, can it provide a list of these projects and inform us of the amounts allocated?

Can the Commission state whether draft legislation to strengthen Europol and the fight against cross-border crime is planned in the coming months?

**Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)**

Property crime by mobile organised criminal groups has been included as one of the priorities within the EU policy cycle on serious and organised crime. The policy cycle sets EU level priorities for cross-border law enforcement cooperation until 2017, involving Member States, Europol and other EU agencies in close cooperation with the Commission.

A Commission proposal for a regulation on Europol (COM/2013/173 final) was presented in March 2013. One of the aims is to strengthen Europol's role as a hub for information exchange between law enforcement authorities of the Member States to fight cross-border crime. The Commission hopes to see it adopted by spring 2014.

Projects of relevance to mobile organised criminal groups, funded by the Prevention of and Fight against Crime (ISEC) programme in recent years, include:

- Serious Offending by Mobile European Criminals — SOMECS. EU grant: EUR 740.163
 - Police-Private Partnership to Tackle Metal Theft II. EU grant: EUR 792.108
 - An integral methodology to develop an information-led and community orientated policy to tackle domestic burglary. EU grant: EUR 246.772
 - Crime Prevention in the habitation — towards a European 'secure' home. EU grant: EUR 42.728.
-