(English version)

Question for written answer E-012112/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Publishing costs of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

According to the Annual Work Programme ([1]) of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the Foundation provided for publishing costs of EUR 968 000 for 2013. According to the Annual Work Programme, these costs are subdivided into 'editing', 'typesetting & printing', 'design' and 'translation'.

1. How exactly are the costs for 2011 and 2012, respectively, split between these sub-items?

2. How does the Foundation expect the costs for 2013 to be split between these sub-items?

3. What publications did the Foundation produce in 2011, 2012 and 2013, respectively? How many copies of each of these publications were printed?

Question for written answer E-012113/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Web publishing costs of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

According to the Annual Work Programme ([2]) of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the Foundation provided for costs for 2013 of EUR 968 000 [*sic*] for 'web-based publishing and distribution, including web development'. According to the Annual Work Programme, these costs are subdivided into 'web content development', 'web hosting', 'web application development (incl. project 38)' and 'web publishing'.

1. How exactly are the costs for 2011 and 2012 split between each of these sub-items?

2. How does the Foundation expect the costs for 2013 to be split between these sub-items?

3. What websites does the Foundation run and how much did, or will, each website cost in 2011, 2012 and 2013?

Question for written answer E-012115/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Costs of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) for events and exhibitions

According to the Annual Work Programme ([3]) of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the Foundation provided for costs for 2013 of EUR 968 000 for events and exhibitions. These costs are subdivided, according to the Annual Work Programme, into the sub-items 'exhibitions' and 'events', with the event sub-item 'Foundation Forum 2013' accounting for EUR 200 000.

1. How exactly are the costs for 2011 and 2012, respectively, split between these sub-items?

2. How does the Foundation expect the costs for 2013 to be split between these sub-items?

([1]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/79/en/2/EF1279EN.pdf
([2]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/79/en/2/EF1279EN.pdf
([3]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/79/en/2/EF1279EN.pdf

3. How many exhibitions and events did the Foundation organise in 2011, 2012 and 2013, and how much did each of them cost?

4. How many people took part in each of the events or visited each of the exhibitions?

5. What is the exact breakdown of the costs for the Foundation Forum 2013?

Question for written answer E-012149/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Buildings costs of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

The statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) for the financial year 2013 contains costs of EUR 708 000 for 'maintenance of buildings and associated costs'. For 2012, an appropriation of EUR 923 583 was provided for, and in 2011, the outturn was EUR 585 731.

1. How many buildings does the Foundation have at its disposal and what is the useful area of each in square metres?

2. Which of these buildings are rented, and what are the monthly rental costs and the rent per square metre?

3. Which of these buildings does the Foundation fully or partly own? What is the useful area of each of these properties in square metres, and when and for what price were the buildings purchased?

4. How many members of staff are assigned to each of these buildings?

5. What maintenance costs were incurred for each of these buildings in 2011, 2012 and 2013?

6. What 'associated costs' are there, and how much were they in 2011, 2012 and 2013?

7. How does the Foundation explain the considerable fluctuation in the costs, with them almost doubling from 2011 to 2012 and decreasing by EUR 200 000 between 2012 and 2013?

8. What costs does the Foundation expect for 2014 and 2015?

9. What steps does the Foundation take to keep the costs for its properties low or to reduce them?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

'The Commission has asked the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) to provide a response to the questions raised by the Honourable Member (12112, 12113, 12115, 12149). The Agency's reply will be sent by the Commission to the Honourable Member as soon as possible.'

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012114/13
an die Kommission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Horizontale Tätigkeiten der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA)

Die Zahlungen der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) für „Horizontale Tätigkeiten" in den Jahren 2011, 2012 und 2013 betrugen 2 659 653,15 (2011), 9 130 989 (2012) und 8 808 000 EUR (2013) bzw. werden circa dieses Niveau erreichen.

1. Welche konkreten Aufgaben und Funktionen der Behörde werden in dem Budgetposten „Horizontale Tätigkeiten" erfasst?

2. Wie erklärt die Behörde die Verdreifachung der Zahlungen von 2011 bis 2013?

3. Warum waren die Zahlungen im Jahr 2012 besonders hoch?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission hat die Europäische Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) gebeten, die Frage des Herrn Abgeordneten zu beantworten. Die Antwort der Behörde ist als Anhang beigefügt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012114/13
to the Commission
Hans-Peter Martin (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Horizontal operations of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

The payments of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for 'horizontal operations' for 2011, 2012 and 2013 were EUR 2 659 653.15, (2011), EUR 9 130 989 (2012) and EUR 8 808 000 (2013), or will reach approximately this level.

1. What specific tasks and functions of the Authority are included in the budget item 'horizontal operations'?

2. How does the Authority explain the threefold increase in the payments from 2011 to 2013?

3. Why were the payments particularly high in 2012?

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

The Commission asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to provide a response to the question raised by the Honourable Member. The Agency's reply is attached in annex.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012123/13
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Finanzielle und politische Aspekte der Wiederaufnahme der Verhandlungen mit der Türkei

Die Verhandlungen mit der Türkei laufen nun bereits seit mehr als einem Jahrzehnt. Zwischenzeitlich hat es Umfragen sowohl in der Türkei als auch in der EU gegeben, die darauf hindeuten, dass die Bevölkerung in beiden Gebieten einen Betritt nicht unbedingt befürwortet.

Angesichts der enormen Kosten, die sowohl ein Beitrittsverfahren (inklusive weiterer Heranführungshilfen) als auch der endgültige Beitritt für die Europäische Union mit sich bringen würden, ebenso wie angesichts der Tatsache einer möglichen Zahlungsunfähigkeit der EU:

1. Aus welchen Gründen hält die Europäische Union gerade in der gegenwärtigen finanziellen Situation derart vehement an den Beitrittsverhandlungen fest?

2. Europa sieht sich derzeit bei verschiedenen Wahlen mit vermehrten Tendenzen hin zum rechten Flügel konfrontiert. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass weitere nicht absehbare finanzielle Verpflichtungen und die Weiterführung umstrittener Beitrittsverhandlungen der richtige Weg sind, um derartigen Tendenzen zu begegnen?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(13. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antwort der Kommission auf die vorherige Anfrage P-010893/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012123/13
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Financial and political aspects of the resumption of negotiations with Turkey

The negotiations with Turkey have been continuing now for more than a decade. In the meantime, surveys have been carried out in both Turkey and the EU which indicate that the people in both regions are not necessarily in favour of accession.

In view of the enormous costs that both the accession procedure (including further pre-accession aid) and the final accession would involve for the European Union, and also the EU's potential inability to pay these costs:

1. Why is the European Union sticking so vehemently to the accession negotiations, particularly given the current financial situation?

2. Europe is increasingly finding itself faced with right-wing tendencies in various elections. Does the Commission believe that further immeasurable financial obligations and the continuation of controversial accession negotiations are the right way to deal with such tendencies?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to previous Question P-010893/2013 ([1]).

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

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-012124/13
do Komisji
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(23 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Status skarg CHAP(2013)02744 i 2013/090949

We wrześniu 2013 r. firmy zaangażowane w budowę farm wiatrowych w gminie Darłowo (województwo pomorskie, Polska) wniosły skargi CHAP(2013)02744 i 2013/090949 odpowiednio do Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Polityki Regionalnej i Miejskiej oraz do Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Konkurencji przeciwko decyzji polskich władz, które odmówiły finansowania ich wspólnego projektu. W uzasadnieniu odmowy stwierdzono, że wspomniany projekt narusza przepisy UE dotyczące pomocy państwa. Składający skargę twierdzą jednakże, że na mocy prawodawstwa UE polskie władze nie miały prawa całkowicie odmówić finansowania i że sprawa powinna była zostać przekazana do Komisji, która ma uprawnienia do orzekania w sprawie intensywności pomocy dla wspólnie realizowanych projektów. Z powodu wydanej z dużym opóźnieniem decyzji administracyjnej projekt został zrealizowany bez pomocy UE i w związku z tym okazał się nieopłacalny pod względem ekonomicznym.

Jaki jest status wspomnianych skarg i jakie jest stanowisko Komisji w tej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(3 grudnia 2013 r.)

W dniu 13 września 2013 r. Komisja otrzymała dwie skargi na brak zabezpieczenia finansowania przez UE projektów rozwoju farm wiatrowych, o których mowa w pytaniu.

Skarga skierowana do Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Polityki Regionalnej i Miejskiej została zarejestrowana pod numerem CHAP(2013)02744, a potwierdzenie otrzymania zostało wysłane do wnoszącego skargę dnia 19 września 2013 r. Ta sama skarga została także skierowana do Dyrekcji Generalnej ds. Konkurencji (pod numerem 2013/090949 i zarejestrowana pod numerem sprawy SA. 37704). Biorąc pod uwagę, że kwestie oceny pomocy państwa poruszone przez wnoszących skargę są nadal w toku, nie zajęto na tym etapie oficjalnego stanowiska w tej sprawie.

Projekty współfinansowane w ramach polityki spójności muszą być zgodne z obowiązującymi przepisami unijnymi i krajowymi. Zasada ta obejmuje przepisy dotyczące polityki spójności, przepisy dotyczące pomocy państwa, a także ochrony środowiska. Pomoc z funduszy jest również zgodna z działaniami, politykami i priorytetami UE. W gestii organów krajowych w pierwszej kolejności leży ocena, czy projekty są zgodne z tymi zasadami. W szczególności w gestii instytucji zarządzającej leży zapewnienie, że wybrane projekty są zgodne z obowiązującymi przepisami unijnymi i krajowymi przez cały okres ich realizacji.

Zarzuty nieprawidłowego stosowania lub interpretacji prawodawstwa UE są obecnie badane przez Komisję. Komisja zastosuje odpowiednią procedurę do rozpatrzenia skargi zgodnie z komunikatem do Rady i Parlamentu Europejskiego „Aktualizacja zasad postępowania w stosunkach ze skarżącymi w przedmiocie stosowania prawa unijnego” ([1]), natychmiast po zakończeniu badania.

([1]) COM(2012) 0154 wersja ostateczna.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012124/13
to the Commission
Wojciech Michał Olejniczak (S&D)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Status of complaints CHAP(2013) 02744 and 2013/090949

In September 2013, companies engaged in the construction of electricity-generating wind farms in the municipality of Darłowo (Pomorskie voivodeship, Poland) filed complaints CHAP(2013) 02744 and 2013/090949 with the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy and the Directorate-General for Competition, respectively, against the decision by Polish authorities to refuse financing for their joint wind farm project. The justification given for the refusal was that the project in question was in breach of EU regulations on state aid. The claimants, however, argue that under EU legislation the Polish authorities had no right to refuse funding entirely and that the case should have been referred to the Commission, which has the power to rule on the intensity of aid in jointly developed projects. As a result of the much-delayed administrative decision, the project in question was developed without EU aid and therefore turned out to be economically unviable.

What is the status of the two complaints and what is the Commission's position on the matter?

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

On 13 September 2013, the Commission received two complaints about the failure to secure EU funding for the wind farm development projects mentioned in the question.

The complaint addressed to the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy was registered under reference CHAP(2013)02744 and an acknowledgement of receipt was sent to the complainant on 19 September 2013. The same complaint was also addressed to the Directorate-General for Competition (under reference 2013/090949 and registered under case SA.37704). Given that the assessment of the state aid issues raised by the complainants is still ongoing, no official position can be communicated at this stage.

Projects co-financed under cohesion policy must respect applicable EU and national rules. This includes the rules on cohesion policy, on state aid, as well as on environment. Assistance from the Funds shall also be consistent with EU activities, policies and priorities. It is for the national authorities in the first instance to assess whether projects are compliant with these rules. In particular, it is for the managing authority to ensure that selected projects comply with applicable EU and national rules for the whole of their implementation period.

The allegations of incorrect application or interpretation of EU legislation are currently under examination by the Commission. The Commission will give the appropriate follow up to the complaint in accordance with its communication to the Council and the European Parliament 'Updating the handling of relations with the complainant in respect of the application of Union law' ([1]), once this examination is finalised.

([1]) COM(2012) 154 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012125/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Uccisione di un dipendente dell'ambasciata tedesca

Il 6 ottobre 2013 vari siti web di informazione hanno riportato la notizia dell'uccisione di una guardia del corpo dell'ambasciata tedesca a seguito di uno scontro a fuoco a Sanaa, la capitale dello Yemen. L'uomo è stato ucciso mentre usciva da un supermercato nel quartiere di Hadda. I servizi di sicurezza indicano che l'attacco sarebbe riconducibile ai militanti di al-Qaeda nella penisola araba (AQAP). Stando ad alcune notizie, l'intenzione degli assalitori era di rapire la nuova ambasciatrice tedesca, sebbene questa tesi non sia stata comunque confermata.

Lo stesso giorno un operatore dell'UNICEF è stato rapito mentre si recava in autobus dalla capitale yemenita al villaggio di Hudaidah sul Mar Rosso. Nel novembre 2012 erano rimasti uccisi un diplomatico saudita e la sua guardia del corpo yemenita, mentre il mese precedente aveva perso la vita anche un funzionario della sicurezza dell'ambasciata statunitense. Il governo yemenita dipende in larga misura dal sostegno degli USA per reprimere le varie rivolte che scoppiano nel paese; dal canto suo, l'AQAP manifesta l'intenzione di continuare a combattere una «guerra santa» nello Yemen.

1. Quali misure precauzionali sono state adottate nello Yemen per garantire la protezione dei funzionari e del personale dell'UE?

2. Qual è il ruolo svolto dall'Unione nel mettere a punto strategie assieme agli Stati Uniti e/o agli altri paesi nella regione al fine di gestire la minaccia rappresentata dall'AQAP?

3. Fino ad ora, quale assistenza specifica ha fornito l'UE alle autorità yemenite per gestire le questioni legate alla sicurezza?

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

Dopo gli avvenimenti del 6 ottobre, l'AR/VP ha esaminato attentamente la situazione in loco e ha rafforzato le misure di sicurezza per la delegazione dell'UE e il suo personale.

L'UE sta valutando la possibilità di riprendere il dialogo con lo Yemen sulle politiche volte a rafforzare la sicurezza e a combattere il terrorismo, che era stato sospeso in seguito alle rivolte del 2011. L'UE fornisce inoltre un sostegno incentrato sulla cooperazione con le organizzazioni della società civile per contrastare l'estremismo violento. L'approccio seguito dall'UE in questo ambito si basa sui principi dello Stato di diritto e della giustizia penale. L'UE sta infine lavorando su un piano d'azione antiterrorismo per il Corno d'Africa e lo Yemen nell'intento di attuare una strategia di lotta al terrorismo in stretta collaborazione con i partner della regione.

Per quanto riguarda l'assistenza fornita alle autorità in materia di sicurezza, l'UE è attualmente in contatto con l'amministrazione yemenita per avviare un programma di riforma del settore presso il ministero dell'Interno.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012125/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Murder of German Embassy employee

On 6 October 2013, it was reported by various news websites that gunmen had killed a security guard from the German Embassy in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa. He was shot whilst leaving a supermarket in the district of Hadda. Security officials say that the attack bears the hallmark of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Some reports suggest that the gunmen were attempting to kidnap the new German Ambassador, but this has not been confirmed.

On the same day, a Unicef employee was kidnapped when travelling by bus from the capital to the Red Sea coastal town of Hudaidah. In November 2012, a Saudi diplomat and his Yemeni bodyguard were shot, and a month before that a security officer at the US mission was also shot dead. The Yemeni Government depends heavily on US support to combat the various insurgencies in the country; meanwhile AQAP says it wants to continue fighting a 'holy war' in Yemen.

1. What precautions are being taken in Yemen to secure the protection of EU officials and staff?

2. What role is the EU taking to develop strategies with the US and /or other countries in the region to deal with the threat of AQAP?

3. Up to now, what assistance has the EU offered the Yemeni authorities specifically to deal with security-related issues?

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

Following the event of 6 October, the HR/VP has carefully reviewed the situation on the ground and has subsequently increased security measures for the EU Delegation and its staff.

In order to enhance security and combat terrorism, the EU was engaged with Yemen in a counter terrorism and policy dialogue which was suspended following the 2011 uprisings and is now looking into reviving it. In addition to that, the EU provides support focused on cooperation with civil society organisations with the aim of countering violent extremism. In this endeavour, the EU approach is underpinned by the principles of rule of law and criminal justice. Finally, the EU is working on a Counterterrorism Action Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen to implement a counter terrorism strategy in close cooperation with its partners in the region.

Regarding assistance provided to the authorities in the area of security, the EU is currently in talks with the Yemeni administration in order to launch a Security Sector Reform programme aimed at reforming the Ministry of Interior.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012126/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Esecuzioni nella Repubblica islamica dell'Iran

L'11 ottobre 2013 il quotidiano britannico *The Times* ha riferito che dal giorno dell'elezione del nuovo Presidente Hassan Rouhani, avvenuta nell'agosto di quest'anno, in Iran erano state giustiziate almeno 150 persone. Tale cifra segna un aumento del numero di esecuzioni dall'entrata in carica di Rouhani, malgrado l'impegno dichiarato dell'Iran ad operare per porre fine alla repressione nel paese e la promessa di Rouhani di adoperarsi per una società più moderata e più giusta.

L'organizzazione Iran Human Rights (IHR), con sede in Norvegia, ha registrato 560 esecuzioni in tutto il paese quest'anno, più di quante ve ne siano state nel corrispondente periodo del 2012. Un attivista dell'organizzazione ha dichiarato: «Non vi sono state reazioni internazionali a questa notizia. È preoccupante il fatto che, essendo cambiata la retorica usata dalle autorità iraniane al di fuori del paese, il mondo trascuri ciò che accade al suo interno». L'Iran ha rilasciato un certo numero di noti prigionieri politici, come Nasrin Sotoudeh, ma molti critici del regime avvertono che si tratta solo di un gesto politico e non di un segnale di autentiche riforme interne.

1. Qual è la posizione della Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante in merito alle notizie provenienti da attivisti iraniani dei diritti umani secondo le quali, malgrado la retorica positiva del Presidente iraniano, il numero di esecuzioni continua ad aumentare?

2. Intende la VP/AR chiedere al governo degli Stati Uniti e ad altri governi di attribuire un'alta priorità, ai fini dell'alleggerimento delle sanzioni, alle riforme nel campo dei diritti umani?

3. Quali iniziative sta assumendo attualmente l'UE per fare pressione su Teheran affinché rilasci tutti i prigionieri politici? Se ne può conoscere qualche esempio?

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

Si rassicura l'onorevole parlamentare che l'Unione europea continua a seguire la situazione dei diritti umani in Iran con il massimo interesse e ad esprimere le proprie preoccupazioni alle autorità iraniane ad ogni livello.

Come egli sottolinea, il numero di esecuzioni in Iran resta estremamente elevato, un fatto documentato di recente dal relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sui diritti umani in Iran. Per questa ragione, l'UE ha ribadito in diverse occasioni la propria preoccupazione per questo grave problema e ha invitato il governo iraniano a interrompere tutte le esecuzioni e ad introdurre una moratoria sulla pena di morte. Questa posizione dell'UE viene confermata ed è destinata altresì al nuovo governo iraniano e al presidente Hasan Rouhani.

Il rilascio di prigionieri in Iran nel settembre 2013 è stato accolto con soddisfazione dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente, che ha auspicato si tratti del primo passo verso il miglioramento della situazione dei diritti umani nel paese, come promesso all'inizio dell'anno dal nuovo presidente iraniano nel corso della campagna elettorale. L'UE continuerà a seguire attentamente il rispetto concreto di tali impegni politici in Iran.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012126/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Executions in the Islamic Republic of Iran

On 11 October 2013, the UK newspaper *The Times* reported that at least 150 people had been executed in Iran since President Hassan Rouhani's election in August of this year. This figure represents an increase in the number of executions since Rouhani took office, despite Iran's pledge to work towards ending repression in the country and Rouhani's pledge to work for a more moderate and just society.

The Norwegian-based organisation Iran Human Rights (IHR) has recorded 560 executions across the country this year, more than in the same period in 2012. An activist from the organisation has stated: 'There has been no international reaction to this. It is worrying that, with the change in rhetoric from the Iranian authorities outside Iran, the world is overlooking what is happening inside the country'. Iran has released a number of high-profile political prisoners, such as Nasrin Sotoudeh, but many critics warn that this is just a political gesture rather than a sign of genuine internal reform.

1. What is the position of the Vice-President/High Representative regarding reports from Iranian human rights activists that allege that, despite the positive rhetoric from Iran's President, the number of executions is continuing to rise?

2. Will the VP/HR ask the US and other governments to make human rights reform a high priority when it comes to the subject of sanctions relief?

3. What steps is the EU taking at present to put pressure on Tehran to release all political prisoners, and can some examples of this be given?

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

The Honourable Parliamentarian can rest assured that the EU continues to follow the human rights situation in Iran with the utmost interest and continues to address its concerns to the Iranian authorities at all levels.

As mentioned by the Honourable Parliamentarian, the number of executions in Iran remains very high. This has most recently been documented by the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Iran. This is why the EU, on several occasions, has expressed its concern over this serious matter and has called on the Iranian Government to halt all executions and install a moratorium on the death penalty. This position by the EU remains valid and is also adressed to the new Iranian Government and President Hasan Rouhani.

The release of prisoners in September 2013 in Iran was welcomed by the HR/VP, who expressed the hope that this would be the first step towards a better human rights situation in the country, as promised by the new Iranian President in his election campaign earlier this year. The EU will continue to follow closely the concrete implementation in Iran of these political commitments.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012129/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Problema della schiavitù in Mauritania

Il 17 ottobre 2013 alcune riviste hanno pubblicato i dati di uno studio condotto dalla Walk Free Foundation, associazione che si occupa di valutare il problema della schiavitù nel mondo. Si tratta di un fenomeno che ha la prevalenza più alta in Mauritania, dove si ritiene che circa il 4 % della popolazione (pari a 140 000-160 000 individui) viva in condizioni di servitù forzata. La fondazione definisce la schiavitù come asservimento per debiti economici, matrimonio forzato, vendita e sfruttamento di bambini, tratta di esseri umani e lavoro forzato. In aggiunta, descrive la Mauritania come la nazione in cui è presente una schiavitù ereditaria profondamente radicata.

Nel paese africano essa si manifesta sotto forma di schiavismo: gli adulti e i bambini sono completamente di proprietà dei loro padroni, i quali esercitano il controllo totale su di loro e sui loro discendenti. In altre parole, la schiavitù si tramanda di generazione in generazione. Agli schiavi non è consentito possedere alcun bene ed è negato il diritto all'eredità e alla proprietà della terra. Il governo mauro ha ratificato vari trattati contro la schiavitù e la pratica è ufficialmente illegale dal 1961. Ciononostante, si osserva una mancanza di consapevolezza e di azione per la sua eliminazione.

1. Alla luce del diffuso problema della schiavitù in Mauritania e in altri paesi del Sahel, in che modo intende l'UE sostenere le iniziative volte a eliminare il problema?

2. Può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante indicare quali sono le misure adottate percontribuire a sensibilizzare sui problemi legati alla schiavitù in Africa e in Asia?

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

Il governo della Mauritania ha preso atto dell'annoso problema della schiavitù nella società del paese e ha adottato misure per contrastarlo, anche mediante l'adozione nel novembre 2012 di una legge per rendere la schiavitù reato penale e l'instaurazione di un piano nazionale per eliminarla. Tuttavia, resta ancora molto da fare per attuare tali misure.

In Mauritania la lotta contro i residui di schiavitù e le sue conseguenze è una delle massime priorità tematiche nell'ambito della strategia nazionale dell'UE in materia di diritti umani. La questione viene affrontata formalmente dall'UE nel quadro del dialogo politico regolare con il governo della Mauritania. Inoltre, l'UE finanzia numerosi progetti in materia di diritti umani, immigrazione, tratta di esseri umani, gestione delle frontiere e riforma della giustizia.

L'UE sostiene le raccomandazioni del relatore speciale delle Nazioni Unite sulle forme attuali di schiavitù e ha intrapreso di recente un'iniziativa diplomatica per incitare il governo della Mauritania ad adottare una tabella di marcia per la loro attuazione. Per quanto riguarda la dimensione socioeconomica, l'UE sta lavorando direttamente con le popolazioni interessate e con i difensori dei diritti umani, attraverso progetti specifici.

L'UE è profondamente impegnata a combattere tutte le forme di schiavitù nel mondo. L'impegno generale dell'UE per la lotta contro la schiavitù figura all'articolo 5 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali. L'UE sostiene inoltre gli sforzi internazionali in questo campo, promuovendo in vari consessi delle Nazioni Unite la prevenzione, l'assistenza alle vittime, la creazione di un quadro legislativo, l'elaborazione delle politiche e l'azione di contrasto, nonché una migliore cooperazione internazionale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012129/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Problem of slavery in Mauritania

On 17 October 2013, a number of periodicals reported the findings of the Walk Free Foundation, which works to assess the problem of slavery across the globe. The problem is most prevalent in Mauritania, where approximately 4% of the population is deemed to be held in slavery — this figure represents between 140 000 and 160 000 people. The foundation defines slavery as debt bondage, forced marriage, sale and exploitation of children, human trafficking and forced labour. Mauritania is described by the organisation as a nation in which 'deeply entrenched hereditary slavery' exists.

Slavery in Mauritania takes the form of chattel slavery, which means that adults and children are the full property of their masters who exercise total control over them and their descendants. In other words, slavery is handed down through the generations. Slaves are not allowed to have their own possessions and they are denied inheritance rights and ownership of land. The Mauritanian government has ratified a number of treaties against slavery and officially the practice has been outlawed since 1961. Nevertheless, there is a lack of awareness and action to eradicate the practice.

1. In light of the widespread problem of slavery in Mauritania and other Sahel countries, what steps is the EU taking to support initiatives which aim to eradicate the problem?

2. Can the Vice President/High Representative point to measures that are being adopted to help to raise awareness of the problems of slavery in Africa and Asia?

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

The long-standing problem of slavery in Mauritanian society has been acknowledged by the Mauritanian Government which has taken steps to combat it, including through the adoption in November 2012 of a law to criminalise it and the establishment of a national plan to eradicate it. Yet, much remains to be done to implement such measures.

In Mauritania, the struggle against remnants of slavery and its consequences is a top thematic priority under the EU country Strategy for Human Rights. The issue is formally addressed by the EU in the framework of the regular Political Dialogue with the Mauritanian Government. Moreover, the EU funds several projects on Human Rights, migration, trafficking in human beings, border management and justice reform.

The EU supports the recommendations of the UN Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and made recently a demarche to press for adoption by the Mauritanian Government of a road map for their implementation. On the socioeconomic dimension, the EU is also working directly with the affected population and human rights defenders through specific projects.

The EU is deeply committed to fighting all forms of slavery worldwide. The EU's overall commitment to combating slavery is reflected in Article 5 of the Charter on Fundamental Rights. The EU also supports international efforts in this field, advocating in various UN fora for prevention, assistance to victims, the establishment of a comprehensive legislative framework, policy development and law enforcement as well as improved international cooperation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012130/13
alla Commissione
Fiorello Provera (EFD) e Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Crisi idrica in Cina

A metà ottobre 2013 l'Economist ha pubblicato un articolo sul peggioramento della crisi idrica in Cina. Il paese utilizza circa 600 miliardi di metri cubi d'acqua all'anno, sebbene una gran parte delle risorse esistenti sia colpita dall'inquinamento. La carenza d'acqua, inoltre, è particolarmente grave nelle regioni settentrionali, dove vive la metà della popolazione e si concentrano i due terzi delle terre coltivabili del paese. Al momento, la Cina utilizza le risorse idriche a un tasso non sostenibile: i fiumi stanno scomparendo a causa dello sfruttamento eccessivo; un terzo delle acque del Fiume Giallo non è adatto per essere utilizzato per scopi agricoli, mentre solo la metà dell'acqua proveniente da fonti urbane è potabile.

Nel 2009 la Banca mondiale aveva calcolato che il costo complessivo della crisi idrica in Cina ammontava al 2,3 % del PIL nazionale, il che riflette soprattutto l'impatto negativo sulla salute della popolazione. La Cina trascura le proprie infrastrutture idriche urbane, come le reti fognarie, le tubazioni e gli impianti di depurazione, con il conseguente aumento dei rifiuti. Secondo Thomson Reuters, all'origine della diminuzione dell'approvvigionamento idrico vi sono la sovrappopolazione, l'industrializzazione aggressiva e il ricorso a progetti ingegneristici sofisticati per l'irrigazione dei campi e il controllo a monte delle risorse. Negli ultimi decenni il paese è riuscito a deviare il corso dei fiumi attraverso dighe gigantesche e canali di deviazione. Al momento è in fase di realizzazione un progetto inteso a collegare il Fiume Azzurro con il Fiume Giallo, che molti temono avrà un impatto ambientale grave.

1. È la Commissione intervenuta per fornire consigli alle autorità cinesi su come preservare e/o depurare le risorse idriche esistenti?

2. Alla luce dell'impatto sulla produzione agricola, quali misure intende intraprendere per monitorare le esportazioni alimentari provenienti dalle regioni cinesi colpite dalla diminuzione dell'approvvigionamento idrico, con particolare riguardo alla contaminazione?

3. Qual è la sua posizione in merito al progetto del governo cinese di mettere in collegamento il Fiume Azzurro con il Fiume Giallo?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(17 dicembre 2013)

1. Per la gestione sostenibile delle risorse idriche in Cina la Commissione svolge un'intensa attività di sostegno e consulenza. Il programma di gestione dei bacini fluviali UE-Cina (2006-2012) ha permesso di diffondere pratiche di gestione integrata dei principali bacini idrografici del paese. A marzo 2012 è stata inoltre lanciata una piattaforma sino europea per le risorse idriche destinata a intensificare le iniziative di ricerca, cooperazione e dialogo sulla gestione idrica in Cina.

Il vertice UE-Cina del 21 novembre è stato incentrato in buona parte su come potenziare il partenariato strategico tra l'Unione e la Cina onde garantire lo sviluppo e la crescita sostenibili. La crescita verde, i cambiamenti climatici e la tutela ambientale sono temi centrali e questo garantisce che la cooperazione in materia di acque (gestione compresa) sia una parte importante di questo programma di lavoro. In occasione del vertice la Commissione ha firmato inoltre una lettera di intenti con l'Accademia cinese delle scienze agricole per favorire la cooperazione mirata alla ricerca e all'innovazione in campo alimentare, agricolo e delle biotecnologie, che permetterà di lanciare attività di cooperazione comuni per la ricerca e l'innovazione anche in materia di agricoltura sostenibile e gestione delle risorse idriche.

2. Non esistono specifiche misure di controllo delle esportazioni alimentari da regioni con problemi di approvvigionamento idrico.

3. La Commissione non ha una posizione su piani della Cina per collegare lo Yangtse e il fiume giallo: trattandosi di una questione interna, la Commissione non ha alcuna competenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012130/13
to the Commission
Fiorello Provera (EFD) and Charles Tannock (ECR)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: China's water crisis

In mid-October 2013, *The Economist* reported on the worsening water crisis in China. The country uses approximately 600 billion cubic metres of water per year but much of the existing supply is affected by pollution. Furthermore, the northern part of the country, which is home to half of the population and which contains two thirds of China's arable land, is where the shortages are most severe. China is currently using water at an unsustainable rate. Due to overuse, rivers are disappearing, with one third of the water in the Yellow River being unfit for agricultural use and only half the of the water sources in cities producing water which is safe to drink.

In 2009 the World Bank noted that the overall cost of China's water crisis amounted to 2.3% of the country's GDP, which mostly reflects the negative affect it is having on the population's health. China is neglecting its urban water infrastructure, such as sewerage systems, pipes and water treatment plants, and this is leading to waste. According to Thomson-Reuters, the dwindling water supply is a result of overpopulation, aggressive industrialisation and a reliance on elaborate engineering schemes to irrigate crops and harness at-source supplies. In recent decades the country has been able to divert water sources through giant dams and diversion channels. At present, a project is underway to connect the Yangtze with the Yellow River, which many fear will have serious environmental consequences.

1. Is the Commission playing a role in helping to advise the Chinese authorities on methods aimed at conserving and/or treating the country's existing water supplies?

2. In light of the effect on agricultural production, what steps is the Commission taking to monitor food exports from regions in China affected by dwindling water supplies, particularly with regard to contamination?

3. What is the Commission's position regarding the Chinese Government's plan to connect the Yangtze and the Yellow River?

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

1. The Commission has provided significant support and advice to China in the sustainable management of water resources. The EU-China River Basin Management Programme (2006-2012) established integrated river basin management practices in some of China's key river basins, and in March 2012, the China Europe Water Platform (CEWP) was launched and will provide an important platform for further research, cooperation and dialogue in managing water resources in China.

The EU-China summit of 21 November has put significant focus on how to strengthen the EU-China Strategic Partnership in order to assure sustainable development and growth. The priority being given to green growth, climate change and the protection of environment ensures that EU-China cooperation on water issues, including water management, form an important part of that agenda. On that occasion, the Commission also signed a Letter of Intent on Research and Innovation Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, which will involve joint research and innovation cooperation activities *inter alia* on sustainable agriculture, including water management.

2. There are no specific measures in place to monitor food exports from regions affected by water supply issues.

3. The Commission does not have a position on China's plans to connect the Yangtze and Yellow rivers. This is an internal Chinese matter for which the Commission does not have competence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012132/13
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: La Francia blocca i lavori della Tav

Mentre in Italia procedono i lavori per la costruzione della Tav, l'alta velocità ferroviaria che collegherà Torino a Lione, dall'altra parte del confine la Francia ne blocca i lavori almeno fino al 2030.

È quanto dichiarato durante una trasmissione televisiva da Ivez Crozet, professore di economia all'Università di Lione e membro del Laboratorio di economia dei trasporti, uno dei dieci membri della commissione Mobilité 21. Nell'ottobre 2012 il ministro dei trasporti francesi ha formato una commissione di dieci persone, sei deputati e senatori e quattro esperti tra cui Crozet, per studiare l'insieme delle infrastrutture dei trasporti in Francia. Questa commissione è stata chiamata Mobilité 21 perché è incentrata sul XXI secolo e i servizi di trasporti.

Il Primo Ministro francese ha recentemente fatto una comunicazione sugli investimenti futuri e ha confermato che avrebbero seguito le conclusioni del rapporto Mobilité 21. Cioè, che avrebbe dato la priorità agli investimenti su due stazioni parigine e che il solo progetto futuro entro il 2030 sarebbe stato la linea Bordeaux-Tolosa. Esclusa quindi la Torino-Lione, cofinanziata al 40 % dall'Unione europea e che fa parte del progetto prioritario 6 (Lione-Trieste-Budapest-confine ucraino) della rete ferroviaria trans-europea, parte a sua volta delle reti di trasporto trans-europee TEN-T.

Alla luce di ciò, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se è a conoscenza del rapporto della commissione Mobilité 21;

2. qual è a oggi nel versante francese lo stato di avanzamento dei lavori dell'alta velocità Torino-Lione?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(26 novembre 2013)

Dato che il tratto transfrontaliero Lione-Torino è disciplinato da un trattato bilaterale, la Francia lo ha escluso dal campo di applicazione del rapporto «Mobilité 21». La Commissione non ha motivo di dubitare della determinazione sia della Francia che dell'Italia di proseguire nella realizzazione del nuovo collegamento ferroviario Lione-Torino.

Per quanto riguarda l'attuale stato di avanzamento dei lavori sul versante francese dell'opera, sono già state costruite tre gallerie di accesso. Per informazioni più dettagliate riguardanti il progetto si rimanda l'onorevole parlamentare alla relazione annuale del coordinatore europeo ([1]), la cui ultima edizione sarà presentata alla commissione TRAN del Parlamento europeo il 26 novembre.

([1]) Le relazioni annuali dei coordinatori europei sono disponibili sulla seguente pagina web: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-implementation/priority-projects/annual-reports_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012132/13
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: France halts high-speed rail works

While the construction of a high-speed rail link between Turin and Lyon is going ahead in Italy, France has halted all works on this project until at least 2030.

This was confirmed in a recent television interview with Yves Crozet, economics lecturer at the University of Lyon II, member of the Transport Economics Laboratory and one of the ten Mobilité 21 commission members. In October 2012, the French Minister for Transport formed this commission, which consists of six members of the Chamber of Representatives and the Senate and four experts, including Yves Crozet, with the aim of studying the French transport network and was It was named 'Mobilité 21' on account of its focus on transport services in the 21st century.

The French Prime Minister recently confirmed that future investments would depend on the findings of the 'Mobilité 21' report. He said that investment priority would be given to two Parisian train stations and that the only future investment project before 2030 would be the Bordeaux-Toulouse rail link. The Turin-Lyon link was therefore excluded, despite the fact that it is 40% co-financed by the EU and forms part of the Priority Project 6 (Lyon-Trieste-Budapest-Ukranian border) railway, which is, in turn, part of the Trans European Transport (TEN-T) network.

1. In the light of the above, is the Commission aware of the findings of the Mobilité 21 report?

2. What stage has now been reached by works on the French section of the rail link?

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

Given that the Lyon-Turin cross-border section is governed by a bilateral treaty, France has excluded it from the scope of the 'Mobility 21' report. The Commission has no reason to doubt the determination of both France and Italy to go ahead with building the new railway link Lyon-Turin.

As regards the current status on the French part of the railway link, three access tunnels have already been constructed. For more detailed information on the project the Honourable member is referred to the Annual Report of the European Coordinator ([1]), the latest issue of which will be presented to the TRAN committee of the European Parliament on 26 November.

([1]) The Annual Reports of the European Coordinators are available on this web page: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-implementation/priority-projects/annual-reports_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012133/13
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(23 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Indagine Europol sulla tratta di organi di minori

Dopo il caso della bimba bionda con gli occhi azzurri strappata dalla polizia greca ai suoi sfruttatori nomadi, che ha commosso l'opinione pubblica internazionale, anche a Dublino emerge un caso quasi identico

Può la Commissione indicare quali iniziative intende intraprendere, attraverso Europol, al fine di realizzare una più stretta ed efficace collaborazione fra le polizie degli Stati membri per verificare, con un'indagine a tappeto in tutti i campi nomadi esistenti in Europa, con particolare riguardo a quelli abusivi, se e in quale misura gli stessi siano utilizzati come «santuari» da parte di chi gestisce la tratta internazionale di organi di minori?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(23 dicembre 2013)

Europol e gli Stati membri dell'UE collaborano nella lotta contro tutte le forme di tratta di esseri umani, in particolare contrastando le organizzazioni della criminalità organizzata. Con particolare riferimento al traffico di organi, Europol è partner di uno specifico progetto le cui attività sono coordinate dagli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012133/13
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Europol investigation into the trafficking of children for their organs

People across the world were shocked by the case of a blonde girl with blue eyes who was taken by the Greek police from the Roma who were exploiting her. Recent reports have now emerged of another almost identical case in Dublin.

Can the Commission say what steps it intends to take through Europol to encourage closer and more efficient collaboration between the police forces of the Member States in investigating all travellers' camps in the EU, targeting illegal camps in particular — in order to establish whether and to what extent they are being used as 'sanctuaries' by those who engage in the international trafficking of children for their organs?

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

Europol and EU Member States work jointly to combat all forms of trafficking in human beings, notably by targeting organised crime groups. Specifically on organs trafficking, Europol is a partner to a dedicated project in which Member States coordinate activities.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012134/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bağış: „Turkije dicht bij EU-standaards"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken, dat Turkije wat betreft „democratisering, mensenrechten en economische ontwikkeling" nog nooit zo dicht bij de EU-standaards zou zijn als nu. Volgens hem zou Turkije „veranderen, ontwikkelen en hervormen" door inzet van de regering.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission"([1])?

2. Hoe reageert de Commissie op de stelling van de heer Bağış dat Turkije wat betreft „democratisering, mensenrechten en economische ontwikkeling" nog nooit zo dicht bij de EU-standaards zou zijn als nu? Deelt de Commissie zijn mening? Waarom wel/niet?

3. Welke zichtbaar positieve resultaten heeft, naar inzicht van de Commissie, de door de heer Bağış aangehaalde inzet van de regering, die Turkije zou „veranderen, ontwikkelen en hervormen"?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije de mensenrechten, waaronder de vrijheid van meningsuiting, in feite met voeten treedt — vooral blijkens het door de regering toegepaste buitensporige politiegeweld, waarmee vanaf mei 2013 overal in het land doorgaans vreedzame demonstraties hardhandig worden terneergeslagen? Zo neen, interpreteert de Commissie het exorbitante geweld van de Turkse politie resp. het repressieve karakter van de Turkse regering dan wel?

5. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de heer Bağış de huidige situatie in Turkije veel rooskleuriger voorspiegelt dan zij in werkelijkheid is, en dat dat kwalijk is ten opzichte van zowel de EU-burgers als de Turkse burgers? Zo neen, hoe staaft de Commissie dan de stelling van de heer Bağış dat Turkije wat betreft „democratisering, mensenrechten en economische ontwikkeling" nog nooit zo dicht bij de EU-standaards zou zijn als nu? Zo ja, welke gevolgen heeft de dus leugenachtige houding van de heer Bağış voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012137/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bağış: „Veel EU-lidstaten doen het slechter dan Turkije"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken, dat wanneer vandaag de dag dergelijke rapporten over de huidige EU-lidstaten zouden worden opgesteld, zij „verdere stappen zouden moeten ondernemen en verder zouden moeten hervormen". Daarmee bedoelt hij dat vele huidige EU-lidstaten „achter zouden liggen ten opzichte van Turkije" wat betreft „tempo en vastberadenheid van hervormingen".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission"([2])?

2. Hoe interpreteert de Commissie de stelling van de heer Bağış dat huidige EU-lidstaten „verdere stappen zouden moeten ondernemen en verder zouden moeten hervormen", en dat vele huidige EU-lidstaten „achter zouden liggen ten opzichte van Turkije" wat betreft „tempo en vastberadenheid van hervormingen"? Op welke lidstaten en welke concrete hervormingen zou, naar inschatting van de Commissie, de heer Bağış hier doelen?

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/
([2]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/

3. Deelt de Commissie de stelling van de heer Bağış? Zo ja, impliceert dat dat de door hem genoemde „vele EU-lidstaten" daadwerkelijk prematuur tot de EU zouden zijn toegetreden? Zo neen, deelt de Commissie dientengevolge de mening dat de aldus leugenachtig arrogante houding van de heer Bağış er louter toe dient om de affreuze situatie in zijn eigen land te verbloemen? Welke gevolgen heeft zijn ongepaste attitude voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de kloof tussen de EU en Turkije in feite almaar groter wordt, en dat Turkije nooit — maar dan ook nóóit! — tot de EU dient toe te treden?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012138/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bağış: „Voortgangsverslag Turkije is geen scorebord"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken, dat het voortgangsverslag „geen scorebord" voor Turkije zou zijn. Hij zegt dat het alleen aan de Turkse bevolking zou zijn om de Turkse regering „een scorebord voor te houden".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission"([3])?

2. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie de stelling van de heer Bağış dat haar voortgangsverslag „geen scorebord" voor Turkije zou zijn? Deelt zij de mening dat daaruit blijkt dat de heer Bağış haar verslag in de kern helemaal niet serieus neemt? Zo neen, hoe ziet de Commissie het dan wel?

3. Indien het alleen aan de Turkse bevolking zou zijn om de Turkse regering „een scorebord voor te houden", welke „score" denkt de Commissie dat het merendeel van de Turken momenteel aan de regering zou geven — in de context van de vele anti-regeringsdemonstraties die vanaf mei 2013 overal in het land plaatsvinden? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de Turkse regering feitelijk helemaal niet luistert naar de Turkse bevolking — blijkens het hardhandige terneerslaan van de demonstraties resp. de roep om aftreden van het huidige autoritaire regime? Zo neen, wat vindt de Commissie dan wel?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(17 december 2013)

De Europese Commissie is op de hoogte van de verklaring van de Turkse minister van EU-zaken waarnaar de geachte Parlementsleden verwijzen.

De Europese Commissie is verheugd over de positieve sfeer waarin het voortgangsverslag van 2013 over Turkije werd ontvangen. Naar aanleiding van de recente opening van hoofdstuk 22 „regionaal beleid en coördinatie van structuurinstrumenten" drukte minister Bağış als volgt zijn mening uit over het voortgangsverslag: „Het is het meest objectieve en motiverende van het recente decennium".

Met betrekking tot de vorderingen van Turkije op het gebied van democratisering, mensenrechten en economische ontwikkeling kan onze beoordeling worden gevonden in het laatste beschikbare voortgangsverslag:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

([3]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012134/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'Turkey close to EU standards'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that, when it comes to 'democratisation, human rights and economic development', Turkey has never been as close to EU standards as it is now. Mr Bağış believes that Turkey is 'changing, developing and transforming' through Government efforts.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission'? ([1])

2. What is the Commission's response to Mr Bağış's claim that, when it comes to 'democratisation, human rights and economic development', Turkey has never been as close to EU standards as it is now? Does Commission share the Minister's view? Why/why not?

3. What are the tangible positive results, as far as the Commission can see, of the efforts of the Turkish Government cited by Mr Bağış, which he claims are 'changing, developing and transforming' the country?

4. Does the Commission share the view that Turkey in fact flouts human rights, including the freedom of expression — in particular as demonstrated by the excessive police violence with which the by and large peaceful demonstrations that have been taking place throughout Turkey since May of this year have been harshly cracked down upon? If not, does the Commission at least recognise the inordinate violence of the Turkish police and the repressive character of the Turkish Government?

5. Does the Commission share the view that Mr Bağış paints a much more rose-tinted picture of the current situation in Turkey than the reality, and that this is a bad thing, both for EU citizens and those of Turkey? If not, how does the Commission corroborate Mr Bağış's claim that, when it comes to 'democratisation, human rights and economic development', Turkey has never been as close to EU standards as it is now? If it does share the view, what consequences will Mr Bağış's therefore disingenuous position have for the accession negotiations?

Question for written answer E-012137/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'Many EU Member States are performing less well than Turkey'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that, if reports of this type were to be drawn up at the moment in respect of the current Member States of the Union, they would 'identify many steps to be taken and areas of further reform'. He also believes that many current EU Member States 'would be lagging behind Turkey in terms of pace and determination with regard to reforms'.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission'? ([2])

2. What is the Commission's interpretation of Mr Bağış's claims that there would be 'many steps to be taken and areas of further reform' for current EU Member States and that many current Member States 'would be lagging behind Turkey in terms of pace and determination with regard to reforms'? In the Commission's estimation, to which Member States and what specific reforms must Mr Bağış be referring in these comments?

3. Does the Commission share Mr Bağış's view? If so, does that imply that the 'many EU Member States' to which he referred actually joined the Union prematurely? If not, does the Commission consequently share the view that the therefore disingenuous and arrogant position taken by Mr Bağış is purely intended to mask the appalling situation in his own country? What are the consequences of his inappropriate attitude for the accession negotiations?

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/
([2]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/

4. Does the Commission share the view that the gulf between the EU and Turkey is actually getting ever larger and that Turkey should never — never ever — accede to the European Union?

Question for written answer E-012138/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'The Turkey progress report is not a scorecard'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that the progress report 'is not a scorecard' for Turkey. He declared that the Turkish people are the 'the only competent authority to grade our Government'.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission'? ([3])

2. How does the Commission assess Mr Bağış's position that its progress report 'is not a scorecard' for Turkey? Does the Commission share the view that this shows that, when it comes down to it, Mr Bağış really does not take its report seriously? If not, what is the Commission's interpretation?

3. If the Turkish people are the 'only competent authority to grade [the Turkish] Government', what 'grade' does the Commission think the majority of Turks would currently give the Government there, given the context of the innumerable anti-government demonstrations that have been taking place throughout the country since May of this year? Does the Commission share the view that the Turkish Government actually completely fails to listen to the Turkish population — as demonstrated by the violent cracking down on the demonstrations and by the calls for the current authoritarian regime to stand down? If not, what is the Commission's view in this regard?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 December 2013)

The European Commission is aware of the declaration the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs to which the Honourable Member refers.

The European Commission welcomes the overall positive atmosphere in which the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey was received. Furthermore, commenting on the recent opening of Chapter 22 'Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments' Minister Bağış referred to the progress report saying that 'it has been the most objective and the most motivating of the recent decade'.

With regard to Turkey's progress on democratisation, human rights and economic development, our assessment can be found in the latest Progress Report available:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

([3]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012135/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bağış: „Geweld is geen middel om rechten te claimen"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken, dat door middel van „geweld", „acties die de vrede verstoren" en „illegale middelen" nooit rechten geclaimd kunnen worden.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission" ([1])?

2. Hoe interpreteert de Commissie de stelling van de heer Bağış — in de context van de doorgaans vreedzame demonstraties die vanaf mei 2013 overal in het land plaatsvinden, maar die door de regering toegepast buitensporig politiegeweld hardhandig worden terneergeslagen?

3. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het dat de heer Bağış enerzijds geweld klaarblijkelijk afkeurt, maar dat zijn regering anderzijds exorbitant politiegeweld jegens haar eigen bevolking toepast? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de heer Bağış hypocriet is?

4. Indien de heer Bağış stelt dat door middel van „illegale middelen" nooit rechten geclaimd kunnen worden, bedoelt hij, naar inschatting van de Commissie, daar dan mee dat demonstraties — die door de Turkse politie immers stelselmatig hardhandig worden terneergeslagen! — „illegaal" zouden zijn en dat dergelijke demonstraties aldus nooit tot het gewenste doel zouden kunnen leiden? Zo neen, hoe ziet de Commissie dit dan wel?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(17 december 2013)

De Commissie gaat volledig akkoord met de beginselen die ten grondslag liggen van de heer Bağış betreffende het gebruik van geweld als een middel om rechten te doen gelden. Wat betreft de beoordeling door de Commissie van de protestacties van mei-juni 2013 en de reactie van de politiediensten bevat het voortgangsverslag van 2013 over Turkije ([2]) gedetailleerde en relevante informatie en de beoordeling van de Commissie, met name ten aanzien van het buitensporig gebruik van geweld en de noodzaak om alle schuldigen ter verantwoording te roepen.

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012135/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'Violence is not a means to claim one's rights'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that rights can never be claimed through 'recourse to violence', 'actions disrupting the peace' and 'illegal methods'.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission'? ([1])

2. How does the Commission interpret Mr Bağış's position in the context of the by and large peaceful demonstrations that have been taking place throughout Turkey since May of this year, but that have been harshly cracked down upon by the Government, with excessive police violence?

3. How does the Commission view the fact that, while Mr Bağış clearly rejects violence, his Government at the same time employs inordinate police violence against its own population? Does the Commission share the view that Mr Bağış is a hypocrite?

4. When Mr Bağış states that rights can never be claimed through 'illegal methods', does he, in the Commission's estimation, mean by this that demonstrations — which, after all, are being systematically and harshly cracked down upon by the Turkish police — are 'illegal' and that such demonstrations would therefore never be able to lead to their intended goal? If not, what is the Commission's interpretation?

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

The Commission fully agrees with the principles underpinning the statements by Mr Bağış on the use of violence as a means to claim one's rights. As regards the Commission's assessment of the protests of May-June 2013 and the response by police forces, the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey ([2]) contains detailed, relevant information and the Commission's assessment, notably as regards the excessive use of force and the need to bring all those responsible to account.

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012136/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Egemen Bağış: „EU-lidmaatschap concreet doel van Turkije"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken: „The AK Party period has long deserved acknowledgement for turning the EU accession process into real gains for our people and EU membership into a concrete and achievable objective".

Recep Erdoğan, de premier van Turkije, heeft echter gezegd de Shanghai-samenwerkingsorganisatie boven de EU te verkiezen: „Dann sagen wir der EU auf Wiedersehen. Wir brauchen euch [die Europäer] nicht". De heer Erdoğan acht de Shanghai-samenwerkingsorganisatie „veel beter en machtiger" dan de EU.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission" ([1]) en het bericht Türkei: „Dann sagen wir der EU auf Wiedersehen" ([2])?

2. Hoe rijmt de Commissie de stelling van de heer Bağış, „dat EU-lidmaatschap een concreet doel van Turkije is", met de stelling van de heer Erdoğan, „dat Turkije de Shanghai-samenwerkingsorganisatie boven de EU verkiest"? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat dit volstrekt tegenstrijdig is? Zo ja, wie van beiden gelooft de Commissie, en waarop baseert zij zich daarbij? Zo neen, hoe legt de Commissie beide stellingen dan niet-conflicterend uit?

3. Hoe verklaart de Commissie dat zij — blijkens de stelling van de heer Erdoğan — blijft trekken aan een dood paard?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(17 december 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op schriftelijke vraag E-10832/2013 ([3]).

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/.
([2]) http://diepresse.com/home/politik/eu/1339046/Tuerkei_Dann-sagen-wir-der-EU-auf-Wiedersehen?from=home.meinung.gastkommentar.sc.p1.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012136/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'EU membership a concrete objective for Turkey'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that, 'The AK Party period has long deserved acknowledgement for turning the EU accession process into real gains for our people and EU membership into a concrete and achievable objective.'

However, Recep Erdoğan, the Turkish Prime Minister, has stated that he would choose the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) over the EU. 'Then we would say goodbye to the EU — we would not need you [Europeans],' he said. Mr Erdoğan apparently views the SCO as 'much better and more powerful' than the EU.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission' ([1]) and the report 'Türkei: "Dann sagen wir der EU auf Wiedersehen"' ['Turkey: "We'll tell the EU goodbye, then"'] ([2])?

2. How does the Commission reconcile Mr Bağış's position that EU membership is a 'concrete objective' for Turkey with Mr Erdoğan's, that Turkey would choose the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) over the EU? Does the Commission share the view that these are totally contradictory positions? If so, which of the two ministers does the Commission believe, and on what does it base that view? If not, how does the Commission explain the two statements in a non-conflicting way?

3. How does the Commission explain the fact that — as appears from Mr Erdoğan's stated views — it continues to flog a dead horse?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-10832/2013 ([3]).

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/
([2]) http://diepresse.com/home/politik/eu/1339046/Tuerkei_Dann-sagen-wir-der-EU-auf-Wiedersehen?from=home.meinung.gastkommentar.sc.p1.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012139/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Egemen Bağış: „Vrijheid van meningsuiting is in orde"

De Europese Commissie heeft haar „Turkey 2013 Progress Report" en „Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014" gepubliceerd. Naar aanleiding daarvan stelt Egemen Bağış, de Turkse minister van Europese Zaken: „Today we enjoy the most transparent and liberal atmosphere ever in the area of freedom of expression and freedom of the media; our Government will continue to take the necessary steps to further enhance these freedoms".

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het „Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission" ([1])?

2. Hoe reageert de Commissie op de stelling van de heer Bağış dat „de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de vrijheid van pers in Turkije in orde zouden zijn" — in de context van het door de regering toegepaste buitensporige politiegeweld, waarmee vanaf mei 2013 overal in het land doorgaans vreedzame demonstraties hardhandig worden terneergeslagen, en de vele arrestaties van demonstranten en (kritische) journalisten? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije, vooral wat betreft de vrijheid van meningsuiting, juist almaar verder afglijdt? Hoe beoordeelt zij de negatieve ontwikkelingen in Turkije dan wel?

3. Welke verwachtingen heeft de Commissie van de toezegging van de heer Bağış „dat zijn regering verdere stappen ter bevordering van de vrijheid van meningsuiting zal ondernemen"? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat deze toezegging — blijkens de realiteit — een wassen neus is? Accepteert de Commissie het dat zij zich door de heer Bağış aldus bij de neus laat nemen?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(12 december 2013)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar voortgangsverslag van 2013 ([2]) over Turkije waarin zij de situatie van de vrijheid van meningsuiting en van de media uitgebreid beoordeelt.

De Commissie verwacht dat het Turkse rechtssysteem verder verandert, in het bijzonder om de vrijheid van meningsuiting en van de media, en de vrijheid van vergadering en vereniging te versterken; de rechtspraktijk moet systematisch de Europese normen weerspiegelen. Het vierde pakket justitiële hervormingen pakt een aantal struikelstenen aan en moet volledig worden uitgevoerd.

Vooruitgang in de toetredingsonderhandelingen en vooruitgang in de politieke hervormingen in Turkije gaan hand in hand. Het is in het belang van zowel Turkije als de EU dat overeenstemming wordt bereikt over de criteria voor het openen van hoofdstuk 23 (rechterlijke macht en grondrechten) en hoofdstuk 24 (justitie, vrijheid en veiligheid) en dat Turkije zo snel mogelijk in kennis wordt gesteld van deze criteria om de onderhandelingen in het kader van beide hoofdstukken in te leiden. Op die manier kan de dialoog van de EU met Turkije over cruciale aangelegenheden van wederzijds belang worden geïntensiveerd en kunnen de lopende hervormingsinspanningen worden ondersteund.

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012139/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Egemen Bağış: 'Freedom of expression situation is fine'

The European Commission has published its 'Turkey 2013 progress report' and its 'Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2013-2014'. In response, Egemen Bağış, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, has stated that, 'Today we enjoy the most transparent and liberal atmosphere ever in the area of freedom of expression and freedom of the media; our Government will continue to take the necessary steps to further enhance these freedoms.'

1. Is the Commission familiar with the 'Statement by Egemen Bağış, Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator, on the Turkey 2013 Progress Report of the European Commission'? ([1])

2. How does the Commission respond to Mr Bağış's claim that the freedoms of expression and of the press are in a healthy state in Turkey, given the context of the excessive police violence with which the by and large peaceful demonstrations that have been taking place throughout Turkey since May of this year have been harshly cracked down upon and the many arrests of demonstrators and (critical) journalists? Does the Commission share the view that, especially when it comes to freedom of expression, Turkey is actually sliding further and further backwards? How does it evaluate the negative developments in Turkey?

3. What expectations does the Commission have in respect of Mr Bağış's pledge that his Government 'will continue to take the necessary steps to further enhance [the] freedom [of expression]'? Does the Commission share the view that this pledge — as the reality demonstrates — is just for show? Does the Commission accept that Mr Bağış is thus taking it for a ride?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its 2013 Progress Report ([2]) on Turkey, in which it draws a comprehensive assessment of the situation vis-à-vis freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

The Commission expects further changes in the Turkish legal system, especially to strengthen freedom of expression and of the media, and freedom of assembly and of association; judicial practice should systematically reflect European standards. The fourth judicial reform package addresses a number of stumbling blocks and should be implemented in full.

Progress in the accession negotiations and progress in the political reforms in Turkey are two sides of the same coin. It is in the interest of both Turkey and the EU that the opening benchmarks for Chapter 23: Judiciary and Fundamental rights and 24: Justice, Freedom and Security are agreed upon and communicated to Turkey as soon as possible with a view to enabling the opening of negotiations under these two chapters so as to enhance the EU's dialogue with Turkey in areas of vital mutual interest and to support ongoing reform efforts.

([1]) http://egemenbagis.com/en/
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse P-012140/13
til Kommissionen
Emilie Turunen (S&D)
(23. oktober 2013)

Om: Anonyme betalingskort

Der har i den senere tid været øget fokus i internationale medier på bekæmpelsen af skattely, skattesvig og skattebedrageri. Brugen af såkaldte anonyme betalingskort (prepaid cards) — hvor kortholderens navn ikke står på kortet, og som kan bruges til anonymt at hæve penge i en pengeautomat — kan ifølge dansk politi og skattemyndigheder bruges til at gemme penge for myndighederne, så kortholder slipper for at betale skat. Af en artikel i Dagbladet Politiken den 21.10.2013 fremgår det, at der er anbragt mindst 1 200 mia. DKK på denne type kort, og i en artikel i samme avis den 23.10.2013 udtaler Per Fiig, vicestatsadvokat hos det danske bagmandspoliti, at der »er ingen tvivl om, at det med disse kort er blevet lettere at anvende skjulte penge og sværere for os at finde dem«. Det amerikanske skatteministerium er tilsvarende bekymret for de navnløse betalingskort, som de betragter som en trussel mod bekæmpelsen af hvidvaskning af penge.

Af samme artikel i Politiken fremgår det, at en analyse foretaget af Boston Consulting Group for MasterCard forudser, at brugen af hævekortene på verdensplan vil være firedoblet i 2017, hvor 4 500 mia. DKK forventes at flyde ind og ud af de ofte navnløse betalingskort, og i 2017 ventes 800 mia. DKK at runde hævekort i Europa, hvilket vil være en femdobling.

I lyset af den stigende brug af anonyme betalingskort og dermed den øgede risiko for skatteunddragelse, skattesnyd og hvidvaskning af penge vil jeg gerne bede Kommissionen om svar på følgende:

1. Er Kommissionen bekendt med omfanget af brugen af anonyme betalingskort og kortenes formodede sammenhæng med skattely/skatteunddragelse og hvidvaskning? Har Kommissionen lavet opgørelser eller lignende over antallet og brugen af denne type kort, og har man overblik over, hvor mange penge der menes at stå på denne type kort?

2. Hvilke initiativer vil Kommissionen tage for dels at overvåge udviklingen, dels at forhindre, at kortene systematisk anvendes til skatteunddragelse og hvidvask? Har man fra Kommissionen overvejet muligheden af helt at forbyde denne type kort, og vil det i givet fald være muligt at indføre et sådan forbud i EU?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Michel Barnier
(28. november 2013)

Kommissionen har ikke nogen tal for brugen af forudbetalte kort.

Kommissionen har været dybt involveret i internationalt arbejde ([1]) om potentielle risici ved forudbetalte kort. Det erkendes i denne sammenhæng, at der er forskel på forskellige typer af forudbetalte kort, hvis funktionalitet går fra lavrisikogavekort til højrisikobetalingskort, der kan påføres penge igen, hvilket i nogle tilfælde kan tillade brugerne at overføre midler fra en person til en anden. Der er særlige risici forbundet med, at den person, der overfører og modtager midlerne, er anonym.

Kommissionen har på baggrund af disse forskelle mellem forudbetalte kort ikke foreslået et totalt forbud af sådanne produkter i sit forslag til det fjerde direktiv til bekæmpelse af hvidvaskning af penge. Forstærkningen af den risikobaserede fremgangsmåde, som foreslås i dette direktiv, vil dog forudsætte, at de pågældende enheder og tilsynsmyndigheder under hensyntagen til forskellige risikofaktorer tager passende tiltag for at identificere og vurdere risikoen for hvidvaskning af penge og finansiering af terrorisme. Dokumentation for højrisikofaktorer omfatter produkter eller transaktioner, der kan tilskynde til anonymitet, eller nye produkter og brugen af nye teknologier eller teknologier under udvikling. Udbydere af nye betalingstjenester vil skulle tage foranstaltninger til at identificere og kontrollere identiteten af deres kunder og overvåge forretningsforholdet på en fortløbende basis — dette skal stå i forhold til den risiko, der er ved produktet.

([1]) Guidance for a risk-based approach prepaid cards, mobile payments and internet-based payment services, Den Finansielle Aktionsgruppe (FATF), juni 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012140/13
to the Commission
Emilie Turunen (S&D)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Prepaid cards

There has recently been increased focus in international media on combating tax havens, tax evasion and tax fraud. Prepaid cards — on which there is no cardholder name — can be used anonymously to withdraw money from a cash machine and, according to the Danish police and tax authorities, to conceal money from the authorities, with the user avoiding paying tax. According to an article in the Danish newspaper '*Politiken*' on 21 October 2013, at least DKK 1 200 billion is stored on such cards; and, in an article in the same newspaper on 23 October 2013, Deputy Public Prosecutor Per Fiig, at the Serious Fraud Office, stated that there is no doubt that such cards have made it easier to hide money and more difficult for the authorities to find it. The US Department of the Treasury is similarly troubled by anonymous prepaid cards, which it regards as a threat to anti-money-laundering efforts.

According to the same *Politiken* article, an analysis by the Boston Consulting Group for MasterCard projects a fourfold increase in worldwide cash card use by 2017, with DKK 4 500 billion likely to flow into and out of what are in many instances anonymous payment cards and, by 2017, DKK 800 billion expected to be stored on prepaid cards in Europe, which would be a fivefold increase.

In the light of increasing use of anonymous prepaid cards and hence the increased risk of tax avoidance, tax evasion and money laundering:

1. Is the Commission aware of the extent to which anonymous payment cards are used and the likely link between them and tax havens/evasion and money laundering? Has the Commission made assessments as to how many such cards there are, and the uses to which they are put, and does it have an idea of how much money is thought to be stored on such cards?

2. What action will the Commission take both to monitor developments and to prevent cards from being systematically used for tax evasion and money laundering purposes? Has the Commission considered the possibility of a blanket ban on such cards and, if so, would it be possible to introduce such a ban in the EU?

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

The Commission does not have figures on the use of prepaid cards.

The Commission has been closely associated to international work ([1]) on potential risks related to prepaid cards. In this context, it is recognised that there are differences between types of prepaid cards, the functionality of which ranges from low-risk gift cards to higher-risk reloadable payment cards that may in some cases allow person-to-person funds transfers between users. Particular risks are posed by the anonymity of the person transfering and receiving the funds.

Given these differences between prepaid cards, the Commission has not proposed a blanket ban on such products in its proposal for a fourth anti-money laundering Directive. However, the reinforcement of the risk-based approach, proposed in this directive, will require the entities concerned and supervisory authorities to take appropriate steps to identify and assess money laundering and terrorist financing risks, taking into account various risk factors. Evidence of higher risk factors includes products or transactions that might favour anonymity, and new products and the use of new or developing technologies. Providers of new payment services will need to take measures to identify and verify their customer's identity, and monitor the business relationship on an ongoing basis — this will need to be in proportion to the level of risk posed by the product.

([1]) Guidance for a risk-based approach prepaid cards, mobile payments and Internet-based payment services, FATF, June 2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-012141/13
à la Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(23 octobre 2013)

Objet: Quelle réponse européenne face au risque sanitaire posé par le mercure dentaire?

La Convention de Minamata sur le mercure, adoptée en octobre 2013, sera bientôt ratifiée par l'Union européenne. Cette convention oblige les signataires à faire diminuer l'utilisation des amalgames dentaires, qui sont composés de mercure à hauteur de 50 %. Cependant, les mesures en ce sens ne suffiront pas à protéger, pour longtemps, les dentistes et les assistants dentaires exposés à des vapeurs de mercure dans leurs cabinets.

En effet, une publication de l'INRS de 2003 indique que les praticiens dentaires sont exposés à d'importantes quantités de vapeurs de mercure, notamment lorsqu'ils travaillent sur l'amalgame d'un patient et quand ils sont à proximité des séparateurs d'amalgames, dont l'étanchéité est insuffisante. De nombreux articles scientifiques ont établi que les vapeurs de mercure induisent chez les dentistes divers troubles, notamment neurocognitifs, et qu'elles affectent en particulier la fertilité des dentistes femmes et des assistantes dentaires. Aussi, dans l'intérêt de ces travailleurs européens:

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission vis-à-vis de ce risque sanitaire? Quelles mesures envisage-t-elle de prendre pour y faire face? La Commission envisage-t-elle d'interdire le mercure dentaire et sinon, pourquoi?

2. Comment la Commission évalue-t-elle la possibilité de contraindre les professions dentaires à adopter des pratiques qui les protègent quand ils travailleront sur les vieux amalgames? Prévoit-elle de prendre des mesures pour exercer cette contrainte, et sinon, quelles mesures alternatives envisage-t-elle d'adopter?

3. Afin notamment de prendre la mesure des risques chimiques sur la santé au travail, la Commission envisage-t-elle de renouveler la stratégie européenne en faveur de la santé et de la sécurité au travail pour la période 2014-2020?

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

Dans le cadre de l'application de la stratégie communautaire sur le mercure adoptée en 2005, les services de la Commission ont consulté le comité scientifique des risques sanitaires émergents et nouveaux (CSRSEN) sur la sécurité des amalgames dentaires pour les patients et les utilisateurs.

En ce qui concerne le personnel dentaire, l'avis du CSRSEN de mai 2008 ([1]) a conclu que l'incidence des effets indésirables est très faible et a diminué considérablement, en raison, notamment, des améliorations de la composition des amalgames dentaires.

Sur la base de cet avis, la Commission n'a pas proposé de mesures restreignant davantage l'utilisation du mercure dans les amalgames dentaires. La Commission a demandé au CSRSEN d'actualiser son avis ([2]) et réexaminera sa position si de nouvelles données sont portées à sa connaissance.

En ce qui concerne la protection des travailleurs, le comité scientifique en matière de limites d'exposition professionnelle à des agents chimiques (SCOEL) a adopté en 2007 une recommandation pour le mercure élémentaire et les composés inorganiques bivalents du mercure *(Elemental mercury and inorganic divalent mercury compounds* — SCOEL/SUM/84 final) ([3]). Sur cette base, la Commission a adopté la directive 2009/161/UE ([4]) établissant une valeur limite indicative d'exposition professionnelle pour cette substance.

([1]) Disponible (en anglais) à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_016.pdf
([2]) Disponible (en anglais) à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_q_034.pdf
([3]) Disponible (en anglais) à l'adresse suivante: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3852&langId=en
([4]) Disponible à l'adresse suivante: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:338:0087:0089:FR:PDF

Cette directive fait partie du cadre législatif en matière de santé et de sécurité au travail dans l'UE. Un autre élément de ce cadre, la directive 98/24/CE ([5]), oblige l'employeur à prendre des mesures pour protéger la santé et la sécurité des travailleurs exposés à des produits chimiques dangereux.

La Commission a finalisé l'évaluation de la stratégie en matière de santé et de sécurité au travail pour 2007-2012 ([6]) et a lancé une consultation publique sur le nouveau cadre politique de l'UE. Lorsqu'elle aura achevé l'analyse des réponses, la Commission déterminera la suite à donner à ce dossier.

([5]) Disponible à l'adresse suivante: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1998:131:0011:0023:FR:PDF

([6]) SWD(2013)202 du 31.5.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012141/13
to the Commission
Karima Delli (Verts/ALE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: EU response to health risks posed by mercury in dental amalgrams

The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted in October 2013 and is due to be ratified shortly by the European Union. Under the Convention signatories are required to phase down the use of dental amalgams, which consist of 50% mercury. However more is needed to provide long-term protection for dentists and dental assistants exposed to mercury vapours in their surgeries.

A publication in 2003 by the INRS, the French Occupational Safety Research Institute, stated that dental practitioners have a high level of exposure to mercury vapours, particularly when working on patients' fillings and when standing or sitting next to amalgam separators that are inadequately sealed. Many scientific articles have proven that mercury vapours are at the root of a variety of disorders, notably neurocognitive ones, in dentists and that they affect the fertility of women dentists and women dental assistants in particular. Therefore, for the good of these EU workers, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What is the Commission's position regarding this health risk? What measures is it considering to tackle them? Is the Commission considering banning mercury in dental amalgams? If not, why not?

2. Does the Commission believe the dental professions can be made to adopt practices that will protect them when working on old fillings? Is it planning to take measures to make them comply with these practices? If not, what alternative measures is it considering adopting?

3. Will the Commission launch the EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work again for the period 2014-2020 in order, in particular, to take stock of chemical health hazards at work?

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

As part of the implementation of the Community Strategy Concerning Mercury adopted in 2005, the Commission services consulted the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks — SCENIHR on the safety of dental amalgam for patients and users.

As far as dental personnel are concerned, the SCENIHR opinion of May 2008 ([1]) concluded that the incidence of reported adverse effects is very low and decreased substantially, especially in connection with improvements to dental amalgam delivery.

On the basis of this opinion, the Commission has not proposed measures further restricting the use of mercury in dental amalgam. The Commission requested an update of the SCENIHR opinion ([2]) and will re-examine its position in case further evidence becomes available.

Regarding the protection of workers, the Scientific Committee for Occupational Exposure Limit Values adopted a recommendation on *Elemental mercury and inorganic divalent mercury compounds (SCOEL/SUM/84)* ([3]) in 2007. On this basis, the Commission adopted Directive 2009/161/EU ([4]) establishing an Indicative Occupational Exposure Limit Value for this substance.

The directive is part of the legislative framework on Occupational Health and Safety in the EU. As part of this framework, Directive 98/24/EC ([5]) obliges the employer to take the measures to protect the health and safety of workers exposed to hazardous chemicals.

The Commission finalised the evaluation of the Occupational Health and Safety strategy for 2007-2012 ([6]) and launched a public consultation on a new policy EU framework. Once the analysis of the replies will be completed, the Commission will decide on further steps.

([1]) Available on webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_risk/committees/04_scenihr/docs/scenihr_o_016.pdf
([2]) Available on webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/emerging/docs/scenihr_q_034.pdf
([3]) Available on webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=3852&langId=en
([4]) Available on webpage: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:338:0087:0089:EN:PDF
([5]) Available on webpage: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1998:131:0011:0023:EN:PDF
([6]) SWD(2013)202 of 31.5.2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012144/13
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(23 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Obligaciones para la financiación de proyectos destinadas al proyecto Castor

El pasado mes de julio el almacén de gas Castor situado en Vinaròs (Castellón) fue seleccionado por el Banco Europeo de Inversiones (BEI) ([1]) y la Comisión Europea para recibir ayuda dentro del marco de la Iniciativa de Obligaciones para la Financiación de Proyectos. En total se emitirán obligaciones por un valor de 1 400 millones de euros a 21,5 años, de los cuales el BEI ya ha comprometido 500 millones de euros. La financiación del proyecto Castor por parte de la Comisión Europea y del BEI los hace responsables directos de cualquier consecuencia o impacto derivados del mismo.

Si bien el objetivo de las obligaciones para la financiación de proyectos es la implementación de la Estrategia Europa 2020, la cual cuenta con criterios de sostenibilidad, el proyecto Castor parece ir en la dirección contraria ya que ha generado movimientos sísmicos de hasta 4,1 grados en la zona de Vinaròs.

Asimismo, en la concesión administrativa a la empresa gestora, Escal UGS, existe una cláusula que asegura que el almacenamiento subterráneo Castor tiene garantizada por parte del Estado la «recuperación de la inversión» en caso de «caducidad o extinción», y una compensación en caso de cese por «dolo o negligencia de la empresa» y que, si se paraliza la actividad del almacén de gas, el Estado español debería pagar una indemnización a dicho proyecto. Dado que este proyecto se ha materializado gracias a la inversión del Banco Europeo de Inversiones, con el visto bueno de la Comisión Europea, y con parte del presupuesto de la Unión Europea, creemos indispensable contar con una opinión oficial y pública de la Comisión.

1. ¿Tenía constancia la Comisión de la cláusula abusiva citada anteriormente entre la empresa y el Estado español en caso de «caducidad o extinción» (incluso por dolo o negligencia de la empresa)?

2. ¿Cuál es el monto total que estima la Comisión que deberá ser asumido por el Estado español como consecuencia de esa cláusula en caso de cierre del proyecto Castor?

3. ¿En cuánto estima la Comisión que aumentará la deuda pública española por esta cláusula abusiva? ¿Existe alguna cláusula de características similares entre el Banco Europeo de Inversiones o la Comisión y la empresa responsable del proyecto Castor?

4. Considerando los sismos producidos recientemente como consecuencia del proyecto Castor y los impactos derivados, ¿apoya la Comisión la clausura del proyecto, independientemente de los costes que esto suponga?

5. ¿Considera la Comisión necesario, al menos, paralizar temporalmente la emisión de obligaciones para la financiación del proyecto Castor hasta que el Gobierno decida si reanuda o no la actividad del proyecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

1., 2. y 3. El papel de la Comisión en este proyecto se limitó a comprobar el cumplimiento político sectorial de las Orientaciones para la RTE-E. Las disposiciones contractuales entre el Estado español y el promotor del proyecto Castor no han sido en modo alguno aprobadas por la Comisión ni revisadas de otro modo, ni tampoco ha participado la Comisión en los acuerdos contractuales entre el BEI y el patrocinador del proyecto.

4. Actualmente hay en marcha un estudio independiente cuya finalidad es determinar el origen de la actividad sísmica y, a partir de él, se espera que el Gobierno español tome una decisión sobre el futuro del proyecto.

5. El proyecto se ha financiado mediante una emisión de bonos con cotización pública que tuvo lugar en julio de 2013.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_BEI-13-117_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012144/13
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Project bonds for the Castor project

In July 2013, the Castor gas storage facility in Vinaròs (Castellón) was chosen by the European Investment Bank (EIB) ([1]) and the Commission to receive aid under the Project Bonds Initiative. In total, EUR 1.4 billion of 21.5-year bonds will be issued, of which the EIB has already committed to EUR 500 million. By funding the Castor project, the Commission and the EIB are directly responsible for any consequences or fallout from the project.

While the aim of project bonds is to implement the Europe 2020 strategy, which has sustainability criteria, the Castor project appears to be at odds with them, since it has caused earthquakes in Vinaròs measuring up to 4.1 on the Richter scale.

Moreover, the administrative concession granted to the company in charge, Escal UGS, contains a clause whereby the State guarantees to return the investment in the Castor underground storage facility should the concession expire or be terminated, and to pay compensation in the event of suspension due to deception or negligence on the part of the company. Furthermore, if gas storage comes to a halt, the Spanish State will have to pay compensation to the project. Given that this project came about as a result of investment by the European Investment Bank, with the Commission's approval, and using a portion of the EU budget, obtaining the Commission's official public opinion is vital.

1. Is the Commission aware of the unfair clause referred to above between the company and the Spanish State in the event of 'expiry or termination' (including due to deception or negligence by the company)?

2. How much in total does the Commission estimate the Spanish State would have to pay out as a result of this clause, were the Castor project to shut down?

3. How much does the Commission think the Spanish public debt will increase by because of this unfair clause? Is there any similar clause between the European Investment Bank or the Commission and the company in charge of the Castor project?

4. In view of the earthquakes that have recently occurred as a result of the Castor project and the associated effects, does the Commission support shutting down the project, irrespective of the costs involved?

5. Does the Commission think it should, at least, temporarily freeze the issuing of bonds to fund the Castor project until the Spanish Government decides whether or not work should resume on the project?

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

1, 2 and 3. The role of the Commission on this project was limited to check policy compliance with the TEN-E guidelines. The contractual arrangements between the Spanish State and the Castor project promoter are in no way approved or otherwise reviewed by the Commission nor is the Commission involved in the contractual arrangements between EIB and the project sponsor.

4. An independent study aiming to identify the origin of the seismic activity is ongoing and based on this a decision is expected to be taken by the Spanish Government on the future of the project.

5. The project has been financed by a publicly traded bond issue, which took place in July 2013.

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_BEI-13-117_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012145/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Energías renovables en el Estado español: objetivo 2020

La propuesta de decreto que el Ministerio de Industria español aprobó en julio de 2013 para regular la producción eléctrica para el autoconsumo ([1]) contempla una multa máxima de treinta millones de euros para aquellos que, entre otras cosas, no registren sus instalaciones o no paguen el nuevo «peaje de respaldo», contemplado en la normativa y que grava la producción casera de electricidad. La cifra —treinta millones de euros— coincide con la sanción máxima contemplada para una fuga radioactiva muy grave en una central nuclear española ([2]) . El Gobierno espera que la normativa para el autoconsumo eléctrico entre en vigor el 1 enero de 2014.

Según *The Wall Street Journal*, este cambio de normativa por parte del Gobierno español podría tener el objetivo de «exprimir» a aquellos ciudadanos que un día decidieron tener un consumo energético lo más autosuficiente posible ([3]).

¿Qué opinión tiene la Comisión sobre este tema?

¿Cree la Comisión que esta nueva normativa favorecerá que el Estado español cumpla con los objetivos 2020 en energías renovables?

El Comisario Oettinger admitió que los Estados español y francés no van a alcanzar el objetivo 2020 de lograr que cada uno de los Estados de la UE pueda importar de sus vecinos un 10 % de la energía que consume. ¿Cree la Comisión que el Estado español va a cumplir con los objetivos 2020 en materia de energías renovables?

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

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta conjunta que dio a las preguntas escritas E-009036/2013, E-009037/2013, E-009040/2013, E-009042/2013 y E-009044/2013, así como a la respuesta dada a las preguntas escritas E-009038/2013 y E-011159/2013 ([4]).

En lo que respecta a la consecución por parte de España de su objetivo nacional en materia de energía renovable del 20 % de aquí a 2020, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a la pregunta escrita E-001624/2013 ([5]).

([1]) http://porlaboca.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/borrador_RD_Autoconsumo.pdf
([2]) http://porlaboca.es/?p=6563
([3]) http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304626104579121823944695940
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012145/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Renewable energy in Spain: 2020 target

The draft decree adopted by the Spanish Ministry of Industry in July 2013 to regulate the generation of electricity for self-supply ([1]) lays down a maximum fine of EUR 30 million for anyone who, *inter alia*, fails to register their installations or to pay the new 'endorsement toll', which is laid down in the legislation and applies to domestic electricity generation. The figure of EUR 30 million is on a par with the maximum penalty laid down for a very serious radioactive leak at a Spanish nuclear power plant ([2]). The Spanish Government expects the legislation on self-supply of electricity to enter into force on 1 January 2014.

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, this change in legislation by the Spanish Government could have the aim of 'squeezing' people who one day decided to make their energy consumption as self-sufficient as possible ([3]).

What view does the Commission take on this matter?

Does the Commission think that this new legislation will help Spain meet the 2020 targets for renewable energy?

Commissioner Oettinger has admitted that Spain and France are not going to achieve the target set for 2020 whereby each EU Member State should be able to import 10% of the energy it consumes from its neighbours. Does the Commission think that Spain will achieve the 2020 targets for renewable energy?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its joint reply to Written Questions E-009036/2013, E-009037/2013, E-009040/2013, E-009042/2013 and E-009044/2013, and to its replies to Written Questions E-009038/2013 and E-011159/2013 ([4]).

Concerning the achievement by Spain of its national national renewable energy target of 20% by 2020, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-001624/2013 ([5]).

([1]) http://porlaboca.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/borrador_RD_Autoconsumo.pdf
([2]) http://porlaboca.es/?p=6563
([3]) http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304626104579121823944695940
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([5]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012147/13
aan de Commissie
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(23 oktober 2013)

Betreft: ACTA-bepalingen in de handelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Singapore

Karel De Gucht, de commissaris belast met handel, had de leden van het EP beloofd dat sommige omstreden bepalingen van de handelsovereenkomst ter bestrijding van namaak ACTA), die door het Parlement is afgewezen, niet in toekomstige vrijhandelsovereenkomsten van de EU zouden worden opgenomen. Gezien de grote interesse van de VS voor de ACTA-overeenkomst is bij de start van de onderhandelingen tussen de EU en de VS over een trans-Atlantische handels- en investeringsovereenkomst (TTIP) de vraag aan de orde gekomen of daarin ACTA-achtige bepalingen zouden worden opgenomen. Ondanks de toezegging van de commissaris dat in de TTIP geen bepalingen van de ACTA-overeenkomst zouden worden overgenomen, bevat de definitieve tekst van de handelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Singapore bepalingen die identiek zijn aan bepalingen in de ACTA-overeenkomst.

In artikel 11.44, lid 2, staat: „Bij de vaststelling van de hoogte van de schadevergoeding wegens inbreuk op een intellectuele-eigendomsrecht hebben de rechterlijke autoriteiten van een partij de bevoegdheid om onder andere door de houder aangevoerde legitieme waardebepalingen, met inbegrip van gederfde winst, de marktwaarde van de goederen of diensten ten aanzien waarvan inbreuk is gemaakt of de voorgestelde detailhandelsprijs, in aanmerking te nemen."

Deze tekst is identiek aan de tekst van artikel 9, lid 1, van de ACTA-overeenkomst. Een aantal andere leden zijn ook exacte kopieën.

1. Is de Commissie het met mij eens dat het onwenselijk is in de handelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Singapore tekstdelen op te nemen die identiek zijn aan tekstdelen van de ACTA-overeenkomst?

2. Waarom neemt de Commissie in nieuwe internationale overeenkomsten bepalingen op die reeds door het Parlement zijn afgewezen, waarbij er in het bijzonder aan dient te worden herinnerd dat dit de (verplichte) instemming van het Parlement met dat soort overeenkomsten in gevaar kan brengen?

3. Kan de Commissie het volgende bevestigen (of ontkennen, en dan uitleggen waarom niet):

(a) dat er in de vrijhandelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Singapore geen strafrechtelijke sancties zijn of zullen worden opgenomen voor inbreuken op intellectuele-eigendomsrechten met betrekking tot hetzij goederen, hetzij diensten;

(b) dat zij nog altijd niet streeft naar private handhaving van intellectuele-eigendomsrechten buiten het rechtskader om;

(c) dat zij nog altijd niet streeft naar de opname van de verplichting voor internetintermediairs om persoonsgebonden informatie van vermeende plegers van inbreuken op intellectuele-eigendomsrechten bekend te maken aan de houders van die rechten;

(d) dat zij terdege rekening zal houden met de bezorgdheid van de burgers en het Parlement met betrekking tot de bescherming van de digitale vrijheden in door de EU gesloten internationale overeenkomsten (waaronder vrijhandelsovereenkomsten)?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(4 december 2013)

De Commissie verzekert het geachte Parlementslid dat het hoofdstuk betreffende intellectuele-eigendomsrechten in de vrijhandelsovereenkomst tussen de EU en Singapore alleen bepalingen bevat die volledig in lijn zijn met het huidige EU-wetgevingskader en in het bijzonder met de handhaving van de Richtlijn inzake intellectuele-eigendomsrechten ([1]) en de Richtlijn inzake elektronische handel ([2]).

([1]) Richtlijn 2004/48/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 29 april 2004 betreffende de handhaving van intellectuele-eigendomsrechten, PB L 157 van 30.4.2004.

([2]) Richtlijn 2000/31/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 8 juni 2000 betreffende bepaalde juridische aspecten van de diensten van de informatiemaatschappij, met name de elektronische handel, in de interne markt (Richtlijn inzake elektronische handel), PB L 178 van 17.7.2000.

Het hoofdstuk betreffende intellectuele-eigendomsrechten in de vrijhandelsovereenkomst EU-Singapore verschilt aanzienlijk van de handelsovereenkomst ter bestrijding van namaak (ACTA). De vrijhandelsovereenkomst EU-Singapore bevat bijvoorbeeld geen strafrechtelijke bepalingen met betrekking tot inbreuken op intellectuele-eigendomsrechten. Daarnaast verschillen de bepalingen met betrekking tot het internet in de vrijhandelsovereenkomst sterk van die in ACTA. In het bijzonder ontbreken de meest controversiele bepalingen op dat vlak (artikelen 27.3 en 27.4 van ACTA) in de vrijhandelsovereenkomst. De tekst is namelijk grotendeels gebaseerd op de Richtlijn inzake elektronische handel, met inbegrip van alle beschermingsmaatregelen.

Wat betreft de bepaling met betrekking tot schadevergoeding geeft artikel 11.44, lid 2, van de vrijhandelsovereenkomst EU-Singapore slechts een overzicht van de vele verschillende optionele methoden waarmee een rechter de hoogte van een schadevergoeding kan berekenen. Dit lid moet echter samen met het eerste lid worden gelezen, waarin het verplichte beginsel wordt vastgesteld dat een dergelijke schadevergoeding voldoende moet zijn om te compenseren voor de geleden schade. Dit garandeert dat er, overeenkomstig het EU-wetgevingskader, binnen de EU geen schadevergoedingen met een punitief karakter zullen worden opgelegd.

Ten slotte bevestigt de Commissie dat zij de beslissing van het Parlement aangaande ACTA volledig erkent en respecteert.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012147/13
to the Commission
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: ACTA provisions in the EU-Singapore trade agreement text

MEPs were assured by the Commissioner for trade, Karel De Gucht, that future EU free trade agreements would not include certain controversial provisions from the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), which was rejected by Parliament. Given the strong support shown by the US for ACTA, questions were raised at the start of the negotiations between the US and EU on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as to whether ACTA-like provisions would be included. Despite the Commissioner's assurances that the TTIP would not see a repetition of ACTA, there are provisions in the final text of the EU-Singapore trade agreement that are identical to provisions in the ACTA.

Article 11.44 (2) states: 'In determining the amount of damages for infringement of intellectual property rights, a Party's judicial authorities shall have the authority to consider, inter alia, any legitimate measure of value the right holder submits, which may include lost profits, the value of the infringed goods or services measured by the market price, or the suggested retail price'.

This passage is identical to Article 9 (1) of the ACTA. Several other paragraphs are also copies.

1. Does the Commission agree that it is undesirable to include text that is identical to parts of the ACTA in the EU-Singapore trade agreement?

2. Why is the Commission including, in new international agreements, provisions that have already been rejected by Parliament, recalling in particular that this could jeopardise Parliament's (mandatory) consent on such an agreement?

3. Can the Commission confirm the following (or if not, explain why not):

(a) that there are and will be no criminal penalties for IPR infringements, either in goods or services, included in the EU-Singapore FTA;

(b) that it still does not seek private enforcement of IPR rights outside the rule of law;

(c) that it still does not seek to include requirements for Internet intermediaries to disclose the personal information of alleged infringers of these rights to right holders;

(d) that it will duly consider the concerns raised by the people and Parliament when it comes to respecting the protection of digital freedoms in international (free trade) agreements concluded by the EU?

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

The Commission reassures the Honourable Member that the intellectual property rights chapter of the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA) only includes provisions fully aligned with the current EU legal framework and in particular with the enforcement of the intellectual property rights Directive ([1]) and the e-commerce Directive ([2]).

The chapter on intellectual property in the EU-Singapore FTA differs substantially from ACTA. For instance, the EU-Singapore FTA does not contain criminal provisions for Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) infringements. Also, the provisions relating to the Internet are very different. In particular, the most controversial provisions in that respect (ACTA Articles 27.3 and 27.4) are not present in the FTA. In fact, the text is largely inspired by the e-commerce Directive including all its safeguards.

([1]) Directive 2004/48/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the enforcement of intellectual property rights, OJ L 157, 30.4.2004.
([2]) Directive 2000/31/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the internal market ('Directive on electronic commerce'), OJ L 178, 17.7.2000.

With regard to the provision on damages, paragraph 2 of Article 11.44 of the EU-Singapore FTA only illustrates a wide range of optional methods for a judge to calculate an indemnity. This paragraph however has to be read with the first paragraph, which establishes the mandatory principle that such indemnity must be adequate to compensate the injury suffered. This ensures that in line with the EU legal framework, there will be no punitive damages in the EU.

Finally, the Commission confirms that it fully recognises and respects Parliament's vote regarding ACTA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012148/13
to the Commission
Brian Simpson (S&D)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Hen harrier decline in North West England

According to Annex I of Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, the hen harrier (circus cyaneus) is subject to the special habitat conservation measures defined under Article 4 of the directive.

Given that the hen harrier is a species native to the United Kingdom, the UK Government is obliged to implement the clear objectives contained within the Conservation of Wild Birds Directive, to ensure the protection of the species.

In 2006, in its reply to Written Question E-4512/2006, the Commission confirmed that it 'does not have grounds to conclude that the United Kingdom is failing to meet its requirements to protect Hen Harriers under Council Directive 79/409/EEC.'

Unfortunately, a recent investigation by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) indicates that hen harriers are 'on the brink of extinction' in England.

Indeed, the situation has become so severe that the UK Government's Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is working on an emergency recovery plan for the hen harrier in England.

This would suggest that, since the Commission's assessment in 2006, hen harrier conservation efforts in England have been inadequate.

Can the Commission confirm what steps it has taken to monitor the UK's efforts to conserve the hen harrier since 2006?

Given that the conservation policies of the UK Government appear to be ineffective, can the Commission outline what action it will take to ensure the UK's compliance with EU conservation legislation, thereby preventing the extinction of the hen harrier in England and ensuring the recovery of hen harrier numbers?

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

The Commission is aware of the unfavourable status of the Hen Harrier *(Circus cyaneus)* in the United Kingdom where, despite suitable habitat, there is evidence that illegal persecution, both during and following the breeding season, continues to limit recovery of the species.

The Commission is aware that the Hen Harrier is one of the UK priorities in terms of combating wildlife crime for the period 2011-2013. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), the UK government's statutory conservation advisors are currently updating 'A Conservation Framework for Hen Harriers in the United Kingdom'. Conservation agencies and stakeholders are also collaborating on a major project in southern Scotland to work with hunting estates to demonstrate co-existence of birds of prey and game shooting interests.

On the basis of available information, the Commission does not have grounds to conclude that the United Kingdom is failing to meet its requirements to protect Hen Harriers under Directive 2009/147/EC ([1]).

Despite the legal protection afforded by EU and national laws, illegal killing of birds, including by poisoning, is still a problem across the EU. The Commission has produced a Roadmap ([2]) aimed at combating illegal killing of birds in the EU with the collaboration of stakeholders, Member States and the Bern Convention.

([1]) Council Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation of wild birds, codifying Directive 79/409/EEC; OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012151/13
à la Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(23 octobre 2013)

Objet: Taxation des carburants

Dans sa réponse à ma question E-006381/2013, la Commission a, comme à son habitude, évité de répondre précisément aux questions posées.

S'il est vrai que le Grand-Duché de Luxembourg pratique une taxation des carburants «moins élevée que dans les pays voisins», et que l'important trafic de transit qui traverse le Luxembourg profite de l'aubaine pour se ravitailler à moindre coût en essence ou en gazole, on ne comprend pas comment le relèvement des prix des carburants au seul Grand-Duché pourrait influer sur les émissions globales de CO2 de l'Union européenne. Si les prix luxembourgeois étaient par exemple supérieurs à ceux pratiqués en Belgique, le «tourisme à la pompe» se déplacerait vers la région frontalière belge. Une grande partie des automobilistes luxembourgeois iraient probablement s'approvisionner en Belgique.

1. La Commission n'a-t-elle pas une vue trop théorique du comportement des automobilistes?

2. Comment une augmentation des taxes sur le carburant préconisée par la Commission pourrait-elle augmenter les «incitations à l'utilisation des transports publics», notamment pour les millions de touristes qui traversent chaque année le Luxembourg pour se rendre dans le Sud de l'Europe? Quid des camionneurs? Comment les inciter à transporter leurs marchandises via les transports publics, alors que les lignes de chemin de fer traversant le Luxembourg ne permettent de desservir que certaines zones bien ciblées du Sud de l'Europe?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(13 décembre 2013)

1. Non. La Commission a été informée des pratiques des transporteurs routiers consistant à faire des détours, par exemple en se rendant du Royaume-Uni en Allemagne afin de bénéficier des prix du gazole moins élevés au Luxembourg.

Le taux d'imposition national actuel pour les carburants au Luxembourg est proche du niveau minimum de taxation de l'UE, ce qui conduit à de tels détours et instaure ainsi une course au carburant le moins cher. Le tourisme à la pompe entraîne des pertes de ressources budgétaires pour les États membres appliquant un droit d'accise relativement élevé sur les carburants. L'incidence sur l'environnement en cas de détours constitue une autre conséquence négative du tourisme à la pompe. En opérateurs rationnels, les conducteurs font jouer le plus possible la différence des prix du gazole et font le plein dans l'État membre où le carburant est le moins cher, tout en tenant compte des coûts supplémentaires associés (les redevances routières, le carburant utilisé et le temps passé, les risques rencontrés sur la route tels que les embouteillages et les accidents, etc.). Lorsque les camionneurs font délibérément des détours sur leur itinéraire pour profiter des différences entre les droits d'accises nationaux, il en découle des effets négatifs nets sur l'environnement en raison de la distance accrue qui est parcourue. La Commission renvoie également à sa réponse à la question écrite E-006381/2013.

2. La Commission réaffirme son avis selon lequel le niveau relativement modéré des taxes sur les carburants réduit l'efficacité des incitations à utiliser les transports publics. Les transports publics ne peuvent pas remplacer entièrement tous les autres moyens de transport. Toutefois, dans de nombreux cas, les transports publics constituent une alternative au transport privé.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012151/13
to the Commission
Robert Goebbels (S&D)
(23 October 2013)

Subject: Tax on fuel

In its answer to my Question E-006381/2013, the Commission avoided directly addressing the questions I asked, as it usually does.

While it is true that the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg taxes fuel 'below the level in neighbouring countries', and that the many drivers who pass through Luxembourg in transit take full advantage of the situation to fill up with petrol or diesel more cheaply, it is not clear how increasing fuel prices in the Luxembourg alone could affect the EU's overall CO2 emissions. Were prices in Luxembourg higher than those in Belgium, for example, 'tank tourists' would move on to the Belgian border region. Many drivers in Luxembourg would probably fill up in Belgium.

1. Is the Commission not taking an overly hypothetical view of how drivers tend to behave?

2. How could increasing fuel taxes, as recommended by the Commission, increase 'incentives to use public transport', particularly for the millions of tourists who pass through Luxembourg each year on their way to southern Europe? What about hauliers? How can hauliers be encouraged to transport freight via public transport, when rail lines crossing Luxembourg only serve certain specific parts of southern Europe?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

1. No. The Commission has been informed of hauliers' practices to make detours on trips e.g. from the UK to Germany in order to benefit from the lower price of gas oil in Luxembourg.

The current national tax rates for motor fuels in Luxembourg are close to the EU minimum tax level, which leads to such detours and thus creates 'tank tourism'. Fuel tourism leads to losses in budgetary resources for those Member States applying a relatively high excise duty on motor fuels. The other negative consequences of fuel tourism are the impact on the environment in the case of detours. As rational operators, drivers will make use of the fuel price difference as much as they can and tank in the Member State where it is the cheapest. In so doing they would also take into account the additional costs involved (road charges, fuel and time spent, risks encountered on the road such as congestion and accidents). When drivers make deliberate detours from their routes to take advantage of the differences in national excise duties, this has a net negative effects on the environment because of the longer distance driven. The Commission also refers you to its reply on your Question E-006381/2013.

2. The Commission confirms its view that relatively low fuel taxes weaken incentives to use public transport. Public transport cannot replace fully all other means of transport. However in many cases public transport is an alternative to private transport.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012153/13
to the Commission
William (The Earl of) Dartmouth (EFD)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: EU investigation into Gibraltar tax system

Is it the view of the Commission that Commissioner Almunia can be objective on the subject of Gibraltar?

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

The Commission recalls that Article 17 (1) and (3) of the Treaty on the European Union provides that the Commission shall promote the general interest of the Union and shall be completely independent; the members of the Commission shall neither seek nor take instructions from any government or other institution, body or entity.

The Commission is of the view that all its Members fully respect these provisions and act in the general interest of the Union.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012154/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Compraventa de órganos en la EU

En la web de intercambios Milanuncios.com aparecieron recientemente varios anuncios de venta de órganos por dinero ([1]). La Organización Nacional de Trasplantes (ONT) recordó que la compraventa de órganos es un delito tipificado en el Código Penal con penas de hasta 12 años de cárcel y advirtió de que estos anuncios pueden estar relacionados con mafias o ser ganchos para la realización de estafas.

Fuentes de la web defendieron que cada día se suben a ella cerca de 100 000 anuncios gratuitos y que esta cuenta con un total de cuatro millones, lo que dificulta la detección de los que no son adecuados; afirmaron también que colaborarán con la ONT, incluso enviándoles los datos de los anunciantes para que sean investigados.

La denuncia del Ministerio de Sanidad ante la brigada de delitos telemáticos de la Guardia Civil llevó esta semana a la desaparición en minutos de estos anuncios.

¿Está al corriente la Comisión de estos hechos?

¿Qué medidas se deberían tomar (o se están tomando) para evitar que estos anuncios se extiendan al resto de países de la UE?

¿Qué medidas se deberían tomar (o se están tomando) para evitar la compraventa de órganos en la EU?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión comparte la preocupación de Su Señoría acerca de la publicidad relacionada con la supuesta compra y venta de órganos.

La Directiva 2010/53/UE ([2]) establece el marco de normas de calidad y seguridad para los órganos humanos destinados al trasplante. El artículo 13 obliga a los Estados miembros a velar por que las donaciones de órganos sean voluntarias y no retribuidas y a prohibir que se anuncie la necesidad o la disponibilidad de órganos, si con tal publicidad se pretende ofrecer o tratar de obtener un beneficio económico o una ventaja comparable. Por otra parte, la Directiva 2011/36/UE ([3]) hace punible la trata de seres humanos, incluyendo la que tiene como objeto la extracción de órganos.

Además, el Plan de Acción sobre Órganos ([4]) insta a los Estados miembros a celebrar acuerdos a escala de la UE para supervisar la envergadura del tráfico de órganos. Uno de los principales objetivos del Plan es apoyar los esfuerzos para aumentar la disponibilidad de órganos, que se considera comúnmente como la manera más eficaz de luchar contra el comercio ilegal de órganos. Un proyecto en curso financiado por la UE ([5]) pretende apoyar estos objetivos ampliando la información sobre el tráfico de órganos y desarrollando de una serie de indicadores para identificar y evaluar tales actividades.

La Comisión está comprobando actualmente el grado de transposición de las Directivas anteriormente mencionadas y está previsto un informe al Parlamento sobre la aplicación de la Directiva 2010/53/UE durante el año 2014. Asimismo, la Comisión está preparando una revisión intermedia del Plan de Acción cuya publicación está prevista para principios de 2014. Estas iniciativas proporcionarán una imagen más completa del progreso actual y también de lo que queda aún por hacer para combatir el tráfico de órganos.

([1]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sociedad/sanidad-hace-retirar-una-web-anuncios-venta-organos-2762911
([2]) Directiva 2010/53/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 7 de julio de 2010, sobre normas de calidad y seguridad de los órganos humanos destinados al trasplante (DO L 207 de 6.8.2010, p. 14-29).
([3]) Directiva 2011/36/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 5 abril de 2011, relativa a la prevención y lucha contra la trata de seres humanos y a la protección de las víctimas y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2002/629/JAI del Consejo (DO L 101 de 15.4.2011, p. 1-11).
([4]) Plan de acción sobre donación y trasplante de órganos (2009-15): cooperación reforzada entre los Estados miembros (COM(2008) 819 final).
([5]) Acción contra el tráfico de órganos humanos para trasplantes (proyecto HOTT).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012154/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Buying and selling of organs in the EU

Recently, numerous advertisements selling organs for money appeared on the trading website Milanuncios.com ([1]). The National Transplant Organisation (NTO) pointed out that the buying and selling of organs was a criminal offence under the Criminal Code punishable by up to 12 years in prison and warned that these advertisements could be linked to mafia organisations or could be bait for scams.

Sources from the site rose to the defence, saying that every day close to 100 000 free advertisements are submitted to it and that the site has 4 million advertisements in total, which makes it difficult to detect those which are inappropriate. They also stated that they would work together with the NTO and would even send it advertisers' data so that they could be investigated.

This week, these advertisements disappeared within minutes of the Ministry of Health reporting the matter to the Guardia Civil's cybercrime team.

Is the Commission aware of these facts?

What measures should be taken (or are being taken) to stop these advertisements from reaching the rest of the EU countries?

What measures should be taken (or are being taken) to prevent the buying and selling of organs in the EU?

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

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concern regarding advertisements linked to the purported buying and selling of organs.

Directive 2010/53/EU ([2]) lays down the quality and safety framework for human organs intended for transplantation. Article 13 obliges Member States to ensure that donations of organs are voluntary and unpaid and to prohibit advertising the need for, or availability of, organs, where such advertising is with a view to offering or seeking financial gain or comparable advantage. In addition, Directive 2011/36/EU ([3]) criminalises the act of trafficking in human beings including for the purposes of organ removal.

Furthermore, the Organs Action Plan ([4]) calls on Member States to establish EU-wide agreements on monitoring the extent of organ trafficking. One of the main objectives of the Plan is to support efforts to increase organ availability — commonly held as the most effective way of combating the illegal trade in organs. An ongoing EU-funded project ([5]) aims to support these aims by increasing knowledge of organ trafficking and by developing a set of indicators to identify and measure such activities.

The Commission is currently verifying the degree of transposition of the abovementioned Directives and a report to Parliament on the implementation of Directive 2010/53/EU is foreseen during the course of 2014. Moreover, the Commission is preparing a mid-term review of the action plan due for publication in early 2014. These initiatives will provide a fuller picture of current progress and also what still needs to be done in order to combat organ trafficking.

([1]) http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/sociedad/sanidad-hace-retirar-una-web-anuncios-venta-organos-2762911
([2]) Directive 2010/53/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2010 on standards of quality and safety of human organs intended for transplantation, OJ L 207, 6.8.2010, p. 14-29.
([3]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1-11.
([4]) Action Plan on Organ donation and Transplantation 2009-15: Strengthened cooperation between Member States, COM(2008) 819/3.
([5]) Action against Human Organ Trafficking for Transplantation (HOTT Project).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012155/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Objetivos en materia de energía para el año 2020

Uno de los objetivos que se pretender lograr en 2020 es que cada uno de los Estados de la UE pueda importar de sus vecinos un 10 % de la energía que consume. El mapa europeo con las megainfraestructuras energéticas, repleto de rayas en países nórdicos y centroeuropeos, aparecía casi intacto en la Península Ibérica. Estamos en el año 2013 y el comisario Oettinger ha admitido que solo dos miembros de la UE saben ya que no van a alcanzar el objetivo con el que se trata de impulsar un mercado paneuropeo: España y Francia ([1]).

«El limitado número de líneas internacionales españolas que hay en el listado de la Comisión Europea refleja la escasez de proyectos presentados por las autoridades nacionales», sintetiza Georg Zachmann, experto en energía del think-tank Bruegel.

Si se toma como referencia la potencia instalada —unos 100 000 megavatios—, está a una distancia sideral; pero si la referencia es algo más modesta —la demanda en punta, en torno a 45 000 megavatios—, la capacidad se quedará cerca del 5 %. Es decir, se quedaría justo a medio camino de la meta que Europa fija para el resto de los países. Además de dar un empujón a la integración de los mercados energéticos europeos, se persigue diversificar sus fuentes, contribuir a poner fin al aislamiento energético de algunos Estados y permitir a la red absorber mayores cantidades de energías renovables, reduciendo así las emisiones de CO_2.

Europa será competitiva cuando todos los Estados miembros cumplan la normativa y los objetivos de la UE para 2020. Si algunos Estados miembros no cumplen, el conjunto de la UE se resiente.

¿Qué medidas piensa tomar la Comisión para que España y Francia cumplan los objetivos energéticos para 2020?

¿Les impondrá alguna sanción?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisióne
(27 de noviembre de 2013)

En la primavera de 2014, la Comisión lanzará la plataforma en línea, de conformidad con lo dispuesto en el artículo 25 de la Directiva de Eficiencia Energética. La plataforma en línea permitirá efectuar intercambios interactivos de experiencias y buenas prácticas entre Estados miembros; estará concebida de tal forma que en ella tenga cabida la aplicación a nivel local y regional, además de a nivel nacional.

Su promoción se efectuará de distintas maneras, entre ellas a través del Comité de la Directiva de Eficiencia Energética y de la Acción Concertada ([2]), que reúne a los representantes de los Estados miembros para debatir la aplicación práctica de la Directiva de Eficiencia Energética.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/10/18/actualidad/1382120141_519914.html
([2]) http://www.esd-ca.eu

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012155/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Energy objectives for 2020

One of the objectives to be achieved by 2020 is that each EU Member State should be able to import 10% of the energy it consumes from its neighbours. The map of Europe showing energy mega-infrastructures, which is full of stripes in Nordic and central European countries, used to appear almost empty in the Iberian Peninsula. It is now 2013 and Commissioner Oettinger has admitted that only two EU Member States now know that they will not reach the objective aimed at driving a pan-European market: Spain and France ([1]).

The limited number of Spanish international infrastructures in the Commission's list reflects the lack of projects presented by the national authorities, according to Georg Zachmann, an energy expert from the think tank Bruegel.

If we use the installed capacity — 100 000 megawatts — as a reference, it is a long way off; but if the reference is more modest — peak demand, around 45 000 megawatts — capacity will remain at around 5%. In other words, it would remain just halfway towards the target set by Europe for the rest of the countries. Apart from boosting the integration of European energy markets, the idea is to diversify their sources, help put an end to the energy isolation of certain States and enable the network to absorb higher amounts of renewable energy, thereby reducing CO_2 emissions.

Europe will be competitive when all Member States comply with the legislation and the EU 2020 objectives. If some Member States do not comply, the whole of the EU suffers.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that Spain and France meet the 2020 energy objectives?

Will they face any sanctions?

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

The Commission will launch the online platform pursuant to Article 25 of the Energy Efficiency Directive in spring 2014. The online platform will allow for interactive exchanges of best practices and experiences amongst Member States and it will be constructed in such a way as to include implementation at local and regional level as well as national.

It will be promoted in various ways, including via the Energy Efficiency Directive Committee and the Concerted Action ([2]) that brings together representatives of the Member States to discuss practical implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/10/18/actualidad/1382120141_519914.html
([2]) http://www.esd-ca.eu

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012156/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Acțiuni ca urmare a Deceniului incluziunii romilor

Minoritatea romă este una dintre cele mai dezavantajate minorități din Europa. Agenția UE pentru Drepturile Fundamentale afirmă că unul din trei romi sunt șomeri iar 90% dintre aceștia trăiesc sub pragul sărăciei. Conform recensământului din 2011, în România trăiesc 621 573 de romi, ceea ce reprezintă 3,3% din totalul populației. În întreaga Europă, numărul total de romi este estimat între 10 și 12 milioane. Romii trebuie să înfrunte un grad foarte înalt de discriminare și segregare.

În 2005 a fost lansat Deceniul incluziunii romilor, având drept scop îmbunătățirea vieții romilor prin îmbunătățirea statutului lor socioeconomic și prin asigurarea incluziunii lor sociale în întreaga regiune. Inițiativa reprezintă rezultatul eforturilor combinate ale 12 țări europene și se va desfășura până în 2015.

În contextul în care această inițiativă se apropie de sfârșit:

1. Ce acțiuni sunt adoptate în acest domeniu de către statele membre care nu participă la Deceniul incluziunii romilor?

2. Ce inițiative în materie de politici propune Comisia pentru capacitarea minorității rome după încheierea Deceniului incluziunii romilor?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(11 decembrie 2013)

Deceniul incluziunii romilor 2005-2015 este o inițiativă internațională care are drept obiectiv incluziunea romilor, desfășurându-se conform propriilor săi termeni de referință. Această inițiativă nu este finanțată sau gestionată de către Comisie.

Uniunea Europeană are propria sa politică privind incluziunea romilor, care este prevăzută în cadrul UE pentru strategiile naționale de integrare a romilor până în 2020, propus de Comisie în aprilie 2011 ([1]) și aprobat de Consiliul European în iunie 2011 ([2]). Fondurile structurale europene, și mai ales Fondul social european, sprijină în mod concret aceste strategii.

Cu toate acestea, conform celor subliniate de către Comisie în diverse ocazii, complementaritatea dintre cadrul UE pentru strategiile naționale de integrare a romilor, strategia de extindere a UE și Deceniul incluziunii romilor este indispensabilă.

În acest scop, Comisia și Secretariatul Deceniului colaborează îndeaproape și au o cooperare fructuoasă la nivel general. Comisia a participat la procesul de consultare cu privire la viitorul acestei inițiative, întrucât mandatul Deceniului se va încheia în luna iunie 2015. Comisia va respecta decizia statelor membre ale Deceniului cu privire la oportunitatea continuării acestei inițiative și cu privire la eventuala sa formă.

([1]) COM(2011) 173 final.
([2]) EUCO 23/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012156/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Follow-up to the Decade of Roma Inclusion

Roma are one of the most disadvantaged minorities in Europe. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights states that one in three Roma are unemployed and 90% live below the poverty line. According to the 2011 census, there are 621 573 Roma in Romania, making up 3.3% of the total population. In total throughout Europe their numbers are estimated at between 10 and 12 million. Roma have to face high levels of perceived discrimination and segregation.

2005 saw the launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, with the goal of enhancing the lives of Roma by improving their socioeconomic status and ensuring the social inclusion of this minority across the region. The initiative is the result of the combined efforts of 12 European countries and will run until 2015.

As the Decade of Roma Inclusion draws to a close:

1. What action is being taken on the issue by those Member States which are not participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion?

2. What policy initiatives has the Commission proposed to empower the Roma minority after the Decade of Roma Inclusion ends?

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

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 is an international initiative focusing on Roma inclusion which operates according to the Decade's Terms of Reference. It is not founded or managed by the Commission.

The European Union does have its own policy regarding Roma inclusion, embodied by the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, proposed by the Commission in April 2011 ([1]) and endorsed by the European Council in June 2011 ([2]). The European Structural Funds, and mainly the European Social Fund, concretely support these Strategies.

However, as emphasised on various occasions by the Commission, complementarity between the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, the EU enlargement strategy and the Decade of Roma Inclusion, is indispensable.

To this effect, the Commission and the Decade Secretariat work closely together and have a generally fruitful cooperation. The Commission has participated in the consultation process on the future of the Decade beyond its mandate ending in June 2015. The Commission will respect the decision of the Decade Member States whether and under which format the Decade for Roma inclusion should continue.

([1]) COM(2011) 173 final.
([2]) EUCO 23/11.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012157/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Attacks on protestors in Egypt

I have been contacted by a constituent, who tells me that the Egyptian army recently attacked unarmed civilians at the two protest camps in Cairo. He tells me that, according to the latest report, 94 bodies have been counted and that more are being discovered.

My constituent believes that the protestors are largely peaceful in their support for democracy and that the ambivalence shown by the Egyptian Government towards the situation is unsatisfactory. He is concerned that the Egyptian army holds more influence than the government.

Given that my constituent is concerned about the safety of protestors in Egypt and the actions of the Egyptian army, will the Commission answer the following:

1. Is it aware of the attacks on the camps by the Egyptian army?

2. If so, is it currently in dialogue with the Egyptian authorities, and have any results been achieved with a view to protecting the welfare of protestors?

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

The European Union is well aware of the situation in Egypt, including the protest camps in Cairo. The EU remains concerned about the continued political polarization and violence in Egypt. The HR/VP issued several statements following the dispersal of the protest camps deploring the loss of lives and injuries and asking all sides to exercise utmost restraint. In its conclusions of 21 August 2013, the Foreign Affairs Council condemned 'in the clearest possible terms all acts of violence' and asked 'to launch an independent investigation into all the killings'. The EU Delegation in Cairo is following the developments closely on the ground.

The EU continues to call for an inclusive process not excluding any political group respecting democratic principles and renouncing the use of violence in order to lead to deep and sustainable democracy as the only solution to the current situation. The HR/VP has been several times travelling to Egypt talking to all sides and the EU also continues to offer its good offices and is ready to talk to all sides if invited to do so without taking a mediation role.

The EU is following the developments closely, including new legislation regarding the right to assembly and demonstration.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012158/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Rights of the LGBT community in Lithuania and Latvia

I have been contacted by a number of constituents who are concerned about the rights of LGBT people living in Lithuania.

My constituents are concerned that Lithuania is pressing forward with anti-homosexuality laws despite the European Union resolution condemning such laws. They are also concerned that similar laws are being drafted in Latvia and Ukraine.

Given that Lithuania and Latvia are EU Member States, and that ties are being strengthened with Moldova and Ukraine, could the Commission confirm:

1. whether it has raised the issue of anti-homosexuality laws with the Latvian and Lithuanian Governments and whether it is putting any pressure on them to reverse their current policy?

2. whether it is taking these discriminatory laws into account when planning closer ties with the Ukraine?

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

It is for Member States, including their judicial authorities, to ensure that fundamental rights are effectively respected and protected in accordance with their international human rights obligations, including the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Commission competence is limited to cases when the implementation of European Union law is at stake.

The Commission is nevertheless following very closely all developments that are relevant to LGBT people in all Member States of the European Union and will raise the concerns of the Honourable Member at a political level in bilateral dialogues with the Member States in question.

In Ukraine, the Commission will follow closely any further developments on the two pending draft laws, submitted by MPs, taking into account the concerns raised by the Venice Commission in its opinion 707/2012 issued on 18 June 2013. In addition, under the Visa Liberalisation Action Plan, Ukraine is expected to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, as recommended by UN and Council of Europe monitoring bodies, to ensure effective protection against discrimination.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012160/13
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Protection of ortolans in France

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the slaughter of songbirds in the EU, in particular of ortolans in France.

He tells me that these birds are being trapped and killed on a regular basis, even though they are an endangered species.

1. Is the Commission aware of the slaughter of ortolans in France?

2. If so, has it raised this issue with the French authorities?

3. Has the French Government agreed to take action to protect the birds and does it intend to monitor this action?

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

The Commission is aware of the illegal trapping of Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza Hortulana*) in South western France. Further to exchanges with the French authorities the Commission launched an infringement procedure against France by issuing, on 24 January 2013, a letter of formal notice under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union for failing to protect the Ortolan Bunting, as requested by Article 5 of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC ([1])). The Commission asked the French authorities for detailed information on police controls carried out in autumn 2013. It will assess the issue based on the latest available information and decide on further steps.

([1]) OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012164/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Pollution de l'air classée cancérigène

Quelque 223 000 personnes sont mortes en 2010 dans le monde d'un cancer du poumon provoqué par l'inhalation de substances toxiques contenues dans l'air ambiant. Le Centre international de recherche sur le cancer (CIRC) dit disposer d'éléments démontrant de manière convaincante que la pollution atmosphérique accroît le risque de cancer de la vessie, de maladies respiratoires et de troubles cardiaques.

Les recherches montrent que l'exposition des populations à cette pollution s'est accrue de manière significative dans les pays fortement peuplés et connaissant une croissance industrielle rapide, comme la Chine. Nous savons aujourd'hui que la pollution de l'air extérieur ne constitue pas seulement un risque majeur pour la santé en général mais qu'elle est aussi une cause environnementale prépondérante des décès liés au cancer. L'air que nous respirons est pollué par un mélange de substances responsables du cancer, ajoute le CIRC. Dans son communiqué publié jeudi, il préconise que la pollution atmosphérique et les particules solides ou liquides en suspension dans l'air soient classées dans le groupe 1 des substances cancérigènes pour l'homme. Ce groupe 1 regroupe une centaine de substances connues pour leurs effets cancérigènes comme l'amiante, le plutonium, la poussière de silice, les radiations d'ultraviolet et la fumée de cigarette.

Dès lors, la pollution de l'air ne devrait-elle pas être classée comme cancérigène?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(29 novembre 2013)

Le Centre international de recherche sur le cancer (CIRC) a classé la pollution de l'air extérieur et les particules comme cancérigènes pour l'homme. L'OMS a en outre récemment présenté à la Commission des informations actualisées concernant les avis relatifs aux aspects sanitaires de la pollution atmosphérique, ainsi que les facteurs de risque pris en considération dans les évaluations des effets sur la santé qui sont utilisées pour l'élaboration des politiques européennes ([1]). Les facteurs de risques actualisés, qui s'appuient essentiellement sur le même matériel scientifique que celui utilisé par le CIEC, comprennent également les facteurs de risque liés au cancer. Ces avis sont utilisés dans le cadre de l'actuel réexamen de la politique de l'UE en matière de qualité de l'air, au sujet de laquelle la Commission présentera prochainement des propositions.

([1]) OMS http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/publications/2013/review-of-evidence-on-health-aspects-of-air-pollution-revihaap-project-final-technical-report

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012164/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Air pollution classified as carcinogenic

Worldwide about 223 000 people died in 2010 of lung cancer caused by breathing in toxic substances in the air. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) says that it has convincing proof that atmospheric pollution increases the risk of bladder cancer, respiratory disease and heart disorders.

Research shows that people's exposure to this pollution has increased significantly in densely populated countries undergoing rapid industrial growth, like China. Today we know that pollution in the outside air is not just a major risk for health in general, but is also an overwhelming environmental cause of cancer deaths. IARC adds that the air we breathe is polluted by a mixture of substances which cause cancer. In a statement issued on Thursday, it recommends that atmospheric pollution and suspensions of solid or liquid particles in the air be classified in group 1 of substances causing cancer in humans. Group 1 contains around a hundred substances known to be carcinogenic, such as asbestos, plutonium, silica dust, ultra-violet radiation and cigarette smoke.

Should air pollution not consequently be classified as a carcinogen?

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

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified outdoor air pollution and particulate matter as carcinogenic to humans. The WHO has in addition recently provided updated advice to the Commission on air pollution health aspects, and updated risk factors for the health impact assessments used in EU policy development ([1]). Those updated risk factors also include the cancer risk factors, largely based on the same scientific material used by IARC. Thise advice is being used in the context of the current review of EU air quality policy, on which the Commission will be presenting proposals shortly.

([1]) WHO http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/publications/2013/review-of-evidence-on-health-aspects-of-air-pollution-revihaap-project-final-technical-report

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012165/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: STOP aux bonus

Rabobank supprime le système de rémunération variable pour les membres du conseil d'administration. Cette décision a été motivée par la position des clients sur le sujet et par le point de vue de la société à l'égard des bonus bancaires. Pour les années 2012 et 2013, Rabobank avait déjà décidé de ne pas octroyer de bonus. Les salaires fixes sont, eux, gelés jusqu'en 2015.

1. La Commission pourrait-elle dresser une liste des banques qui font de même et de celles qui ne le font pas?

2. Concernant les banques qui continuent de distribuer des bonus plantureux alors que les épargnants ont des taux ridiculement bas — pour autant que les citoyens aient encore de quoi épargner… —, que compte faire la Commission pour mettre fin à ce système anachronique et éloigné de la situation financière des citoyens européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(13 décembre 2013)

La Commission n'envisage pas pour l'instant de dresser une liste des banques qui mettent en place de telles mesures, mais elle va suivre la situation de près, en collaboration avec les autorités nationales compétentes.

La nouvelle directive sur les exigences de fonds propres («CRD IV» ([1])) contient des règles spécifiques ([2]) sur la politique de rémunération des banques, qui définissent notamment des ratios appropriés entre composantes fixe et variable de la rémunération totale pour toutes les catégories de personnel, incluant la direction générale, les preneurs de risques et les personnes exerçant une fonction de contrôle, ainsi que tout salarié qui, au vu de ses revenus globaux, se trouve dans la même tranche de rémunération que la direction générale et les preneurs de risques, dont les activités professionnelles ont une incidence significative sur le profil de risque de leur établissement.

Conformément à la CRD IV, les États membres doivent exiger des établissements qu'ils appliquent les principes mentionnés ci-dessus aux rémunérations accordées pour les services fournis ou pour les performances de travail à compter de 2014, qu'elles soient dues sur la base de contrats existants ou nouveaux.

Le règlement ([3]) adopté avec la CRD IV contient également des règles ([4]) régissant la communication par les banques d'informations relatives à leurs politiques de rémunération, y compris les ratios entre les rémunérations fixe et variable définis conformément à la CRD IV.

La Commission contrôlera la mise en œuvre de la CRD IV par les États membres ainsi que l'application concrète des mesures nationales par les autorités compétentes.

([1]) Directive 2013/36/UE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 26 juin 2013 concernant l'accès à l'activité des établissements de crédit et la surveillance prudentielle des établissements de crédit et des entreprises d'investissement, modifiant la directive 2002/87/CE et abrogeant les directives 2006/48/CE et 2006/49/CE (JO L 176 du 27.6.2013, p. 338).

([2]) Articles 92 et 94 de la directive 2013/36/UE.

([3]) Règlement (UE) n° 575/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 26 juin 2013 concernant les exigences prudentielles applicables aux établissements de crédit et aux entreprises d'investissement et modifiant le règlement (UE) n° 648/2012 (JO L 176 du 27.6.2013, p. 1).

([4]) Article 450 du règlement n° 575/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012165/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: STOP the bonuses

Rabobank is scrapping the system of variable pay for members of its Board of Directors. This decision was prompted by its customers' opinions on the matter and by the company's perspective on bank bonuses. Rabobank had already decided against granting bonuses for 2012 and 2013. Fixed salaries are themselves frozen until 2015.

1. Could the Commission draw up a list of banks that are doing the same and those that are not?

2. With regard to banks continuing to distribute massive bonuses while savers enjoy ridiculously low rates (provided that citizens still have money to save …), what does the Commission intend to do to put a stop to this anachronistic system, far removed from the financial position faced by citizens of Europe?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

At the moment, the Commission does not envisage to draw up a list of banks that are putting in place such measures but will monitor the situation closely together with the national competent authorities.

The new Capital Requirements Directive ('CRD IV' ([1])) contains specific rules ([2]) on remuneration in banks providing, *inter alia*, for appropriate limits to the ratio between the fixed and the variable components of the total remuneration for all categories of staff including senior management, risk takers, staff engaged in control functions and any employee receiving total remuneration that takes them into the same remuneration bracket as senior management and risk takers, whose professional activities have a material impact on their institution's risk profile.

CRD IV provides that Member States must require institutions to apply the provisions referred to above to remuneration awarded for services provided or performance from the year 2014 onwards, whether due on the basis of existing or new contracts.

The regulation ([3]) adopted together with CRD IV also contains rules ([4]) governing the disclosure by banks of information relating to their remuneration policies, including the ratios between fixed and variable remuneration set pursuant to CRD IV.

The Commission will monitor the implementation of CRD IV by the Member States and the concrete application of the national measures by the competent authorities.

([1]) Directive 2013/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on the access to the activity of credit institutions and the prudential supervision of credit institutions and investment firms, amending Directive 2002/87/EC and repealing Directives 2006/48/EC and 2006/49/EC, OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p. 338.
([2]) Articles 92 and 94 of Directive 2013/36/EU.
([3]) Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on prudential requirements for credit institutions and investment firms and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012, OJ L 176, 27.6.2013, p. 1.
([4]) Article 450 of Regulation 575/2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012166/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Électronique verte

En 2010, la Commission a identifié une liste de quatorze matières premières importantes du point de vue économique qui sont sujettes à un plus grand risque d'interruption de leur approvisionnement.

Comment les leaders de l'industrie vont-ils pouvoir faire face à cette menace?

Ces matières premières sont-elles encore primordiales?

Cette liste est-elle la même trois ans plus tard?

Concrètement, quelles sont les actions entreprises depuis la création de la liste en 2010?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(11 décembre 2013)

L'initiative «matières premières» a été lancée pour apporter des réponses aux problèmes relatifs aux matières premières au niveau de l'UE, y compris l'identification des matières premières essentielles. La première analyse des matières premières essentielles pour l'UE a été publiée en 2010. La Commission a formellement adopté une liste de quatorze matières premières essentielles et a proposé qu'elle soit régulièrement mise à jour au moins tous les trois ans.

Toutes les matières premières qui étaient considérées comme vitales dans l'étude de 2010 sont en cours de réévaluation en 2013. La Commission doit publier un résumé de l'étude en janvier 2014. La liste des matières premières essentielles doit être officiellement adoptée par la Commission dans le courant de 2014. Par rapport à l'étude de 2010, dans laquelle 41 matières premières ont été analysées, l'étude de 2014 porte sur 54 matières premières non énergétiques, non alimentaires et abiotiques et, pour la première fois, biotiques.

La liste des matières premières essentielles s'est révélée utile en tant qu'instrument pour attirer l'attention des responsables politiques, promouvoir la coordination des politiques nationales relatives à l'approvisionnement en ressources minérales et aux matières premières essentielles, s'opposer aux mesures susceptibles d'aboutir à une distorsion du commerce, analyser le fonctionnement des marchés et promouvoir la recherche. Elle a aussi servi de point de référence lorsque le Conseil économique transatlantique (CET) a arrêté un programme de travail sur les matières premières en novembre 2011.

La liste de l'UE constitue également un outil à la disposition de l'industrie pour obtenir des informations sur les matières premières considérées comme essentielles pour l'économie européenne. Les entreprises sont les mieux placées pour définir quelles matières premières sont essentielles à chacune et prendre les mesures nécessaires afin de garantir la sécurité de leurs approvisionnements.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012166/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Green electronics

In 2010 the Commission identified a list of 14 raw materials of strategic economic importance whose supply was at an increased risk of interruption.

How are industry leaders facing up to this threat?

Are these raw materials still of prime importance?

Is the list still the same three years later?

What concrete action has been taken since the list was created in 2010?

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

The Raw Materials Initiative was instigated to manage responses to raw materials issues at an EU level including defining critical raw materials. The first analysis of EU critical raw materials was published in 2010. The Commission formally adopted a list of 14 critical raw materials and proposed that it will regularly update it at least every 3 years.

All the raw materials that were deemed critical in the 2010 study are being assessed again in 2013. A summary of the study is to be published by the Commission in January 2014. The list of critical raw materials is to be officially adopted by the Commission later in 2014. Compared with the 2010 study, in which 41 materials were analysed, the scope of materials considered in this study includes 54 non-energy, non-food abiotic and, for the first time, biotic materials.

The critical raw materials list has proven successful in serving as a tool to raise attention of policy-makers, promote coordination of national policies regarding mineral supply and critical materials, challenge trade distortive measures regarding critical raw materials, analyse the functioning of the markets and promote research. The list has also served as a reference point when the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC) agreed to a Raw Materials Work Plan in November 2011.

The EU list also constitutes a tool at industry's disposal for information on which raw materials are deemed critical for the European economy. Companies are best placed to identify the raw materials that are important to each of them and to take the necessary steps to secure their supply.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012169/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Concession Samsung

Cinq ans de répit. ZDnet.com rapporte que, concernant certains brevets, Samsung n'attaquera plus ses petits camarades en justice pendant une demi-décennie.

1. Cela met-il donc fin à la procédure de la Commission?

En échange, toute entreprise qui voudra utiliser les technologies protégées par les brevets de Samsung devra s'acquitter de droits de licence à des conditions raisonnables, équitables et non discriminatoires. En cas de désaccord sur ces droits pendant plus d'un an, un tribunal pourra être saisi pour arbitrage.

Cette information fait partie des dernières concessions de Samsung à la Commission européenne.

2. Samsung va-t-il éviter l'amende? Certes il y a concession, mais ces concessions ont pour origine une fraude. Comment la Commission se positionne-t-elle?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(17 décembre 2013)

Le 27 septembre 2013, Samsung a proposé des engagements, en application de l'article 9 du règlement (CE) nº 1/2003, de nature à répondre aux préoccupations en matière de concurrence exprimées par la Commission dans sa communication des griefs adoptée le 21 décembre 2012.

Ces engagements ont fait l'objet d'une consultation auprès des acteurs du marché ([1]). Le délai pour les observations à présenter par les tiers intéressés avait été fixé au 18 novembre 2013. La Commission examine actuellement ces observations. Si, à la lumière de ces dernières, la Commission estime que les engagements proposés par Samsung répondent de manière appropriée à ses préoccupations en matière de concurrence, elle peut adopter une décision en application de l'article 9 du règlement nº 1/2003, laquelle rendrait juridiquement contraignants les engagements de Samsung. Ceci mettrait alors fin à la procédure de la Commission.

Toutefois, si elle estime que les engagements proposés par Samsung ne répondent pas de manière appropriée aux problèmes de concurrence identifiés, la Commission peut revenir à la procédure prévue à l'article 7 du règlement nº 1/2003.

([1]) Communication de la Commission publiée conformément à l'article 27, paragraphe 4, du règlement (CE) n° 1/2003 du Conseil dans l'affaire AT.39939 — Samsung — Respect des brevets essentiels pour la norme UMTS, JO C 302 du 18.10.2013, p. 14.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012169/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Samsung concessions

According to an article on ZDnet.com, Samsung is to give its fellow market players five years breathing space by no longer bringing certain patent infringement cases against them during that period.

1. Does this therefore put an end to the Commission's procedure?

In exchange, companies wishing to use the technologies protected by Samsung's patents must take out licences on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms. If no licensing agreement is reached after12 months, the courts may be involved to arbitrate the dispute.

This information covers some of Samsung's recent concessions to the Commission.

2. Is Samsung going to avoid a fine? Whilst concessions have been made, they have been made due to an act of fraud. What is the Commission's position?

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

On 27 September 2013, Samsung offered commitments pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003 to meet the competition concerns expressed by the Commission in its Statement of Objections adopted on 21 December 2012.

The commitments have been market-tested ([1]). The deadline for observations by interested third parties was 18 November 2013. The Commission is currently evaluating those observations. If, in light of those observations, the Commission considers that the commitments proposed by Samsung adequately address its competition concerns, it may adopt a decision pursuant to Article 9 of Regulation 1/2003 making them legally binding on Samsung. This would then put an end to the Commission's procedure.

If, however, the Commission considers that the commitments proposed by Samsung do not adequately address its competition concerns, the Commission may revert to proceedings pursuant to Article 7 of Regulation 1/2003.

([1]) Communication from the Commission published pursuant to Article 27(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2003 in Case AT.39939 — Samsung — Enforcement of UMTS standard essential patents, OJ C 302, 18.10.2013, p. 14-15.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012170/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Financement participatif

La Commission européenne a lancé une consultation invitant les parties prenantes à partager leurs points de vue au sujet du financement participatif: ses avantages, ses risques éventuels et la conception d'un cadre politique optimal pour dégager le potentiel de cette nouvelle forme de financement pour les acteurs culturels et créatifs.

La consultation couvre toutes les formes de financement participatif, des dons aux placements financiers. Tout le monde est invité à partager son opinion en répondant au questionnaire en ligne, y compris les citoyens qui pourraient contribuer à ces campagnes de financement et les entrepreneurs qui pourraient les lancer. Les autorités nationales et les plateformes de financement participatif sont particulièrement encouragées à répondre.

1. Quel est l'objectif de la consultation pour la Commission?

2. Comment compte-t-elle encourager la croissance de cette nouvelle industrie?

3. Quel est l'agenda de la Commission à ce sujet?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

Le 3 octobre 2013, la Commission a lancé une consultation publique sur le financement participatif, qui se clôturera le 31 décembre 2013.

L'objectif de cette consultation est d'évaluer la valeur ajoutée potentielle de l'action de l'UE. Bien que le financement participatif dispose d'un potentiel prometteur en vue de financer la croissance et de promouvoir l'innovation sociale, culturelle et technique à travers l'Europe, il pourrait également présenter certains risques. L'essor du financement participatif passe impérativement par une protection efficace des donateurs et par l'instauration d'un environnement juridique clair pour ces pratiques en mutation. Conscients de cet état de fait, certains États membres ont déjà commencé à réglementer le financement participatif au niveau national. En outre, l'Autorité européenne des marchés financiers (AEMF) et l'Organisation internationale des commissions de valeurs mobilières (OICV) ont également entrepris de récolter des informations sur les cadres juridiques applicables.

La consultation lancée par la Commission vérifie des options non législatives, telles que la sensibilisation et le partage de bonnes pratiques, ainsi que l'autorégulation. Les parties prenantes sont appelées à donner leur avis sur des options législatives telles que la corégulation, le financement jumelé, les modifications législatives apportées à la législation en vigueur ou l'instauration d'un régime européen spécialement adapté au financement participatif. La Commission se prononcera sur les éventuelles démarches à adopter ultérieurement à la lumière des résultats de la consultation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012170/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Crowdfunding

The Commission has launched a consultation inviting stakeholders to share their views on crowdfunding: its benefits, potential risks and the design of an optimal policy framework to untap the potential of this new form of financing for the arts and creative industries.

The consultation covers all forms of crowdfunding, from donations to financial investment. Everyone is invited to share their opinion by replying to an online questionnaire, including citizens who might contribute to crowdfunding campaigns and entrepreneurs who might launch them. National authorities and crowdfunding platforms are particularly encouraged to reply.

1. What is the Commission's objective in holding this consultation?

2. How does it intend to encourage the growth of this new industry?

3. What is the Commission's agenda on this matter?

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

The Commission launched a public consultation on crowdfunding on 3 October 2013 that will close on 31 December 2013.

The aim of this consultation is to assess the potential added value of EU action. Crowdfunding has promising potential to finance growth and promote social, cultural and technical innovation across Europe. However, crowdfunding might raise certain risks too. Ensuring effective protection of contributors and a clear legal environment for these evolving practices are key to the growth of crowdfunding. Realising this, some Member States already started regulating crowdfunding at national level. In addition, the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) and the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) have also started gathering information about the applicable legal frameworks.

The consultation launched by the Commission is testing non-legislative options, such as awareness-raising or sharing of best practices, as well as self-regulation. Co-regulation, matched financing, legal amendments to existing legislation, or a tailored European regime for crowdfunding are among the legislative options that stakeholders are asked to give their views on. The Commission will take a view on possible next steps in the light of the results of the consultation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012171/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Powerdriver

Le projet Powerdriver, financé par l'Union européenne, est l'un des projets visant à récupérer la chaleur perdue à grande échelle en Europe. Le projet concerne spécifiquement le secteur des transports, soit un quart des gaz à effet de serre en Europe. Le projet souhaite transformer la chaleur perdue issue des gaz d'échappement des moteurs à combustion en électricité à l'aide de la technologie de thermogénérateur.

1. Quels sont les objectifs précis et chiffrés de la Commission?

2. Quel est l'agenda?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Geoghegan-Quinn au nom de la Commission
(3 décembre 2013)

1. Powerdriver est un projet de recherche financé au titre du programme «Recherche au profit des PME» du 7^e^ PC ([1]). Il vise à élaborer, pour le secteur de l'automobile et des applications marines, un nouveau système de production thermoélectrique respectueux de l'environnement basé sur la récupération de l'énergie thermique issue des gaz d'échappement, en vue d'améliorer le rendement des carburants, de réduire les émissions et de baisser les coûts d'exploitation.

Le projet Powerdriver vise à générer de l'électricité à partir de la chaleur résiduelle des moteurs à combustion interne. Ce faisant, le système d'échappement créé offrira des performances environnementales considérablement accrues grâce à l'amélioration du rendement des carburants et à la réduction des émissions (CO_2, oxyde d'azote, d'hydrocarbures, monoxyde de carbone et particules), le tout pour un coût abordable pour l'utilisateur final. Selon les prévisions, même en tenant compte du supplément de poids qu'elle implique, cette technologie augmenterait le rendement des carburants d'au moins 5 %, toute en réduisant de 5 % les émissions.

Jusqu'à présent, l'Union européenne s'est fixé pour objectif de réduire ses émissions de CO_2 de 20 % d'ici 2020 par rapport aux niveaux de 1990.

2. Le projet a démarré le 1^er^ février 2012 et se terminera le 31 janvier 2014. Ses résultats finaux seront ensuite évalués.

([1]) Septième programme-cadre pour des activités de recherche, de développement technologique et de démonstration (7^e^ PC, 2007-2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012171/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: POWERDRIVER

The European Union funded POWERDRIVER project is a project which aims to recover heat which is wasted on a large scale in Europe. The project relates specifically to the transport sector as this represents a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe. The project seeks to convert exhaust waste heat from combustion engines into electricity using thermoelectric generation technology.

1. What are the Commission's specific quantified targets?

2. What is the timetable?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(3 December 2013)

1. POWERDRIVER is a research project funded in the FP7 ([1]) 'Research for the benefit of SMEs' programme. It aims to develop an innovative environmentally friendly thermo-electric power generation system for automotive and marine applications that is powered by exhaust waste thermal energy thereby achieving better fuel efficiency, lower emissions and lower operating costs.

The POWERDRIVER project aims to generate power from the Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) waste heat. By doing this, the exhaust system created will offer greatly improved environmental performance due to improved fuel efficiency and reduced emissions (CO_2, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and particulates) at a cost that is affordable to the end-user. It is predicted that (even if the additional weight of the unit is considered) fuel efficiency will increase by at least 5%, leading to a corresponding 5% reduction in emissions.

The EU is so far aiming to cut CO_2 emissions by 20% by 2020 compared with 1990 levels.

2. The project started on 1 February 2012 and will end 31 January 2014, after which the final results will be evaluated.

([1]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012173/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Alerte lingettes bébé

La très grande majorité des lingettes et laits de toilette pour bébés (94 %) sont potentiellement nocifs. Ce n'est pas la première fois que les lingettes pour bébés font l'objet d'une alerte. En novembre 2012, l'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (ANSM) avait déjà recommandé de ne pas utiliser les produits contenant du phénoxyéthanol. En effet, les tests réalisés en laboratoire ont révélé que 26 lingettes et 6 laits de toilette grand public sur 34 produits testés seraient saturés de molécules allergisantes, d'antibactériens ou d'antioxydants «toxiques, voire perturbateurs endocriniens». Pas moins de 94 % des produits testés seraient ainsi «potentiellement nocifs». Les lingettes utilisées pour nettoyer les bébés cumulent les facteurs de risque. Elles sont appliquées plusieurs fois par jour sur une peau de bébé souvent irritée et particulièrement fragile. Pire, l'absence de rinçage après application a pour effet de prolonger le temps de pénétration. De plus, certaines substances soupçonnées d'être des perturbateurs endocriniens sont dissimulées sous un étiquetage trompeur.

Le phénoxyéthanol, un conservateur aux effets toxiques pour le foie, suspecté de nuire au système reproducteur et au développement, est présent dans de nombreuses lingettes. Les substances toxiques contenues dans ces lingettes pourraient être particulièrement délétères puisqu'elles agissent aux stades précoces du développement de l'enfant.

1. Face à ces résultats, la Commission compte-t-elle recommander aux parents d'être très vigilants, de se méfier de ces «facilités cosmétiques» et de recourir plutôt aux traditionnels savons beaucoup moins nocifs?

2. Compte-t-elle mener sa propre étude?

3. Pourrait-elle, à titre préventif, envoyer une alerte européenne sur ces produits?

4. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas renforcer la règlementation sur ce type de produits? En effet, cette concentration de toxiques tels que le phénoxyéthanol est rendue possible par le laxisme de la réglementation européenne.

5. Quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour que les fabricants mettent un terme à leur pratique irresponsable en retirant les nombreuses substances dangereuses trouvées dans leurs produits?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(19 décembre 2013)

Le règlement (CE) nº 1223/2009 ([1]) relatif aux produits cosmétiques autorise l'utilisation du phénoxyéthanol en tant qu'agent conservateur dans les produits cosmétiques à condition que sa concentration ne dépasse pas 1 %. Conformément à ce règlement, tous les produits cosmétiques mis sur le marché de l'UE doivent être sans danger pour la santé humaine.

La recherche scientifique existante sur le phénoxyéthanol n'est pas cohérente parce que ses données s'appliquent soit à l'exposition au phénoxyéthanol dans l'isolement soit à des produits ayant une forte concentration de cette substance en tant qu'ingrédient.

La Commission a reçu des autorités françaises des études d'évaluation ([2]) suscitant certaines préoccupations quant à l'utilisation du phénoxyéthanol en tant qu'agent conservateur dans les produits cosmétiques. Sur la base de ces études, les autorités françaises ont publié de nouvelles recommandations sur la concentration du phénoxyéthanol dans les produits destinés aux enfants de moins de trois ans. Elles comportent une interdiction totale du phénoxyéthanol pour les produits «destinés au siège» et une nouvelle restriction de la teneur maximale de cette substance à 0,4 % pour tous les autres produits cosmétiques destinés aux enfants de moins de trois ans.

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 1223/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 30 novembre 2009 relatif aux produits cosmétiques, JO L 342 du 22.12.2009, p. 59.
([2]) L'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (ANSM).

En réponse, la Commission a publié en octobre 2013 un appel de données ([3]) sur la sécurité du phénoxyéthanol en vue d'une nouvelle évaluation de cet agent conservateur par le comité scientifique européen pour la sécurité des consommateurs de l'UE. En fonction des résultats de cet appel et des conclusions de l'avis scientifique qui s'en suivra, la Commission proposera toutes les mesures appropriées pour garantir la pleine protection des consommateurs.

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/files/pdf/cfd_phenoxy_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012173/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Baby wipes warning

The vast majority of baby wipes and cleansing lotions (94%) are potentially harmful. This is not the first time that baby wipes have been the subject of a warning. In November 2012, the National Agency for the Safety of Medicines and Health Products (Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé /ANSM) recommended that products containing phenoxyethanol should not be used. In fact laboratory tests have shown that 26 wipes and 6 lotions out of 34 widely available products tested were full of allergenic, antibacterial or antioxidant molecules which were 'toxic or even endocrine disruptors'. So no less than 94% of products tested were 'potentially harmful'. Wipes used to cleanse babies compound the risk factors. They are applied several times a day to a baby's skin which is often irritated and particularly fragile. Worse, the fact that they are not rinsed off after application has the effect of lengthening the penetration time. Also some substances suspected of being endocrine disruptors are masked behind misleading labelling.

Phenoxyethanol is a preservative with toxic effects on the liver; it is suspected of reproductive and developmental toxicity and is contained in many wipes. The toxic substances in these wipes could be particularly harmful acting as they do in the earliest stages of the child's development.

1. Faced with these results, does the Commission intend to recommend that parents should be very vigilant, should beware of these 'cosmetic convenience products' and should use traditional soaps instead as they are much less harmful?

2. Does it intend to carry out its own study?

3. As a precautionary measure could it issue a Europe-wide warning about these products?

4. Should the Commission not strengthen the regulation of these types of products? In fact the concentration of toxic agents such as phenoxyethanol is made possible by the laxity of European regulation.

5. What measures does the Commission intend to take so that manufacturers put a stop to their irresponsible practices and withdraw the many dangerous substances in their products?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(19 December 2013)

The EU Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([1]) authorises the use of Phenoxyethanol as preservative in cosmetic products for up to 1%. According to that regulation all cosmetic products placed on the EU market must be safe for human health.

Existing scientific research on Phenoxyethanol is inconsistent because research data either apply to exposure to Phenoxyethanol in isolation or to products containing high levels of this substance as ingredient.

The Commission has received assessment studies by the French authorities ([2]) which raised concern about the use of Phenoxyethanol as preservative in cosmetic products. Based on these studies, the French authorities have recently issued new recommendations for concentration of Phenoxyethanol in products destined for children under the age of three years. They contain a full ban of the Phenoxyethanol for products used in the 'diaper area' and a new 0.4% restriction for all other cosmetic products destined for children of the same age.

In response, the Commission published in October 2013 a call ([3]) for data on the safety of Phenoxyethanol in view of assessing this preservative by the EU Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety. Following the outcome of the call and depending on the conclusions of the subsequent scientific opinion, the Commission will propose all appropriate measures to ensure full protection of consumers.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59.
([2]) L'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (ANSM).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/files/pdf/cfd_phenoxy_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012174/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Cimetière de bateaux

Pour éviter la répétition du scénario du porte-avions Clémenceau, nous venons de donner notre feu vert à une nouvelle réglementation qui a pour objectif d'assurer le démantèlement des vieux navires dans des conditions ne mettant, ni la santé des travailleurs, ni l'environnement, en péril. Dans ses motivations, la nouvelle législation européenne cible d'ailleurs clairement la pratique de «l'échouage» qui consiste à abandonner ces carcasses sur les plages des pays d'Asie du sud (en majorité) où celles-ci seront découpées sans autre forme de procès, à l'aide de simples chalumeaux, par des hommes vivant dans des conditions misérables. Considérées comme des déchets dangereux en raison des substances nuisibles présentes à bord (par exemple, plomb, dioxines, amiante), ces épaves ne devraient normalement pas pouvoir être exportées vers des pays non membres de l'OCDE. Mais en pratique, cette règle n'est pas respectée par leurs propriétaires qui se tournent vers les entreprises de démantèlement prêtes à leur offrir le meilleur prix. Et, sans surprise, les acheteurs les plus à même d'offrir un tarif de rachat attrayant sont ceux qui réalisent des économies sur le dos de leurs ouvriers et de l'environnement.

Le nouveau cadre européen entend en quelque sorte anticiper les dispositions de la convention de Hong Kong. Adopté en 2009, cet accord international vise à assurer «un recyclage sûr et économiquement rationnel des navires», mais il n'entrera pas en vigueur avant plusieurs années, les pays ne se précipitant pas vraiment pour le signer et le ratifier. En outre, cette convention n'exclut pas formellement la pratique de l'échouage.

Alors que l'on s'attend à une augmentation du nombre de bateaux mis au rebut dans les années à venir, les règles européennes prévoient notamment que ce démantèlement soit pratiqué sur des sites de recyclage agréés et régulièrement contrôlés par les autorités nationales, si ces installations se trouvent en Europe, ou par des contrôleurs indépendants, s'il s'agit de pays tiers. Ces infrastructures devront démontrer leur capacité à gérer les matières dangereuses et les déchets produits tout au long du processus de démontage, en empêchant entre autres les infiltrations dans les sols.

Un bémol, mais il est de taille: ces dispositions ne concernent que les navires battant pavillon européen. Ceux-ci devront néanmoins faire l'objet d'inspections quinquennales après leur mise en service. À l'inverse, tous les bateaux, quelle que soit leur provenance, devront dresser et tenir à jour un listing des matériaux dangereux présents à bord et présenter celui-ci lorsqu'ils accèdent aux ports européens. Les sanctions en cas d'infraction seront du ressort des États membres.

Que pense la Commission d'un fonds alimenté par une taxe prélevée lors de chaque escale dans un port de l'Union européenne afin de financer des infrastructures de recyclage sûres? Quelles sont les autres propositions imaginées ou examinées par la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(16 décembre 2013)

Dans l'analyse d'impact qui accompagne sa proposition concernant le nouveau règlement relatif au recyclage des navires ([1]) à, la Commission a examiné la possibilité de création d'un fonds pour le démantèlement des navires (voir pp. 107 et 108) ([2]) à et s'est référée à une étude antérieure sur le sujet. Toutefois, cette option n'a pas été retenue dans la proposition.

L'article 29 du nouveau règlement relatif au recyclage des navires, tel qu'il a été adopté par les colégislateurs (mais non encore publié au Journal officiel), invite la Commission à élaborer, au plus tard trois ans après l'entrée en vigueur du règlement, un rapport sur la faisabilité d'un instrument financier qui faciliterait le recyclage sûr et écologiquement rationnel des navires, accompagné, le cas échéant, d'une proposition législative.

Afin de préparer ledit rapport, la Commission a l'intention de lancer une étude de faisabilité. Celle-ci doit permettre à la Commission de définir les options envisageables et de formuler son avis sur la question.

([1]) SWD(2012) 47 final du 23.3.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/ships/pdf/Impact%20Assessment.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012174/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Ships' graveyard

To avoid any repetition of the Clémenceau aircraft-carrier scenario, we have approved a new regulation aimed at ensuring that dismantling of old ships is carried out in conditions which do not endanger workers' health or the environment. The motivations of the new European legislation are clearly to target the practice of 'beaching' which consists of abandoning these hulks on South Asian beaches for them to be cut up without further ado by men living in wretched conditions, using simple blowtorches. Theses wrecks should not normally be exported to non-OECD countries as they are considered as hazardous waste because of the harmful substances on board (e.g. lead, dioxins, asbestos). In practice however this rule is not observed by the ship owners who resort to dismantlers prepared to quote them the best price. There is no surprise that the buyers best able to quote an attractive repurchase rate are those who make cost savings at the expense of their workers and the environment.

To some extent the new European framework is intended to bring into force an early implementation of the requirements of the Hong Kong Convention. This international agreement, adopted in 2009, aims to ensure 'the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships', but it will not take effect for several years as countries are really in no hurry to sign and ratify it. Also, the Convention does not explicitly forbid the practice of beaching.

While an increase in the number of ships scrapped is expected in coming years, the European rules provide in particular for dismantling to be carried out at recycling sites certified and regularly inspected by national agencies if these facilities are in Europe, or by independent inspectors in third countries. These infrastructures need to demonstrate that they can manage hazardous materials and the waste produced throughout the disassembly process and prevent infiltrations into the soil amongst other things.

One substantial disadvantage: these provisions only apply to ships flying EU flags. These will need to be inspected every five years after entering service. On the other hand all ships, no matter where they come from, must maintain an updated inventory of hazardous materials on board, which they must present when calling at European ports. Penalties for non-compliance are to be set by Member States.

What does the Commission think of having a fund raised through a tax levied on each stay in a European Union port to finance safe recycling infrastructure? What other proposals has the Commission thought of or looked into?

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

The impact assessment accompanying the proposal of the Commission for the new Regulation on Ship Recycling ([1]) addressed the feasibility of establishing a 'ship dismantling fund' (see pp. 107-108) ([2]) and referred to a previous study on this. However this option was not included in the proposal.

Article 29 of the new Regulation on ship recycling as adopted by the colegislators (but not yet published in the Official Journal) invites the Commission to produce — at the latest three years after entry into force of the regulation — a report on the feasibility of a financial instrument that would facilitate safe and sound ship recycling. The Commission shall, if appropriate, accompany the report by a legislative proposal.

In order to prepare the said report, the Commission intends to launch a feasibility study. The study should allow the Commission to identify the options available and to form its opinion on this issue.

([1]) SWD(2012) 47 final of 23.3.2012.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/ships/pdf/Impact%20Assessment.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012175/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Accords UE-Canada

Le président de la Commission a déclaré, sur son compte Twitter, «espérer conclure rapidement» les négociations. Car elles furent longues, ces négociations, entamées en mai 2009. Européens et Canadiens auront surtout buté sur des contentieux agricoles, comme la question des produits laitiers et l'ouverture du marché européen au bœuf canadien. Le plafond proposé par l'Union européenne pour la viande a ainsi longtemps été jugé insuffisant du côté canadien. Un sujet très sensible pour les éleveurs européens déjà sous pression.

Qu'en est-il?

Le Canada va-t-il éliminer les barrières tarifaires sur 98 % de ses importations en provenance de l'Union européenne comme convenu plus tôt?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(16 décembre 2013)

Le premier ministre canadien, M. Harper, et le président de la Commission, M. Barroso, sont parvenus à un accord politique sur les éléments essentiels de l'accord économique et commercial global entre le Canada et l'UE, le 18 octobre 2013, à Bruxelles.

En ce qui concerne l'accès au marché dans le domaine de l'agriculture, et plus particulièrement pour les produits jugés sensibles, tels que les produits laitiers pour le Canada et la viande bovine et porcine pour l'Union européenne, il a été convenu que tout nouvel accès au marché serait accordé sous la forme de contingents tarifaires. L'accord sur les produits laitiers porte sur 18 500 tonnes de fromage — dont 1 700 tonnes de fromage industriel — et constitue une concession sans précédent du Canada à l'égard d'un partenaire commercial.

En ce qui concerne la libéralisation tarifaire, la Commission est en mesure de confirmer que le Canada va éliminer les barrières tarifaires sur presque 99 % de ses lignes tarifaires vis-à-vis de l'Union européenne.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012175/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: EU-Canada agreements

On his Twitter feed, the Commission President said that he 'hope[s] to conclude soon' the lengthy negotiations which began in May 2009. The Europeans and Canadians have struggled above all with contentious agricultural issues, such as that of dairy products and the opening up of the European market to Canadian beef. The European Union's proposed ceiling for meat has long been considered inadequate by the Canadians. This is a very sensitive matter for European livestock farmers, who are already under pressure.

What is the current situation with regard to this point?

Will Canada remove the tariff barriers on 98% of its imports from the European Union as agreed earlier?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

Canadian Prime Minister Harper and Commission President Barroso reached a political agreement on the key elements for a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the EU on 18 October 2013 in Brussels.

As regards market access on agriculture, and more particularly products considered sensitive, such as dairy for Canada and beef and pork for the EU, it has been agreed that new market access will be granted in the form of tariff rate quotas. The agreement on dairy amounts to 18.500 t of cheese — of which 1.700 t of industrial cheese — and constitutes an unprecedented concession from Canada to any trade partner.

As regards tariff liberalisation by Canada, the Commission can confirm that Canada will remove tariffs on almost 99% of tariff lines vis-à-vis the EU.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012176/13
do Komisji
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(24 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Działanie i możliwość egzekwowania europejskiego nakazu aresztowania

15 Lipca 2013 r. obywatel Grecji (ojciec, pozbawiony przez polski sąd prawomocnym wyrokiem praw rodzicielskich) uprowadził z Polski znajdującego się pod pełną władzą rodzicielską matki (obywatelki Polski) ich 7-letniego syna.

Polski sąd wydał europejski nakaz aresztowania ojca dziecka . Porywacz po ok. 3 miesiącach od zdarzenia został niedawno zatrzymany w Grecji przez tamtejsza policję, a następnie wypuszczony za kaucją, mimo iż odmówił wskazania miejsca, gdzie przebywa dziecko.

Policja grecka nie poinformowała odpowiednich polskich władz o zatrzymaniu, mimo iż była do tego zobligowana na mocy europejskiego nakazu aresztowania. Ponadto pomimo posiadania informacji o miejscu pobytu porywacza, nie chce ich udzielić ani matce, która jest jedynym prawnym opiekunem chłopca, ani polskim organom ścigania. Greckie władze nie podejmują działań koordynujących pracę z polską policją. Matka chłopca, po wizycie w greckiej prowadzącej sprawę prokuraturze, otrzymała informację, iż nikt nie poszukuje jej dziecka.

Chciałabym zapytać Komisję, jakie są zobowiązania stron w przypadku wydania europejskiego nakazu aresztowania oraz jakie są konsekwencje ich zaniedbania? Jakie Komisja przewiduje sankcje dla państw członkowskich nieprzestrzegających zobowiązań wynikających z europejskiego nakazu aresztowania?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Viviane Reding w imieniu Komisji
(20 grudnia 2013 r.)

Celem europejskiego nakazu aresztowania (ENA) jest ułatwienie wydania wskazanej osoby, tak aby mogła zostać osądzona za domniemane przestępstwo w państwie składającym wniosek. Kwestia zatrzymania po aresztowaniu na mocy ENA należy całkowicie do kompetencji organu sądowego państwa wykonującego ENA zgodnie z jego prawem krajowym. Decyzja ramowa w sprawie ENA ([1]) nie reguluje spraw takich jak kwestia miejsca pobytu rzekomo uprowadzonego dziecka, która została podniesiona w tym przypadku.

W odniesieniu do kwestii miejsca pobytu rzekomo uprowadzonego dziecka rozporządzenie Rady (WE) 2201/2003 dotyczące jurysdykcji oraz uznawania i wykonywania orzeczeń w sprawach małżeńskich oraz w sprawach dotyczących odpowiedzialności rodzicielskiej ustanawia między innymi wspólne zasady dotyczące uprowadzenia dziecka przez jednego z rodziców na terytorium UE („rozporządzenie Bruksela II bis"). Organy centralne wyznaczone na mocy wspomnianego rozporządzenia (art. 53-55) mogą gromadzić i wymieniać informacje na temat sytuacji uprowadzonego dziecka.

W omawianym przypadku małżonek, który posiada pełne prawa do opieki nad dzieckiem, powinien zwrócić się do właściwych organów państwa członkowskiego, które było miejscem zwykłego pobytu dziecka bezpośrednio przed bezprawnym zabraniem lub przetrzymywaniem – w tym przypadku do odpowiedniego polskiego sądu, w celu uzyskania orzeczenia na podstawie art. 11 rozporządzenia Bruksela II bis i odzyskania dziecka.

([1]) Dz.U. L 190 z 18.7.2002, s. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012176/13
to the Commission
Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Functioning of the European Arrest Warrant and opportunities for its enforcement

On 15 July 2013, a Greek citizen took his son out of Poland despite having had his parental rights lawfully terminated by a Polish court and even though the child's mother, a Polish citizen, has full parental custody.

The Polish court subsequently issued a European Arrest Warrant for the father. The kidnapper was recently detained in Greece by the local police, around three months after the abduction, but was released on bail even though he refused to provide any information on the child's whereabouts.

The Greek police failed to inform the relevant Polish authorities about the arrest, in contravention of their obligations under the European Arrest Warrant. What is more, they have refused to inform either the mother, as the boy's sole legal guardian, or the Polish law-enforcement agencies of the kidnapper's place of residence. Greek authorities are not taking any steps to coordinate activities with the Polish police. When the boy's mother visited the Greek public prosecutor's office in charge of the case, she was told that no one was looking for her child.

Can the Commission state the obligations incumbent upon the various parties following the issuing of a European Arrest Warrant, and the consequences of failing to discharge these obligations? What sanctions does the Commission plan to impose on Member States which fail to discharge their obligations under the European Arrest Warrant?

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

The purpose of the European arrest warrant (EAW) is to facilitate the surrender of a requested person in order that they can be tried for the alleged criminal offence in the requesting state. The issue of detention subsequent to arrest pursuant to an EAW arrest is entirely within the competence of the judicial authority in the executing state according to their domestic law. The framework Decision on the EAW ([1]) does not govern the issues such as the location of an allegedly abducted child, as has arisen in this case.

Concerning the issue of locating an allegedly abducted child, Council Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 concerning jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and the matters of parental responsibility, establishes *inter alia* common rules on parental child abduction within the EU ('the Brussels IIa regulation'). The Central Authorities designated under the regulation (Articles 53-55) may collect and exchange information on the situation of the abducted child.

In the case at stake, the spouse, who has full custody rights, is advised to apply to the competent authorities in the Member State where the child was habitually resident immediately before the wrongful removal or retention, in casu the competent Polish Court, to obtain a judgment on the basis of Article 11 of the Brussels IIa regulation in order to obtain the return of the child.

([1]) OJ L190/1 18.7.2002.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012177/13
adresată Comisiei
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(24 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Sectorul vitivinicol

În viitoarea reformă din sectorul vitivinicol, nu există o strategie concretă pentru a îmbunătăți protejarea indicațiilor geografice europene la scară internațională, iar uzurpările în detrimentul vinurilor europene DOP și IGP continuă.

În ceea ce privește acordurile bilaterale de liber schimb, trebuie recunoscute și protejate toate indicațiile geografice europene, nu doar cele mai importante.

Politica privind calitatea nu trebuie să se limiteze la produsele DOP și IGP, ci trebuie să includă, de asemenea, vinurile de marcă și cele cu denumire de soi, „întrucât consumatorii le recunosc ca fiind produse de calitate".

În contextul deschiderii piețelor, aceste specificități sunt puncte forte pe care sectorul vitivinicol european trebuie să se poată baza pentru a-și spori competitivitatea pe plan internațional, permițându-le agricultorilor și cooperativelor acestora să obțină de pe piață compensații pe măsura eforturilor depuse.

Ținând cont de faptul că politica privind calitatea vinurilor trebuie concepută ca un instrument în serviciul agricultorilor și al cooperativelor agricole din Europa, are în vedere Comisia măsuri concrete care să îi protejeze pe viticultori și care să le permită să informeze consumatorii cu privire la caracteristicile specifice ale produselor pe care le comercializează, în speță cele referitoare la originea geografică?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(3 decembrie 2013)

Reforma PAC care urmează să fie adoptată respectă orientarea stabilită în cadrul reformei sectorului vitivinicol din 2008, care a instituit în Uniunea Europeană cele mai înalte standarde în materie de protecție a denumirilor de origine protejată (DOP) și a indicațiilor geografice protejate (IGP).

În ceea ce privește țările terțe, strategia Comisiei este de a obține protecție internațională pentru toate DOP/IGP, după cum reiese din numeroase acorduri bilaterale recente, de exemplu cu Georgia, Moldova și alte țări terțe, în curs de adoptare. Cu toate acestea, în ceea ce privește multe țări terțe reticente, Comisia a trebuit să adopte o abordare pragmatică, acordând prioritate protecției celor mai amenințate DOP/IGP. Această strategie are ca obiectiv sporirea protecției denumirilor și indicațiilor care sunt cel mai des contrafăcute în țările terțe. Chiar și în cazul în care numai DOP/IGP incluse pe liste restrânse sunt inițial protejate, acordurile prevăd un mecanism pentru a adăuga noi denumiri pe liste. În plus, aceste liste restrânse sunt realizate de comun acord cu statele membre în cauză.

Deși reforma actuală a PAC va permite o mai bună organizare a coexistenței dintre DOP/IGP și mărcile comerciale, protecția mărcilor comerciale nu intră în domeniul său de aplicare.

Reforma PAC care urmează să fie adoptată menține posibilitatea de a finanța acțiuni de promovare în țări terțe a vinurilor cu DOP/IGP sau a vinurilor cu denumiri de soiuri, cu posibilitatea de a promova mărci. Aceste măsuri concrete au ca scop consolidarea vandabilității și a competitivității produselor vitivinicole din UE și informarea consumatorilor cu privire la caracteristicile specifice ale produselor care beneficiază de o DOP/IGP. De asemenea, reforma extinde măsurile de promovare a vinurilor la piața internă a Uniunii Europene, pentru a informa consumatorii cu privire la sistemele Uniunii referitoare la DOP/IGP și nu numai.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012177/13
to the Commission
Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: The wine sector

In the future reform of the wine sector, there is no concrete strategy to improve the protection of European geographical indications internationally, while usurpations continue to the detriment of protected designation of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indication (PGI) European wines.

As for bilateral free trade agreements, all European geographical indications must be recognised and protected, not only the most important.

Policy concerning quality should not be limited to PDO and PGI products, but should also include wine brands and the variety denomination, 'since consumers recognise them as being quality products'.

In the context of opening up the markets, these specificities are strengths that the European wine sector must be able to rely on to enhance international competition, enabling farmers and their cooperatives to obtain compensation from the market according to the effort put in.

Given that policy concerning the quality of wine should be designed as an instrument to aid farmers and agricultural cooperatives in Europe, what concrete measures is the Commission intending to take to protect wine growers and enable them to inform consumers about the specific characteristics of the products they are marketing, namely those relating to geographical origin?

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

The CAP reform to be adopted respects the orientation taken in the 2008 wine reform, which established the highest standards in terms of protection of designations of origin (PDO) and geographical indications (PGI) in the European Union.

Concerning third countries, the strategy of the Commission is to obtain international protection for all PDO/PGI as evidenced by several of our recent bilateral agreements, e.g. with Georgia, Moldova and various other third countries in the process of being adopted. However, as regards many reluctant third countries, the Commission had to adopt a pragmatic approach by giving the priority to the protection of the most threatened PDO/PGI. This strategy aims at fostering the protection of those names which are the most infringed in third countries. Even in cases where only shortlists of PDO/PGI are initially protected, the agreements foresee a mechanism to add further names to the list. Moreover, these shortlists are done in agreement with the concerned Member States.

Even though the current CAP reform will better organise the coexistence between PDO/PGI and trademarks, the protection of trademarks is not within its scope.

The CAP reform to be adopted keeps the possibility to finance promotion measures concerning wines with PDO/PGI or varietal wines in third countries, with the possibility to promote brand names. These concrete measures aim at increasing the marketability and competitiveness of Union grapevine products and informing consumers about the specific characteristics of the products bearing a PDO/PGI. The reform also extends promotion measures concerning wines to the internal market of the European Union with a view to informing consumers about, among others, the Union systems covering PDO/PGI.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-012178/13
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(24 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: W sprawie promocji ideologii gender

Rządy państw członkowskich Unii Europejskiej w tym rząd RP opracowują nowe Programy Operacyjne, które mają określić sposób wdrożenia środków europejskich w ramach budżetu unijnego na lata 2014-2020.

Jednocześnie Instytucje Europejskie, w tym Parlament Europejski oraz Komisja Europejska, wzmogły działania propagujące podejście dla wielu spraw z perspektywy genderowej.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z pytaniem, czy prawdą jest, że w nowym okresie programowania beneficjent w realizowanych przez siebie projektach o charakterze społecznym, będzie musiał wykazać konkretne działania, które mają za cel realizację polityki równościowej opartej o definicję płci kulturowo-społecznej, tj. zgodnej z koncepcją gender?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(21 listopada 2013 r.)

Komisja zapewnia podejście dwukierunkowe: integrację horyzontalną równouprawnienia płci wymaganą Traktatem należy uzupełnić o specjalne środki. Ramy prawne europejskich funduszy strukturalnych i inwestycyjnych (ESIF) na lata 2014-2020 koncentrują się na równouprawnieniu płci oraz strategii uwzględniania aspektu płci bardziej niż w poprzednich okresach finansowania. W szczególności ramy te obejmują przepisy zobowiązujące państwa członkowskie do zagwarantowania, że równość kobiet i mężczyzn oraz perspektywa płci będą brane pod uwagę i akcentowane w trakcie przygotowania, realizacji, monitorowania i oceny programów. Państwa członkowskie podejmują również odpowiednie kroki w celu zapobiegania wszelkiej dyskryminacji ze względu na płeć i zapewnienia potencjału administracyjnego w celu wdrożenia i stosowania prawa i polityki UE na rzecz równości płci w zakresie ESIF. Ponadto każdy program operacyjny zawiera opis konkretnych działań w celu promowania równych szans i zapobiegania wszelkiej dyskryminacji ze względu na płeć.

Rozporządzenie w sprawie EFS zawiera obszerne wymogi co do połączenia zdecydowanego podejścia i ukierunkowanych działań szczegółowych na rzecz równości płci. EFS wspiera ukierunkowane działania szczegółowe w ramach każdego z priorytetów inwestycyjnych w celu zwiększenia trwałego udziału kobiet w zatrudnieniu i rozwoju ich kariery, takie jak zwalczanie feminizacji ubóstwa, ograniczenie segregacji ze względu na płeć, promowanie godzenia pracy i życia prywatnego dla wszystkich.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012178/13
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Promoting gender ideology

The governments of the Member States, including the Polish Government, are currently drawing up new operational programmes to implement the European funding available in the period 2014-2020.

At the same time, the European institutions, including Parliament and the Commission, have stepped up measures promoting gender mainstreaming.

Is it true that in the new programming period, beneficiaries implementing projects of a social character will have to demonstrate that they are taking specific action aimed at implementing equality policies based on the socio-cultural definition of gender that underpins the gender mainstreaming approach?

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

The Commission pursues to ensure a dual approach: horizontal integration of gender equality required by the Treaty needs to be complemented by specific measures. The legislative framework for the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2014-2020 focuses on gender equality and the gender mainstreaming strategy more than in previous funding periods. In particular, the framework includes provisions requiring Member States to ensure that equality between men and women, and the integration of a gender perspective are taken into account and promoted throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. Member States shall also take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based on sex and ensure the existence of administrative capacity for the implementation and application of EU gender equality law and policy in the field of ESIF. Moreover, each operational programme shall include a description of specific actions with the aim of promoting equal opportunities and preventing any discrimination based on sex.

The ESF Regulation includes a comprehensive requirement for a combination of a robust mainstreaming approach and targeted specific actions for gender equality, The ESF shall support specific targeted actions within any of the investment priorities with the aim of increasing the sustainable participation and progress of women in employment, such as combating the feminisation of poverty, reducing gender-based segregation, promoting reconciliation of work and personal life for all.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012180/13
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Charles Tannock (ECR) e Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(24 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Estensione dell'applicazione della sharia nel Sultanato del Brunei

Il 22 ottobre 2013 è stato annunciato che, a partire dal mese di aprile 2014, il Sultanato del Brunei estenderà l'applicazione della legge islamica al suo interno. Nel Brunei la sharia regola attualmente questioni inerenti alla famiglia, come il matrimonio e la successione, ma a seguito del recente annuncio coprirà anche la materia penale. È stato tuttavia precisato che il nuovo codice si applicherà solo ai cittadini musulmani.

I 400 000 abitanti del Brunei, due terzi dei quali sono musulmani, vivono già in uno degli ordinamenti giuridici più severi della regione, un sistema che proibisce la vendita e il consumo di alcol. Se i cambiamenti annunciati saranno effettivamente introdotti, i cittadini saranno lapidati per adulterio, subiranno amputazioni degli arti per il reato di furto e la fustigazione per reati come l'aborto.

Il sultano del Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah, ha dichiarato pubblicamente che «è per il nostro bisogno che Allah l'Onnipotente, in tutta la sua generosità, ha creato leggi per noi, in modo che possiamo utilizzarle per ottenere giustizia». Mentre funzionari del Brunei da sempre dichiarano che i giudici godono di un certo potere discrezionale per quanto riguarda le sentenze, un portavoce di «Human Rights Watch» ha affermato che il recente annuncio dimostra che nel Brunei il rispetto dei diritti civili e politici fondamentali è pressoché pari a zero.

1. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rilasciare una dichiarazione pubblica sul cambiamento del codice penale nel Brunei?

2. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante affrontare la questione con le autorità del Brunei, tenuto conto del fatto che il Paese è firmatario dell'Accordo UE-ASEAN del 1980?

3. Intende il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante ricordare alle autorità del Brunei gli obblighi che incombono loro in virtù della Carta ASEAN del 2008 per quanto attiene alla difesa del rispetto dei diritti umani?

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

L'UE è al corrente del fatto che il 22 ottobre scorso il Sultanato del Brunei ha introdotto un nuovo codice penale basato sulla Sharia la cui entrata in vigore è prevista dopo sei mesi e che sarà applicato progressivamente in tre fasi, l'ultima delle quali inizierà dopo 24 mesi dalla pubblicazione del codice come atto legislativo. L'AR/VP sta raccogliendo ulteriori informazioni sulle modalità di applicazione del nuovo codice visto che, a quanto risulta, i relativi orientamenti di applicazione sarebbero ancora in fase di elaborazione.

L'UE rifletterà sull'opportunità di rilasciare una dichiarazione pubblica una volta chiarite le condizioni di applicazione del codice penale basato sulla Sharia.

L'UE è al corrente del fatto che la Carta dell'Associazione delle nazioni del sud-est asiatico (ASEAN) del 2008 contiene un riferimento al rispetto e alla tutela dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali. L'UE coglierà tutte le occasioni per ricordare al Brunei i suoi obblighi in conformità della Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo, della Carta dell'ASEAN e della Dichiarazione sui diritti umani dell'ASEAN, il cui articolo 14 vieta il ricorso alla tortura e ad altre pene o trattamenti crudeli, inumani o degradanti. La Commissione ritiene che spetti anche agli Stati membri dell'ASEAN rammentare al Brunei i suoi obblighi in quanto firmatario della Carta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012180/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR) and Fiorello Provera (EFD)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Sultanate of Brunei to extend use of Sharia law

On 22 October 2013 it was widely reported that the Sultanate of Brunei is to extend the use of Sharia law within the country as of April 2014. Sharia law is currently exercised in Brunei for family matters such as marriage and inheritance, but this latest proclamation will see its mandate extended to cover criminal matters. It has been stressed, however, that the new code will only apply to the country's Muslim citizens.

Brunei's 400 000-strong population, of whom around two thirds are Muslim, already live under one of the region's strictest Islamic legal systems — a system which sees the sale and consumption of alcohol banned. If the proposed changes go ahead, citizens could be stoned for adultery, have limbs amputated for theft, and face flogging for offences such as abortion.

In a public statement, the Sultan of Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah, said that 'it is because of our need that Allah the Almighty, in all his generosity, has created laws for us, so that we can utilise them to obtain justice'. Whilst Brunei officials have historically stated that judges enjoy the right of discretion on the issue of sentencing, a spokesman for Human Rights Watch has said that this latest announcement illustrates that 'respect for basic civil and political rights is near zero in Brunei'.

1. Will the Vice-President/High Representative make a public statement on this change to Brunei's penal code?

2. Does the VP/HR plan to raise this matter with the Brunei authorities, bearing in mind the country's status as a signatory to the EU-ASEAN Agreement of 1980?

3. Will the VP/HR remind the Brunei authorities of their obligations, under the 2008 ASEAN Charter, to uphold respect for human rights?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The EU is aware that the Sultanate of Brunei announced a new Sharia Penal Code on 22 October which, it was indicated, would come into force after six months and will be applied progressively in three phases, with the final phase entering into force 24 months after the Code was gazetted. The HR/VP is currently in the process of gathering further information on how the new code would be applied, as we understand that implementing guidelines are still under preparation.

The EU will consider the need for issuing a public statement once the conditions for applying the Sharia Penal Code have become clear.

The EU is aware that the 2008 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Charter contains a reference to respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU will use available opportunities to remind Brunei of its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ASEAN Charter and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, which under Article 14 states that 'no person shall be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.' The Commission is of the opinion that it would also be up to ASEAN Member States themselves to remind Brunei of its obligations under the Charter.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012181/13
an die Kommission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(24. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Vorschlag für eine Verordnung über die Erzeugung von Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial und dessen Bereitstellung auf dem Markt (Saatgutverordnung)

1. In der Sitzung des Ausschusses für Landwirtschaft und ländliche Entwicklung des Parlaments vom 30. September 2013 berichtete Eric Poudelet (Kommission, GD SANCO), dass 70 % der Saatguterzeuger in der EU kleine oder mittlere landwirtschaftliche Betriebe sind. Kann die Kommission nähere Angaben zu der Datenbank machen, aus der diese Information stammt?

2. Viele Bürger wollen sich aktiv am Schutz und an der Verbreitung althergebrachter Sorten sowie an der Erhaltung der biologischen Vielfalt beteiligen. Oft haben die Bürger keine andere Wahl als Samen und Pflanzen beispielsweise auf lokalen Märkten zu kaufen und zu verkaufen. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass dies gemäß der von ihr vorgeschlagenen neuen Verordnung auch in Zukunft noch legal ist?

3. Heutzutage tragen Landwirte durch den Austausch von Samen und Pflanzen erheblich zum Schutz und zur Verbreitung althergebrachter Sorten sowie zur Erhaltung der biologischen Vielfalt bei. Dieser Austausch ist nur möglich, wenn die Landwirte die Erstattung ihrer Ausgaben beantragen können. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass dies gemäß der von ihr vorgeschlagenen neuen Verordnung auch in Zukunft noch legal ist?

4. Wie wird die Kommission die Rechte der Landwirte bezüglich der erneuten Aussaat von Samen auf ihren landwirtschaftlichen Betrieben schützen?

5. Für den ökologischen Landbau ist es von entscheidender Bedeutung, die angewandten Zuchtmethoden und -techniken zu kennen. Wie wird die Kommission angesichts von Artikel 75 zur Vertraulichkeit sicherstellen, dass Biolandwirte Zugang zu den notwendigen Informationen erhalten?

Antwort von Herrn Borg im Namen der Kommission
(17. Dezember 2013)

1. Der Kommission sind keine Studien mit fundierten Daten zum Anteil der KMU am EU-Markt für Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial bekannt. Einer jüngsten Studie des Europäischen Parlaments ([1]) zufolge haben die KMU jedoch nach wie vor einen großen Anteil am EU-Saatgutsektor (beispielsweise stellen sie bei den italienischen Saatgutunternehmen die überwältigende Mehrheit dar), auch wenn es — je nach Größe des Unternehmens (Umsatz, Beschäftigtenzahl), Pflanzenportfolio, erfasstem geografischen Gebiet und durchgeführten Tätigkeiten — sehr große Unterschiede gibt. Im Bereich Pflanzkartoffeln und Zuckerrüben sind keine multinationalen Unternehmen tätig, ein einziges Unternehmen kann aber Eigentümer einer großen Zahl von Marken sein. Auch bei Getreide ist der Anteil der multinationalen Unternehmen gering. Im Gegenzug dazu handelt es sich bei den wichtigsten in den Bereichen Strohgetreide, Mais, Sonnenblumen und Rapssamen tätigen Unternehmen überwiegend um multinationale Unternehmen ([2]).

2. In Artikel 36 des Vorschlagsentwurfs sind Abweichungen von den Registrierungsanforderungen im Fall von für Nischenmärkte bestimmtem Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial festgelegt. Personen, die keine Unternehmer sind, sowie bestimmte Unternehmer dürfen solches Material auf dem Markt bereitstellen, wenn die Bedingungen des genannten Artikels erfüllt sind.

3. Gemäß Artikel 2 Buchstabe d des Vorschlagsentwurfs ist der Austausch von Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial durch andere Personen als Unternehmer vom Anwendungsbereich der Verordnung ausgeschlossen.

4. Mit der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2100/94 des Rates über den gemeinschaftlichen Sortenschutz wurde eine Ausnahmeregelung geschaffen, nach der Landwirte unter bestimmten Bedingungen in ihrem eigenen Betrieb selbstgezogenes Saatgut geschützter Sorten verwenden dürfen. Die Kommission schlägt nicht vor, diese Regelung abzuschaffen. Was den Ertrag nicht geschützter Sorten anbelangt, so wird die vorgeschlagene Verordnung über Pflanzenvermehrungsmaterial nicht die Möglichkeit berühren, dass Landwirte diesen zur Wiederbepflanzung in ihrem eigenen Betrieb nutzen.

5. Der Vorschlagsentwurf enthält keine Bestimmungen über Zuchtverfahren oder -techniken.

([1]) Europäisches Parlament, Study on The EU Seed and Plant Reproductive Material (PRM) Market in Perspective — A focus on companies and market shares (Brüssel, 21. November 2013).
([2]) Europäisches Parlament, 21. November 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012181/13
to the Commission
Martin Häusling (Verts/ALE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Proposal for a regulation on the production and making available on the market of plant reproductive material (plant reproductive material law)

1. At the meeting of Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development held on 30 September 2013, it was reported by Eric Poudelet, of the Commission's DG Sanco, that 70% of breeders in the EU are small or medium-sized farmers. Can the Commission provide details of the database from which this information was taken?

2. Many citizens want to be active in saving and disseminating old varieties and preserving biodiversity. Often citizens have no other choice than to sell and buy seeds and plants, for example at local markets. Does the Commission think that under the new legislation it is proposing, such actions will still be considered legal in the future?

3. Today farmers make an important contribution in terms of saving and disseminating old varieties and preserving biodiversity by exchanging their seeds and plants. Such exchange is only practicable if farmers are allowed to ask for a refund of their expenses. Does the Commission think that under the new legislation it is proposing, these actions also will still be considered legal in the future?

4. How does the Commission intend to safeguard farmers' rights as regards replanting seeds on their farms?

5. For the organic farming sector it is fundamental to be aware of the breeding methods and techniques in use. How does the Commission intend to ensure that organic farmers have access to the necessary information in view of Article 75 on confidentiality?

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

1. There are no studies known to the Commission providing solid data on the share of SMEs in the EU market for plant reproductive material, but according to a recent study of the EP ([1]), SMEs still represent a high share of the EU seed sector (for example, they represent the overwhelming majority of Italy's seed companies), although the situation is highly diversified, according to their size (turnover, number of employees), crops portfolio, geographical area covered and activities carried out. In seed potatoes and sugar beet no multinational companies are active, although a single company may own a large number of brands. Also in cereals, the share of multinationals is small. On straw cereals, maize, sunflower and rapeseed on the contrary the main seed companies are mainly multinationals ([2]).

2. Article 36 of the draft proposal establishes a derogation from registration requirements for niche-market material. Any person other than professional operators and some professional operators can make such material available on the market if the conditions of that article are fulfilled.

3. Article 2(d) of the draft proposal excludes the exchange in kind of plant reproductive material between persons other than professional operators from the scope of the regulation.

4. Council Regulation (EC) No2100/94 on Community Plant Variety Rights establishes a derogation for farmers to use, on their own holding, farm saved seed of protected varieties under certain conditions. The Commission is not proposing to abolish this principle. Concerning the harvest of seed of non-protected varieties, the proposed Regulation on plant reproductive material will not affect the possibility for farmers to replant them on their own farm.

5. The draft proposal does not include any provisions concerning breeding methods or techniques.

([1]) European Parliament, Study on The EU Seed and Plant Reproductive Material (PRM) Market in Perspective — A focus on companies and market shares (Brussels, 21 November 2013).
([2]) European Parliament, 21 November 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012184/13
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(24 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Armonizzazione delle autorizzazioni per i prodotti fitosanitari

L'articolo 53 del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 prevede, in situazioni di emergenza fitosanitaria, la possibilità per gli Stati membri di autorizzare l'immissione sul mercato di prodotti fitosanitari per un uso limitato e controllato.

La disposizione normativa sopra citata prevede un'eccessiva discrezionalità nell'utilizzo delle autorizzazioni ed una scarsa armonizzazione delle stesse su scala europea. Ciò rischia concretamente di creare vantaggi competitivi per alcuni paesi dell'UE e una conseguente distorsione sul mercato europeo dei prodotti ortofrutticoli. In base alle autorizzazioni dell'articolo 53, si verifica infatti che alcuni principi attivi/agrofarmaci possono essere utilizzati su determinate colture in alcuni paesi dell'Unione mentre in altri restano vietati.

L'Italia, a differenza di paesi concorrenti sul mercato ortofrutticolo quali la Francia, non ha l'autorizzazione per l'utilizzo del geodisinfestante 1,3 dicloropropene per difendere le produzioni di carote dai nematodi. Sempre in Italia, gli antiossidanti storicamente utilizzati su pomacee (Etossichina e Difenilammina) non sono più autorizzati dalla normativa vigente, mentre in Spagna e Portogallo è stata concessa l'autorizzazione all'uso straordinario sulle pere della molecola Etossichina anche per l'annata 2013/2014 (articolo 53 del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009). La gestione differente di tali autorizzazioni da parte dei vari paesi europei sta dunque creando distorsioni di concorrenza a livello europeo.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

È a conoscenza del fenomeno descritto e ha valutato l'eventualità di rivedere il funzionamento del processo di rilascio delle autorizzazioni (di cui all'articolo 53 del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009), al fine di prevedere una gestione più armonizzata a livello europeo del sistema delle autorizzazioni e di evitare i sempre più diffusi fenomeni di distorsione di concorrenza sopra descritti?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(20 dicembre 2013)

L'articolo 53 del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 ([1]) concede agli Stati membri un alto grado di flessibilità per quanto riguarda le cosiddette «autorizzazioni di emergenza» e la sua applicazione presenta notevoli differenze tra i diversi paesi dell'UE.

In forza di tale articolo in casi eccezionali gli Stati membri possono autorizzare per non oltre centoventi giorni prodotti fitosanitari non conformi al regolamento n. 1107/2009, ove tale provvedimento appaia necessario a causa di un pericolo che non può essere contenuto in alcun altro modo ragionevole. Allo scopo di fornire una guida per l'applicazione di tali norme la Commissione ha presentato al comitato permanente per la catena alimentare e la salute degli animali un progetto di documento di orientamento riguardante l'articolo 53. Tale documento era finalizzato ad armonizzare l'attuazione dell'articolo 53 e a migliorare il sistema di notifica, in quanto esso imponeva agli Stati membri di notificare alla Commissione le motivazioni particolareggiate dell'autorizzazione e le misure attenuative applicate. Tali informazioni sarebbero state essenziali per l'esame delle autorizzazioni rilasciate dagli Stati membri ed eventualmente per l'adozione delle azioni previste dall'articolo 53, paragrafo 3, ivi compresa la richiesta di revocare o modificare il provvedimento.

Nel febbraio del 2013 la Commissione ha sottoposto il progetto di documento orientativo all'approvazione del comitato permanente. Il testo non è stato però approvato all'unanimità da tutti gli Stati membri, per cui la sua valenza attuale è quella di un documento di lavoro ([2]). Di conseguenza sono rari, tra gli Stati membri, quelli che attualmente applicano il sistema di notifica.

La Commissione continuerà a studiare le azioni più appropriate per garantire l'applicazione armonizzata dell'articolo 53, con l'obiettivo ultimo di evitare situazioni quali quelle descritte dall'Onorevole parlamentare.

([1]) GU L 309 del 24.11.2009, pag. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/approval_active_substances/docs/working_document_emergency_authorisations_article53_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012184/13
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Uniform application of authorisations for plant protection products

Article 53 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 allows Member States to authorise plant protection products to be placed on the market in emergency plant protection situations, subject to limited, controlled use.

The abovementioned legislative provision allows too much leeway in the use of these authorisations and does not provide for adequate standardisation of the authorisations at EU level. In practice, this is threatening to create a competitive advantage for some EU countries, leading to a distortion of the European fruit and vegetable market. In some countries, certain ingredients or agrochemicals are permitted on specific crops on the basis of the authorisations provided for under the abovementioned Article 53, while in others the same substances are banned.

In Italy, the use of the soil fumigant 1,3-dichloropropene to protect carrot crops against nematodes is not authorised, whereas it is in other countries competing in the fruit and vegetable market, such as France. Again in Italy, the antioxidants traditionally used on apples and pears (ethoxyquin and diphenylamine) are no longer authorised under the current regulations, while in Spain and Portugal authorisation for the exceptional use of ethoxyquin on pears was again granted for the 2013-14 season under Article 53. Variations in the way different Member States apply these authorisations is therefore creating a distortion of competition at EU level.

Is the Commission aware of the problem described above and has it assessed the possibility of reviewing the authorisation issuing procedure under Article 53 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009, with a view to creating uniform application of the authorisation system across Europe and preventing the growing problem of distortion of competition described above?

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

Article 53 of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]) provides for a high degree of flexibility to Member States as regards the so-called 'emergency authorisations' and that its application is much diversified across the EU.

According to this article, in exceptional cases Member States can authorise for maximum 120 days plant protection products not complying with Regulation (EC) No 1107/2007, when it is necessary to do so because of a danger that cannot be contained by any other reasonable means. In order to provide guidance in applying these rules, a draft guidance document on Article 53 has been submitted by the Commission to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The draft guidance aimed at harmonising the implementation of Article 53 and at improving the notification system, by requiring the Member States to submit information to the Commission on the detailed reasons for granting the authorisation and the mitigation measures applied. Such type of information would be essential in reviewing the authorisations issued by Member States and, if necessary, taking any actions as provided for in Article 53(3), including a request to withdraw or amend the authorisation.

In February 2013, the Commission submitted the draft guidance for endorsement to the Standing Committee. The text was however not unanimously endorsed by all Member States, and as a result its status remains that of a working document ([2]). As a consequence, very few Member States are currently making use of the improved notification system.

The Commission will now further reflect on the most appropriate actions to ensure a harmonised application of Article 53, with the ultimate objective to avoid situations as those described by the Honourable Member.

([1]) OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 1.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/pesticides/approval_active_substances/docs/working_document_emergency_authorisations_article53_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012185/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Funding for environmental projects in 2014

Will the Commission make funding available to Member States in 2014 to enable them to fund nationally implemented environmental projects, such as Ireland's Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS), ahead of the implementation of the new Common Agricultural Policy? In order to make the scheme as effective as possible, we must ensure continuity, as a year-long gap could result in considerable deterioration of land quality and jeopardise the progress made by the REPS programme so far.

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

If Member States want to ensure continuity from the current rural development programming period to the next as concerns their agri-environment measures (such as REPS in Ireland), they can make use of the following transitional rules:

If the aim is to extend already existing agri-environment contracts, Article 27(12) of Regulation 1974/2006 ([1]), as amended by Regulation 335/2013 ([2]), allows the extension of agri-environment commitments until the end of the period to which the 2014 payment claim refers. This would normally be financed out of a Member State's 2007-2013 rural development financial envelope. Alternatively, Commission proposal COM(2013) 226 final ([3]) for a regulation laying down transitional provisions proposes in its Article 3 to allow payments for such an extension to be made out of a Member State's 2014-2020 financial envelope.

If the aim is to enter into new agri-environment contracts with beneficiaries, Member States have two possibilities. If there are resources left in their 2007-2013 financial envelope, these can be used for financing these new contracts. Alternatively, Commission proposal COM(2013)226 final foresees in its Article 1 to allow Member States to continue undertaking new legal commitments in 2014 pursuant to current rural development programmes even after the financial resources of the 2007-2013 programming period have been used up. Payments for such new contracts would again be possible from the 2014-2020 rural development financial envelope in accordance with Article 3 of the proposal.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 of 15 December 2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (OJ L 368, 23.12. 2006, p.15).

([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 335/2013 of 12 April 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 1974/2006 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (OJ L 105, 13.4.2013, p.1).

([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down certain transitional provisions on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and amending Regulation (EU) No [RD] as regards resources and their distribution in respect of the year 2014 and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 and Regulations (EU) No [DP], (EU) No [HZ] and (EU) No [sCMO] as regards their application in the year 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012187/13
alla Commissione
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(24 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Malattia vegetale degli ulivi in Puglia

Presentatasi in forma sporadica e inavvertibile, si è diffusa, negli ultimi mesi, in maniera gravissima ed estesa, una letale malattia vegetale degli ulivi, che si è localizzata in Puglia e in particolare nella provincia di Lecce.

L'epidemia riscontrata, che provoca l'essiccamento delle piante, si è estesa in un'area di circa 8 mila ettari colpendo decine e decine di migliaia di alberi di ulivo. A seguito degli accertamenti e delle analisi effettuate da tutti gli uffici e istituti preposti, è emerso in maniera incontrovertibile che l'infezione è originata da un batterio denominato «Xylella fastidiosa», agente particolarmente pericoloso mai individuato in Europa che ha provocato invece, in America e in Asia, malattie su varie specie di piante, tra cui vite e agrumi, causando notevolissime perdite al mondo agricolo ed economico.

La vastità dell'area e del numero delle piante colpite, nonché la rapidissima diffusione del batterio, provocano fortissima preoccupazione non solo per i danni già prodotti, ma per quelli che potrebbero derivare da un ulteriore contagio che potrebbe colpire il resto delle colture olivicole se non anche di altro tipo, in Puglia, in Italia e in Europa.

Alla luce della pericolosissima epidemia, scientificamente accertata, e degli unici rimedi indicati, consistenti nello sradicamento degli alberi colpiti e nella loro distruzione, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. quali provvedimenti intenda adottare con urgenza al fine di provvedere all'accertamento e alla verifica dell'epidemia riscontrata e, conseguentemente, quali aiuti scientifici e tecnici possano essere disposti per essere di supporto alle istituzioni locali;

2. quali misure di natura finanziaria possano essere mobilitate per tamponare con un cordone sanitario l'area colpita e provvedere allo sradicamento degli alberi infetti onde impedire la propagazione del batterio;

3. quale aiuto economico possa essere indirizzato verso i produttori colpiti da questa gravissima infezione che sta provocando ingentissimi danni economici?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012314/13
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(29 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Interventi per contrastare il batterio degli ulivi

Il batterio Xylella fastidiosa ha contaminato circa ottomila ettari di uliveti nella zona del Salento (Puglia) mettendo a rischio di sradicamento 500-600 mila alberi d'ulivo, tra cui moltissimi secolari.

Tale batterio causa il disseccamento della chioma e l'imbrunimento del legno fino alla morte definitiva della pianta.

Fino ad ora, esso non si è diffuso né in Europa né tantomeno sulle piante di ulivo, ma la sua diffusione, che si pensa veicolata da insetti cicadellidi, è molto repentina e mette a rischio l'economia e il paesaggio di un'intera Regione la cui agricoltura si basa sulla coltivazione dell'ulivo e il cui ambiente è legato alla presenza di ulivi secolari di inestimabile valore paesaggistico-naturale.

Può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza del fenomeno e cosa intende fare anche in termini di risorse finanziarie per contrastare la propagazione repentina della malattia (che potrebbe estendersi ad altre parti del territorio europeo) e per aiutare lo Stato membro interessato e gli agricoltori colpiti a fronteggiare questa crisi?

Risposta congiunta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(5 dicembre 2013)

Alla fine di ottobre, la Commissione è stata informata dalle autorità italiane dell'esistenza di un focolaio del batterio *Xyllela fastidiosa* in Puglia. Una discussione sulla necessità di misure dell'Unione europea è programmata per il 27 novembre 2013 nell'ambito del Comitato fitosanitario permanente, sulla base anche di un primo parere scientifico dell'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare.

A norma della direttiva sul regime fitosanitario UE ([1]), a determinate condizioni e per talune misure, l'Italia potrebbe ricevere un cofinanziamento dell'Unione per le spese direttamente connesse alle misure necessarie per contrastare il batterio.

Attualmente, il FEASR prevede un sostegno al ripristino del potenziale produttivo agricolo danneggiato da calamità naturali. Per beneficiare di questo sostegno, il provvedimento deve essere coperto dal PSR regionale ([2]). Se così non fosse la Regione può presentare alla Commissione una domanda di modifica del PSR che introduca il provvedimento, utilizzando i fondi disponibili o nuovi fondi a decorrere dal 2014.

L'Italia può concedere aiuti nazionali fino al 100 % per compensare le perdite causate da organismi nocivi, conformemente agli Orientamenti comunitari per gli aiuti di Stato nel settore agricolo e forestale 2007-2013 ([3]) o al regolamento 1857/2006 ([4]). L'Italia può anche accordare aiuti *de minimis* a norma del regolamento 1535/2007 ([5]).

La creazione di una banca dati europea sugli organismi patogeni delle colture per la quarantena dei vegetali è attualmente in discussione presso l'Organizzazione europea e mediterranea per la protezione delle piante; il sostegno finanziario dell'UE sarà considerato quando vi sarà una base di finanziamento *ad hoc* in linea con la proposta della Commissione di un regolamento per la gestione della spesa nel settore della catena alimentare ([6]).

([1]) Stabilito dalla direttiva 2000/29/CE del Consiglio, dell'8 maggio 2000, concernente le misure di protezione contro l'introduzione nella Comunità di organismi nocivi ai vegetali o ai prodotti vegetali e contro la loro diffusione nella Comunità (GU L 169 del 10.7.2000).
([2]) Programma di sviluppo rurale.
([3]) Orientamenti comunitari per gli aiuti di Stato nel settore agricolo e forestale 2007-2013.
([4]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1857/2006 della Commissione.
([5]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1535/2007 della Commissione.
([6]) 2013/0169 (COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012187/13
to the Commission
Raffaele Baldassarre (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Olive tree disease in Puglia

Initially only sporadic and imperceptible, in recent months a very serious, extensive and deadly plant disease has been spreading among olive trees in Puglia and in particular in the province of Lecce.

The epidemic, which causes the trees to dry out, has spread across an area of around 8000 hectares, affecting tens of thousands of olive trees. Following investigations and tests carried out by all the offices and institutions responsible, incontrovertible evidence has emerged that the infection comes from a bacterium called '*Xylella fastidiosa*', a particularly dangerous agent that has never been identified in Europe but which, in America and Asia, has caused disease in various species of plants, including vines and citrus trees, resulting in substantial losses to the agricultural sector and the economy.

The vastness of the area and the number of affected trees, not to mention the extremely rapid spread of the bacterium, is causing grave concern not only for the damage already done, but for that which might be caused by further contagion, which could affect the rest of the olive, and other, crops in Puglia, Italy and Europe.

In the light of this dangerous, scientifically proven epidemic and of the only course of action recommended, namely the uprooting and destruction of the diseased trees, can the Commission say:

1. what measures it intends to take, as a matter of urgency, to ascertain and conduct checks on the epidemic in question and, consequently, what scientific and technical aid can be provided to support local institutions;

2. what financial measures can be taken with a view to setting up a sanitary cordon around the affected area and uprooting the infected trees, in order to prevent the spread of the bacterium;

3. what financial assistance can be given to producers affected by this extremely seriousinfection that is causing such great economic damage?

Question for written answer P-012314/13
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(29 October 2013)

Subject: Measures to contain bacterium infecting olive trees

Around 8000 hectares of olive groves in the Salento area of Puglia have been infected by the Xylella fastidiosa bacterium, possibly necessitating the uprooting of between 500 000 and 600 000 olive trees, many of them centuries old.

The bacterium causes foliage to dry out and wood to darken, eventually killing the infected plant.

The disease, which is believed to be carried by the leafhopper (Cicadellidae), has not yet been propagated further afield and still less affected olive trees in the rest of Europe. However, it is spreading very rapidly, posing an economic and environmental threat to an entire region where olive production is the staple agricultural activity and centuries-old olive trees form an inestimably valuable part of the landscape and natural heritage.

Is the Commission aware of the problem? What financial and other measures is it envisaging contain the rapid propagation of the disease (which could spread further afield in Europe) and help the Member State and olive growers concerned confront this crisis?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

End October, the Commission was informed by Italy of the *Xyllela fastidiosa* bacterium outbreak in Puglia. A discussion on the need for EU measures is scheduled in the Standing Committee on Plant Health on 27 November 2013, using also a first scientific statement of the European Food Safety Authority.

Under the EU plant-health regime Directive ([1]), on certain conditions and for certain measures, Italy might receive, a co-financing from the Union for expenditure relating directly to necessary measures against the bacterium.

Currently, the EAFRD provides for support to restoring agricultural production potential damaged by natural disasters. To benefit from this support the measure has to be covered by the regional RDP ([2]). If it is not the case the region can submit a request to the Commission for an amendment to the RDP introducing the measure, using available funds or making use of new funds as of 2014.

Italy may grant national aid up to 100% to compensate for losses caused by harmful organisms in line with the Community guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector 2007 to 2013 ([3]) or of Regulation 1857/2006 ([4]). Italy may also grant *de minimis* aid in accordance with Regulation 1535/2007 ([5]).

The creation of a European crop pathogen database for plant quarantine organisms is currently discussed at the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation, EU financial support will be considered once *ad hoc* financing basis will exist in line with Commission proposal for a regulation for the management of the expenditure in the food chain area ([6]).

([1]) Established by Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000 on protective measures against the introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plants or plant products and against their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.7.2000).
([2]) Rural Development Programme.
([3]) The Community guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector 2007 to 2013.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1857/2006.
([5]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 1535/2007.
([6]) 2013/0169 (COD).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012188/13
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Scandalo alimentare nell'UE: intestini di maiale venduti al posto dei calamari

In numerosi supermercati europei sono in vendita calamari che in realtà sarebbero intestini di suino la cui consistenza gelatinosa ricorderebbe i molluschi.

Considerati i recenti scandali alimentari dei preparati a base di carne di manzo sofisticati, già sollevati nelle interrogazioni E-001557/2013 «Hamburger di manzo sofisticati con altre carni: necessità di una normativa sulla tracciabilità della filiera dei preparati alimentari trasparente per i consumatori» e E-001559/2013 «Lasagne surgelate contenenti carne di cavallo: normativa sull'etichettatura, tutela dei consumatori e lotta all'Italian sounding», e tenuto conto che il livello di guardia sulla sicurezza alimentare dovrebbe essere aumentato;

Può la Commissione indicare:

— Se è a conoscenza dei fatti sopra esposti e se ha aperto un'indagine in merito?

— Quanto è estesa la situazione e quali catene della grande distribuzione sono coinvolte e in quali Stati membri?

— Se ritiene che vi sia un rischio per la salute dei cittadini e, se sì, come intende intervenire per tutelare i consumatori europei?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(4 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione presta attenzione a tutte le informazioni concernenti potenziali frodi nella catena agroalimentare e si impegna a migliorare la capacità degli Stati membri di opporsi a casi di tale natura.

La Commissione non dispone di informazioni da cui risulti che le pratiche cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato e che sono state riferite da alcuni articoli di stampa, si stiano effettivamente verificando. Secondo altre fonti giornalistiche, le notizie secondo cui intestini di suino sarebbero stati venduti come calamari sarebbero in realtà una pura invenzione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012188/13
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Food scandal in the EU: pigs' intestines sold as calamari

Pigs' intestines, the gelatinous consistency of which is reminiscent of squid, has apparently been sold as calamari in a number of European supermarkets.

There have been other recent food scandals involving adulterated beef-based products, as raised in Questions E-001557/2013 'Beefburgers adulterated with other kinds of meat: need for a transparent set of rules on traceability in the food preparations sector for consumers' and E-001559/2013 'Frozen lasagne containing horsemeat: labelling legislation, consumer protection and combating the "Italian sounding" phenomenon', and safeguards need to be stepped up in terms of food safety.

Is the Commission aware of the above facts and has it opened an investigation into the issue?

How widespread is the phenomenon, which large retail chains are involved and in which Member States?

Does the Commission think that there is a risk to public health and, if so, what will it do to protect European consumers?

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

The Commission is attentive to all information regarding potential frauds along the agri-food chain and is actively seeking to improve the Member States' capability to counter any such case.

The Commission has no information indicating that the practices to which the Honourable Member refers, and reported by some press articles, are actually taking place. Indeed, further press articles point to the possibility that the claim according to which pigs' intestines would be sold as calamari, is a hoax.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012189/13
al Consiglio
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(24 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Costruzione del nuovo edificio del Consiglio europeo

Nel 2002 il governo belga propone la ristrutturazione di una parte del Residence Palace, da destinare alle attività del Consiglio europeo.

Il Consiglio europeo dispone già di diversi spazi e in particolare il Justus Lipsius, all'angolo del Rond-Point Schuman, e il LEX, sulla rue de la Loi.

Il nuovo edificio, la cui costruzione è iniziata nel 2008, comprende tre sale conferenze con cabine d'interpretazione, altre cinque sale riunioni, luoghi di lavoro per il presidente del Consiglio europeo, per le presidenze del Consiglio, per le delegazioni degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea e per la stampa.

Si sostiene che il costo di tale progetto, secondo quanto approvato nel 2004, rimarrà al di sotto del limite massimo concordato di 240 milioni di euro.

Pertanto chiedo al Consiglio se ci possa essere fornito un dettaglio del piano finanziario legato all'opera, con evidenza delle fonti di finanziamento della stessa.

Risposta
(16 dicembre 2013)

Il Consiglio non ha nulla da aggiungere alla sua risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-002198/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012189/13
to the Council
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Construction of the new Council building

In 2002, the Belgian Government proposed to refurbish part of the Residence Palace to house some of the Council's activities.

The Council already has various premises, including the Justus Lipsius building on the corner of Schuman Square, and the Lex building on rue de la Loi.

The new building, begun in 2008, will house three conference halls with interpreters' booths, five meeting rooms, work space for the President of the European Council and the rotating presidencies, Member State delegations and the press.

It is claimed that the cost of the project will remain under the threshold budget of EUR 240 million approved in 2004.

Is the Council able to provide details of the project's budget, highlighting the sources of funding?

Reply
(16 December 2013)

The Council has nothing to add to its reply to Written Question E-002198/13.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012190/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Evaluatieprocedure bouw kerncentrale Hinkley Point C

In het zuidwesten van Engeland „Hinkley Point" zal men van start gaan met het bouwen van een nieuwe kerncentrale.

In een eerdere vraag (E-008523/2011), peilde ik naar de houding en inmenging van de Commissie in dit gigantische investeringsproject, gebaseerd op de bepalingen vervat in art 43 van het Euratom verdrag. Meer bepaald vroeg ik of de Commissie voor haar advies, volgend uit een evaluatieprocedure, rekening ging houden met de gebeurtenissen in Fukushima.

In het antwoord stond het volgende te lezen: „tijdens deze besprekingen zal de Commissie de investeerder vragen de lessen van het incident in Fukushima in acht te nemen. In het bijzonder zal de Commissie deze projecten bestuderen en daarbij de criteria en de resultaten van de diepgaande veiligheids- en risicoanalyses („stresstests") in acht nemen".

Kan de Commissie aangeven:

— op welke wijze de investeerder deze lessen in acht heeft genomen?

— hoe de Commissie zelf de criteria en resultaten van de stresstests in acht heeft genomen?

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

1. De lessen die werden getrokken uit het incident in Fukushima en de stresstests werden tijdens de artikel-43-procedure met de investeerder besproken. Aangezien er op dat moment in Europa twee Europese drukwaterreactoren in aanbouw waren, waarvan één (Flamanville, in Frankrijk) diende als referentieontwerp voor Hinkley Point, werd het relevant bevonden rekening te houden met de conclusies van het Franse stresstestverslag. Volgens dit verslag werd voor de Europese drukwaterreactoren vanaf de ontwerpfase rekening gehouden met scenario's van ernstige ongevallen en overwoog de licentienemer ([1]) verscheidene aanvullende maatregelen die de veiligheid van de reactor in Flamanville moeten verbeteren. Uit de discussies bleek ook duidelijk dat de investeerder ([2]) van Hinkley Point rekening zou houden met de resultaten van de stresstests in het Verenigd Koninkrijk ([3]).

2. Op basis van de resultaten van de stresstests en van het overleg met de nationale toezichthouders en belanghebbenden heeft de Commissie een voorstel goedgekeurd voor een gewijzigde richtlijn inzake nucleaire veiligheid ([4]). Het voorstel bevat nieuwe bepalingen die de rol en de onafhankelijkheid van de nationale toezichthouders moeten versterken, de transparantie op het gebied van nucleaire veiligheid moeten vergroten en nieuwe veiligheidsdoelstellingen en -eisen moeten invoeren voor alle fasen van de levenscyclus van kerninstallaties (het ontwerp, de keuze van de vestigingsplaats, de bouw, het bedrijfsklaar maken, de exploitatie en de ontmanteling). Een Europees systeem van „peer-reviews" van de veiligheid van kerninstallaties wordt overwogen, net als een mechanisme voor de ontwikkeling van in heel de EU geharmoniseerde richtsnoeren inzake nucleaire veiligheid. Het voorstel wordt momenteel in de Raad besproken.

([1]) EDF — Enérgie de France. EDF is tevens de meerderheidsaandeelhouder van de investeerder van Hinkley Point.
([2]) NNB Generation Company Ltd., een deel van EDF Group.
([3]) De uitvoering van deze verbintenissen, die onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de investeerder valt, vindt plaats onder toezicht van de Britse toezichthouder.
([4]) Voorstel voor een richtlijn van de Raad houdende wijziging van Richtlijn 2009/71/Euratom tot vaststelling van een communautair kader voor de nucleaire veiligheid van kerninstallaties (COM(2013)0715).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012190/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Evaluation procedure for the construction of the Hinkley Point C nuclear power station

A new nuclear power station is to be built at Hinkley Point in the South-West of England.

In a previous question (E-008523/2011), I sought to find out the attitude and involvement of the Commission in this enormous investment project, based on the provisions of Article 43 of the Euratom Treaty. More specifically, I asked whether, for its opinion, following an evaluation process, the Commission took into consideration the events at Fukushima.

The answer included the following: 'In the discussion the Commission will ask the investor to consider the lessons learnt from the Fukushima event. In particular, the Commission will examine these projects taking into account the criteria and the outcome of the comprehensive risk and safety assessments ("stress tests").'

Can the Commission tell me:

— how the investor has taken account of these lessons; and

— how the Commission itself has taken account of the results of the stress tests?

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

1. The lessons learned from the Fukushima accident and the stress tests were discussed with the investor during the article 43 procedure. Since at the time there were two European pressurised reactors (EPR) under construction in Europe, one of which (Flamanville, in France) served as reference design for Hinkley Point, it was deemed relevant to consider the conclusions of the French stress test report. According to this report, in the case of the EPR, severe accident scenarios were integrated from the design stage and several complementary safety improvement measures for the EPR in Flamanville were envisaged by the licensee ([1]). From the discussions it also became clear that the Hinkley Point investor ([2]) would take into account the results of the stress tests in the UK ([3]).

2. On the basis of the results of the stress tests, as well as consultations with national regulators and stakeholders, the Commission adopted a legislative proposal for an amended Nuclear Safety Directive ([4]). The proposal includes new provisions aiming at strengthening the role and independence of national regulators, enhancing transparency on nuclear safety matters and introducing new safety objectives and requirements for the different stages of the lifecycle of nuclear installations (design, siting, construction, commissioning, operation and decommissioning). A European system of peer reviews of the safety of nuclear installations is envisaged, as well as a mechanism for the development of EU-wide harmonised nuclear safety guidelines. The proposal is currently being discussed in the Council.

([1]) EDF — Enérgie de France. EDF is also the majority shareholder of the Hinkley Point investor.
([2]) NNB Generation Company Ltd., part of the EDF Group.
([3]) The implementation of these commitments, which is the responsibility of the investor, takes place under the supervision of the UK regulator.
([4]) Proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2009/71/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations (COM(2013) 715).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012191/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Kostenraming en timing bouw kerncentrale Verenigd Koninkrijk

In het zuidwesten van Engeland „Hinkley Point" zal men van start gaan met het bouwen van een nieuwe kerncentrale. Het betreft de constructie van twee EPR-reactoren. Een type dat nog niet operatief is in Europa.

In Finland bouwt men sinds 2005 in de Olkiluoto kerncentrale eveneens aan een EPR-reactor. Het bouwproces verloopt uiterst moeizaam. De huidige kosten worden momenteel geraamd op 8,5 miljard euro, bijna 3 maal de prijs van de eerst voorgestelde 3,2 miljard euro. De datum voor de start van de productie werd ook al meermaals jaren uitgesteld. Ondertussen wordt verwacht dat de reactor niet voor 2016 „on line" zal gaan.

De investering voor Hinkley Point in het Verenigd Koninkrijk wordt geraamd op 19 miljard euro. De geplande productiedatum 2023.

Areva, het Franse nucleaire bedrijf dat het EPR ontwerp voor Hinkley Point C verzorgt, is ook betrokken bij het project in Finland.

— Werd er in de evaluatieprocedure van de Commissie voor de centrale in het Verenigd Koninkrijk rekening gehouden met de vertragingen en extra kosten die de constructie in Finland ondervindt?

— Zo ja, hoe?

— Zijn er reeds vermoedens dat de timing en kostenraming ook in het Verenigd Koninkrijk onderschat worden?

— Werden er „veiligheidsmarges" ingebouwd in de vooropgestelde timing en kostenraming?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(3 december 2013)

1. en 2. De Europese drukwaterreactoren (EPR-reactoren) in de kerncentrales van Olkiluoto en Hinkley Point zijn volgens de regels aangemeld bij de Commissie, die haar standpunt bij artikel 43 van het Euratom-verdrag heeft gepubliceerd ([1]).

In het kader van deze procedure bespreekt de Commissie met de investeerders alle aspecten van het project die in verband staan met de doelstellingen van het Euratom-Verdrag. De financiering en het tijdschema van een project komen tijdens deze besprekingen weliswaar ter sprake, maar worden enkel behandeld wanneer het gaat over de haalbaarheid van het gehele project en de positieve bijdrage ervan tot het verzekeren van de continuïteit van de energievoorziening.

De procedure van beide EPR-projecten, met name het project van de Olkiluoto-reactor, vond plaats in omstandigheden die aanzienlijk verschilden van die van vandaag. De evaluatie van de Commissie bij die gelegenheid vond plaats vóór de ramp in Fukushima en de beslissing van de Duitse regering om met kernenergie te stoppen. Beide gebeurtenissen hebben het financieringslandschap voor kerncentrales aanzienlijk veranderd. Het consortium voor Hinkley Point bijvoorbeeld bestond destijds uit Duitse nutsbedrijven die zich nadien hebben teruggetrokken. De kostenramingen en tijdschema's waarover de Commissie op het ogenblik van de evaluatie beschikte, vermeldden geen overschrijdingen of vertragingen.

3. en 4. De vertragingen en kostenoverschrijdingen zijn in de eerste plaats een handelszaak, waarvan de risico's worden gedragen door de betrokken investeerder(s).

In verband met de door de Commissie uitgevoerde evaluatie van de veiligheid van de Europese drukwaterreactoren, in het bijzonder na de ramp in Fukushima, wordt het geachte Parlementslid verwezen naar het antwoord van de Commissie op schriftelijke vraag E-012190/2013 ([2]).

([1]) http://hinkleypoint.edfenergyconsultation.info/newsroom-faqs/press-releases/974
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012191/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Cost estimate and timescales for the construction of a nuclear power station in the UK

A new nuclear power station is to be built at Hinkley Point in the South-West of England. This will mean the construction of two European pressurised reactors (EPR). This is a type of reactor not yet operational in Europe.

In Finland, too, an EPR has been under construction at the Olkiluoto nuclear power station since 2005. The construction process is making extremely laborious progress. The current costs are presently estimated at EUR 8.5 billion, nearly three times the price of EUR 3.2 billion originally proposed. The date for the commencement of power generation has also been put back by years on multiple occasions. Meanwhile, the reactor is not expected to go online before 2016.

The investment for Hinkley Point in the United Kingdom is estimated at EUR 19 billion. Power generation is expected to start in 2023.

Areva, the French nuclear firm providing the EPR design for Hinkley Point C, is also involved in the project in Finland.

— In the Commission's evaluation process for the nuclear power station in the UK, is account being taken of the delays and extra costs experienced during construction in Finland?

— If so, how?

— Are there already suspicions that the timescales and cost estimates for the UK may also be underestimated?

— Have safety margins been built into the proposed timescales and cost estimates?

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

1-2. The European Pressurised Reactors (EPR) at the Olkiluoto and Hinkley Point nuclear power plants (NPPs) were duly notified to the Commission, which issued its point of view under Article 43 Euratom ([1]).

As part of this procedure, the Commission discusses with the investors all aspects of the project which relate to the objectives of the Euratom Treaty. The financing and the timeframe of a project, though touched upon during these discussions, are treated only as far as the feasibility of the entire project and its positive contribution to ensuring supply security in Europe are concerned.

The procedure in relation to both EPR projects, particularly the Olkiluoto reactor, took place under circumstances which were considerably different from those prevailing today. The Commission's evaluation on that occasion predated both the Fukushima accident as well as the German government's decision to phase out nuclear energy. Both events changed considerably the financing landscape for NPP. For example, the consortium for Hinkley Point at the time included German utilities, which have since backed out. The cost estimates and timeframes at the Commission's disposal at the time of its evaluation did not indicate overruns or delays.

3-4. Delays and cost overruns are primarily a commercial matter, the risks of which are borne by the investor(s) concerned.

In terms of the Commission's evaluation of the safety of EPR, particularly following the Fukushima accident, the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply to Written Question E-012190/2013 ([2]).

([1]) The notification documents and the Commission's point of view in relation to the Hinkley Point C EPR reactors are in the public domain and can be accessed at the following url: http://hinkleypoint.edfenergyconsultation.info/newsroom-faqs/press-releases/974

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

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012192/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Bouw van EPR reactor in Hinkley Point C

In het Verenigd Koninkrijk plant men de nieuwe kerncentrale „Hinkley Point C" waarvoor twee EPR-reactoren gebouwd zullen worden in Sumerset in het zuidwesten van Engeland.

Een EPR is een nieuw type reactor, behorend tot de „derde generatie" met een erg groot vermogen. Er is momenteel nog geen enkele EPR reactor operatief in de EU.

Er is er één in aanbouw in Finland (Olkiluoto). De Franse firma AREVA heeft hierover de leiding. Het bouwproces loopt reeds jaren vertraging op. Er werd vooropgesteld dat de reactor online zou gaan in 2009 maar deze datum werd al uitgesteld tot minstens 2016. Een andere EPR reactor wordt gebouwd in Frankrijk (Flamanville), onder leiding van het, eveneens Franse, EDF. Ook hier zijn vertragingen opgelopen. Bij beide reactoren zijn die onder andere te wijten aan kwaliteitsproblemen.

Volgens de bepalingen van art 43 van het Euratom verdrag moet de Commissie een evaluatieprocedure uitvoeren voor de bouwplannen in Hinkley Point C. Bij dit gigantische investeringsproject zijn ook EDF en AREVA als eigenaars, uitbaters en bouwers verantwoordelijk.

— Zag de Commissie het feit dat er nog geen werkende reactoren zijn van dit type in Europa als een bijkomende moeilijkheid in haar evaluatieprocedure?

— Op welke manier werd dit gegeven meegenomen in de evaluatieprocedure?

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

Bij de evaluatie van een investeringsproject overeenkomstig artikel 43 van het Euratom-Verdrag bespreekt de Commissie met de investeerders alle aspecten van het project die in verband staan met de doelstellingen van het Verdrag, met inbegrip van de veiligheid. Volgens de Euratom-wetgeving en in het bijzonder volgens de richtlijn inzake nucleaire veiligheid ([1]) is de veiligheid van de kerncentrales echter de verantwoordelijkheid van de uitbater die onder supervisie van een onafhankelijke nationale toezichthouder staat; bovendien moeten de lidstaten volgens deze richtlijn een wettelijk kader ontwerpen dat ook zorgt voor de goedkeuring van de nationale voorschriften inzake nucleaire veiligheid. In haar standpunt aangaande Hinkley Point behandelde de Commissie wel het feit dat er nog steeds geen functionerende EPR in Europa was, maar moest zij een beroep doen op de beoordeling van de nationale toezichthouder op basis van de relevante nationale regels.

Met name in de loop van de besprekingen met de investeerders bleek dat Flamanville 3 diende als referentieontwerp van Hinkley Point C, met enkele kleine verschillen vanwege de bijzondere eisen van de Britse toezichthouder. Aan het einde van 2009, in het kader van een gedetailleerde studie van het EPR-ontwerp heeft de Britse toezichthouder verklaard dat hij niet adviseerde om de EPR te bouwen wegens de veiligheidsproblemen in het ontwerp die eerst moesten worden aangepakt. In november 2010 stelde de toezichthouder echter het EOF en Areva officieel op de hoogte dat deze punten van zorg op bevredigende wijze waren afgehandeld en dat daardoor de kwestie was afgesloten.

Voor nadere informatie wordt het geachte Parlementslid verwezen naar de kennisgevingsdocumenten en het standpunt van de Commissie die zijn gepubliceerd ([2]).

([1]) Richtlijn 2009/71/Euratom van de Raad van 25 juni 2009 tot vaststelling van een communautair kader voor de nucleaire veiligheid van kerninstallaties (PB L 172 van 2.7.2009, blz. 18).

([2]) http://hinkleypoint.edfenergyconsultation.info/newsroom-faqs/press-releases/974.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012192/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Construction of a European pressurised reactor (EPR) at Hinkley Point C

The new Hinkley Point C nuclear power station is being planned in the United Kingdom, for which two EPRs are to be built in Somerset, in the South-West of England.

An EPR is a new type of reactor, a third-generation reactor, with a very large capacity. At present there is not a single operational EPR in the EU.

One such reactor is under construction in Finland (Olkiluoto). This project is headed by the French firm Areva. The building process is already subject to years of delay. The reactor was originally scheduled to go live in 2009, but that date has already been put back until at least 2016. Another EPR is being built in France (Flamanville), under the leadership of another French firm in EDF. Here, too, there have been delays. In both reactors, these delays have been attributable, amongst other things, to quality issues.

Article 43 of the Euratom Treaty requires the Commission to carry out an evaluation process in respect of the construction plans at Hinkley Point C. EDF and Areva are also in charge of this enormous investment project, as owners, operators and constructors.

— In its evaluation process, did the Commission consider the fact that there are still no working reactors of this type in Europe as an additional difficulty?

— How is this fact incorporated into the evaluation process?

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

During the evaluation of an investment project under Article 43 of the Euratom Treaty, the Commission discusses with the investors all aspects of the project which relate to the objectives of the Treaty, including safety considerations. However, under Euratom law and in particular according to the Nuclear Safety Directive ([1]), the safety of nuclear power plants is the responsibility of the operator, under the supervision of an independent national regulator; in addition, according to this directive, Member States have to establish a legislative framework, which shall also provide for the adoption of national nuclear safety requirements. In its point of view in relation to Hinkley Point, the Commission did address the fact that there is still no operating European pressurised reactor (EPR) in Europe, but had to rely on the national regulator's assessment of this matter on the basis of the relevant national rules.

In particular, throughout the course of discussions with the investors, it emerged that Flamanville 3 served as reference design for Hinkley Point C, with some slight differences owing to specific requirements laid down by the UK regulator. At the end of 2009, in the context of a detailed study of the EPR design, the UK regulator had stated that it could not recommend new builds based on the EPR due to issues with the safety features of the design that would first have to be addressed. In November 2010, however, the regulator officially informed EDF and AREVA that they had addressed these concerns in a satisfactory manner, and that it had therefore closed the corresponding regulatory issue.

For more information, the Honourable Member is referred to the notification documents and the Commission's point of view, which are in the public domain ([2]).

([1]) Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2009 establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, Official Journal L 172, 2/07/2009, p. 18.
([2]) http://hinkleypoint.edfenergyconsultation.info/newsroom-faqs/press-releases/974

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012193/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Chinese participatie in het Hinkley Point C project

Het nieuwe reactorpark „Hinkley Point C" dat gepland is in Somerset (UK) zal gebouwd, uitgebaat en in eigendom zijn van het Franse bedrijf EDF. In het consortium zit echter ook de Chinese partner, China General Nuclear Power Group, dat voor 100% in Chinese staatshanden is. Het Chinese aandeel in het consortium bedraagt 40%. Het bedrijf gaf zelf eerder al aan in de internationale pers dat het hoopt dat het project in het VK hen de nodige geloofwaardigheid zal opleveren om ook op andere plaatsen in Europa nieuwe reactors te bouwen.

China is echter op gebied van nucleaire thema's niet onbesproken.

Bij de constructie van de eerste nucleaire centrale in China, ook in samenwerking met EDF, werden slechts 50 % van de vereiste verstevigingsstaven gebruikt in de betonnen constructie onder de reactor.

— China wordt beschuldigd van betrokkenheid in cyberspionage. Ziet de Commissie risico's in het verstrekken van toegang aan een Chinees overheidsbedrijf tot gevoelige informatie over de Europese energie-infrastructuur?

China is tevens een kernwapenstaat. Men vermoedt dat het land beschikt over 240 kernkoppen. Gezien de beperkte hoeveelheid beschikbare informatie hierover variëren de schattingen van 100 tot 400.

— Vindt de Commissie deze feiten aangaande veiligheidsaspecten, politieke regimes en proliferatie risico's zorgwekkend?

— Op welke manier heeft zij hiermee rekening gehouden bij de evaluatieprocedure van het Hinkley point C project?

— Is verder het feit dat 40 % van een nieuw energieproject in de EU in handen is van de Chinese overheid in lijn met de doelstellingen die de EU voorop stelt inzake energie-onafhankelijkheid van derde landen?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(23 december 2013)

1. In de nasleep van het ongeluk in Fukushima werden stresstests uitgevoerd op het vlak van zowel veiligheid als beveiliging. De beveiligingsaspecten werden besproken door een ad-hocgroep nucleaire beveiliging ([1]) die belast is met het opstellen van aanbevelingen voor de lidstaten om de beveiliging van kerncentrales te verbeteren ([2]). In het bijzonder op het gebied van cyberbeveiliging werd in het eindverslag van de ad-hocgroep herhaald dat dit eigenlijk een verantwoordelijkheid van de nationale autoriteiten was, maar toch werd een aantal algemene aanbevelingen gedaan om de beveiliging van kerncentrales te verbeteren.

2.-3. Op het tijdstip van de evaluatie door de Commissie krachtens artikel 43 van het Euratom-Verdrag was er nog geen Chinese betrokkenheid bij het project ([3]). In het kader van deze procedure werden alle aspecten in verband met de doelstellingen van het Euratom-Verdrag, waaronder nucleaire veiligheidscontrole besproken. Mogelijke militaire gevolgen vallen echter buiten de werkingssfeer van het Euratom-Verdrag en maken dan ook geen deel uit van de besprekingen. Ongeacht de samenstelling van het consortium zullen de exploitanten van de Hinkley-Point-kerncentrales echter de veiligheidscontroles volgens het Euratom-Verdrag moeten toepassen zodra de installatie operationeel is; zij moeten eveneens de internationale instrumenten in acht nemen op het gebied van nucleaire veiligheid waaraan het Verenigd Koninkrijk, de EU en het Euratom deelnemen, net zoals het Verdrag inzake de fysieke bescherming van nucleair materiaal ([4]).

4. De deelname van een buitenlandse investeerder brengt de elektriciteitsvoorziening in Europa niet in gevaar. De energiemarkt in de EU staat open voor investeringen uit derde landen. Buitenlandse investeerders die deelnemen aan de interne energiemarkt moeten net zoals investeerders uit de EU voldoen aan de toepasselijke voorschriften.

([1]) De ad-hocgroep werd voorgezeten door het voorzitterschap van de Raad.
([2]) Het verslag is beschikbaar op: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st10/st10616.en12.pdf
([3]) De evaluatie van de Commissie werd voltooid toen de Commissie op 12 juli 2012 haar standpunt publiceerde.
([4]) De veiligheidscontrole en de beveiligingsgerelateerde regels moeten derhalve worden toegepast, ongeacht de Chinese betrokkenheid bij het betrokken consortium.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012193/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Chinese participation in the Hinkley Point C project

The new Hinkley Point C reactor park planned for the English county of Somerset is to be built, operated and owned by the French company EDF. However, the consortium also includes a Chinese partner, China General Nuclear Power Group, which is 100% owned by the Chinese State. The Chinese stake in the consortium is 40%. The company itself has previously stated in the international press that it hopes that the project in the UK will give it the necessary credibility to also build new reactors elsewhere in Europe.

However, China is not beyond reproach when it comes to nuclear issues.

When the first nuclear power station was built in China, even in collaboration with EDF, only 50% of the required reinforcing bars were used in the concrete structure beneath the reactor.

— China is accused of involvement in cyber-espionage. Does the Commission see risks in granting access to a Chinese State firm to sensitive information about Europe's energy infrastructure?

China is also a nuclear weapons State. It is believed to possess over 240 nuclear warheads. In light of the limited information available in this regard, the estimates range between 100 and 400.

— Does the Commission find these facts concerning aspects of security, political regimes and proliferation risks disturbing?

— How did it take this into consideration in the evaluation procedure for the Hinkley Point C project?

— Furthermore, is the fact that 40% of a new energy project in the EU is in the hands of the Chinese Government in line with the EU's proposed objectives in relation to energy independence from third countries?

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

1. The stress tests conducted in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident were performed on the basis of a two-track process, dealing with safety and security. The security aspects were discussed by an Ad Hoc Group on Nuclear Security (AHGNS) ([1]), tasked with producing recommendations for the Member States on how to improve the security of nuclear power plants (NPPs) ([2]). Specifically on the subject of cyber-security, the final report of AHGNS reiterated that this was primarily a responsibility of national authorities, but offered a set of general recommendations to improve the security of NPPs.

2-3. At the time of the Commission's evaluation under Article 43 Euratom, there was as yet no Chinese involvement in the project ([3]). Discussions under this procedure include all aspects which relate to the objectives of the Euratom Treaty, including nuclear safeguards. Possible military implications are however outside the scope of the Euratom Treaty and are therefore not part of the discussions. Regardless of the composition of the consortium however, the operators of the Hinkley Point NPP will have to apply safeguards according to the Euratom Treaty once the plant is operational, as well as abide by international instruments in the field of nuclear security to which the United Kingdom, the EU and Euratom are parties, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material ([4]).

4. The participation of a foreign investor does not constitute as such a risk to secure electricity supply in Europe. The EU energy market is open to investment from third countries. Foreign investors who participate in the internal energy market must comply with the applicable rules just as EU investors.

([1]) AHGNS was chaired by the Council Presidency.
([2]) Report available at the following URL: http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st10/st10616.en12.pdf
([3]) The Commission's evaluation was completed when the Commission issued its point of view on 12 July 2012.
([4]) Thus, safeguards and security related regulations will have to be applied, irrespective of the Chinese involvement in the consortium in question.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012196/13
to the Commission
Andrew Henry William Brons (NI)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Treaty of 8 April 1965

Under Article 28 of the Merger Treaty of 8 April 1965 and Article 9 of the Protocol thereto, Members of the European Parliament may not be subject to any form of inquiry, detention or legal proceedings in respect of the opinions expressed or votes cast by them when carrying out their duties.

This treaty was declared invalid on 1 May 1999 on the grounds that its provisions had been included in later treaties adopted by the Member States.

In which treaty do these provisions now appear, and what, exactly, is the current wording?

If the current wording differs in any way from the original, can the Commission explain the reasons for any such changes?

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

The Treaty of 8 April 1965 establishing a Single Council and a Single Commission of the European Communities (the 'Merger treaty') was not declared invalid, but repealed by Article 9(1) of the treaty of Amsterdam. By virtue of the treaty of Amsterdam, the adapted text of Article 28 of the Merger treaty was inserted into the EC treaty (Article 291 EC), the ECSC treaty (Art. 76 ECSC) and the Euratom treaty (Art. 191 EAEC). By virtue of the treaty of Lisbon, Article 291 EC treaty has become Article 343 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The Protocol of 8 April 1965 on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Communities, originally annexed to the Merger treaty, was not repealed by the treaty of Amsterdam. By virtue of the treaty of Lisbon, it has been annexed, as Protocol No 7 on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union, to the Treaty on European Union, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Euratom treaty.

The text of Article 9 of the Protocol of 8 April 1965 has remained unchanged save for the replacement of the expression 'Members of the Assembly' by 'Members of the European Parliament'. Article 9 of Protocol No 7 on the Privileges and Immunities of the European Union reads : 'Members of the European Parliament shall not be subject to any form of inquiry, detention or legal proceedings in respect of opinions expressed or votes cast by them in the performance of their duties'.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012197/13
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D), Catherine Stihler (S&D) and Brian Simpson (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Method of slaughter labelling and Sikhism

The most humane way to slaughter an animal is to stun it first. Some religious communities are exempted from using pre-stunning in line with their dietary laws. However, for various reasons, a significant amount of meat from animals that are slaughtered without being pre-stunned ends up on the market for general consumption. This is a matter of great concern to consumers who care about animal welfare and want to make sure that the meat they buy is killed in the most humane way possible.

Furthermore, people following the Sikh religion should not eat ritually slaughtered meat. However, without mandatory labelling of the method of slaughter, there is often no way for practising Sikhs to know whether they are following this rule correctly or not.

When slaughter method labelling was discussed during negotiations on the Food Information Regulation, the Commission promised to come forward with separate proposals under the animal welfare strategy. This was foreseen for late 2013, but Parliament has yet to receive anything.

When can we expect to receive this report?

Will the Commission take into account the concerns of EU citizens who care about animal welfare, as well as the issues surrounding religious freedom of practicing Sikhs?

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

Recital (50) of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers ([1]) states that: '(50) Union consumers show an increasing interest in the implementation of the Union animal welfare rules at the time of slaughter, including whether the animal was stunned before slaughter. In this respect, a study on the opportunity to provide consumers with the relevant information on the stunning of animals should be considered in the context of a future Union strategy for the protection and welfare of animals.'

When the Commission adopted the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([2]), it included in its annex the delivery of this study.

The study is presently ongoing and results are expected by April 2014. In the light of them, the Commission will consider if further action is necessary, with due regard to the different socioeconomic aspects.

([1]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 18-63.
([2]) COM(2012) 6 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012198/13
to the Commission
Julie Girling (ECR)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Follow-up on vehicle defects and accidents

In his answer to Written Question E-009633/2013, Commissioner Kallas cites two sources of statistics on motorcycle accidents due to technical defects: 'Statistics relating to motorcycle accidents is taken from MAIDS' study (http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/projects/maids.pdf) as well as DEKRA's motorcycle report: (http://www.dekra.com/en/home).'

However, the two studies give quite contradictory statistics, with the DEKRA study citing 8% and the MAIDS study citing less than 1%. The Commissioner has publicly cited 8% in a press release on vehicle roadworthiness issued on2 July 2013 (MEMO/13/637).

Can the Commission explain why the statistics in the independent DEKRA study were favoured over the Commission's own MAIDS survey?

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

The Commission draws the attention of the Honourable member that the MAIDS study is not a Commission study but an independent study carried out by the motorcycle industry with the partial financial support of the European Union.

As regards the findings of the MAIDS study, it is correct that less than 1% of accidents involving motorcycles have as the only single cause an identified technical defect, but it concludes that up to 6% ([1]) of motorcycle accidents could be linked to technical defects. This value is indeed consistent with the findings of the most recent DEKRA road safety report . The Commission based its conclusions on the most recent data when elaborating its proposal for a revision of the roadworthiness legislation.

([1]) MAIDS study report p40: 5,1% with identified technical defects plus 0,9% where the investigators were unable to determine if a vehicle technical failure had occurred.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012200/13
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Danger des «chasseurs de brevets»

Les «chasseurs de brevets» vont-ils bientôt débarquer en masse en Europe? Ces sociétés, très actives aux États-Unis, vivent de l'acquisition de brevets dans le seul but d'attaquer en justice quiconque les violeraient. Les «chasseurs de brevets» n'utilisent donc pas commercialement les brevets acquis mais s'en servent uniquement comme moyen de pression afin de soutirer de l'argent à d'autres sociétés.

Actuellement, le phénomène des «chasseurs de brevets» est essentiellement américain. Mais la nouvelle législation européenne sur les brevets pourrait changer la donne.

1. Comment la Commission se prépare-t-elle à cela?

2. Ne craint-elle pas des abus?

Un litige en matière de propriété intellectuelle peut être traité par deux tribunaux. L'un se penche sur la validité du brevet et l'autre détermine s'il y a eu violation ou non de ce brevet. Les deux procédures étant indépendantes l'une de l'autre, la commercialisation d'un produit peut être suspendue préventivement avant que la question de la validité du brevet ne soit tranchée. Et cela dans treize États membres au minimum, une fois que le brevet unique sera d'actualité.

3. Étant donné l'impact majeur d'une telle interdiction, les plaignants ne parviendraient-ils pas soutirer des sommes considérables sur la base de brevets de faible qualité ou même invalides?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(8 janvier 2014)

La Commission ne voit pas pourquoi la récente législation de l'Union sur les brevets, à savoir les règlements (UE) nº 1257/2012 et 1260/2012, conduirait à une augmentation de l'activité des «chasseurs de brevets» en Europe. Dans la mesure où la question de l'Honorable Parlementaire concerne la juridiction unifiée du brevet (JUB), il convient de rappeler que l'accord relatif à cette juridiction («accord JUB») est un instrument de droit international et ne fait pas partie du droit de l'Union. Ce domaine ne relève donc pas des compétences de la Commission. Celle-ci peut néanmoins fournir les informations factuelles ci-dessous.

La JUB, en tant que juridiction commune spécialisée dans les brevets, renforcera la sécurité juridique, et l'existence d'une procédure centralisée de révocation des brevets rendra l'activité des «chasseurs de brevets» plus difficile que dans la situation de fragmentation actuelle.

L'accord JUB prévoit des mesures de sauvegarde contre les «chasseurs de brevets». Aucune injonction ne sera prononcée automatiquement: la JUB dispose d'un pouvoir d'appréciation pour mettre en balance les intérêts des parties et tenir compte des effets préjudiciables éventuels résultant de sa décision de prononcer ou non l'injonction en question. Le règlement de procédure de cette juridiction (projet du 25 juin 2013) prévoit la possibilité d'exiger des preuves raisonnables de la validité du brevet et de sa violation ainsi que d'imposer la constitution d'une garantie suffisante pour réparer tout préjudice susceptible d'être causé au contrevenant présumé si l'injonction est levée ultérieurement.

La JUB est une juridiction unique compétente à la fois pour les actions en contrefaçon et pour les actions en nullité en matière de brevets. Une division locale ou régionale a simplement la faculté, après avoir entendu les parties, de renvoyer une demande reconventionnelle devant la division centrale. Le règlement de procédure prévoit qu'en cas de probabilité élevée que le brevet soit déclaré non valide dans le cadre de l'action en nullité, le tribunal doit suspendre l'action en contrefaçon, de sorte qu'une décision soit prise quant à la validité du brevet avant que l'action en contrefaçon ne puisse se poursuivre.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012200/13
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Danger posed by 'patent trolls'

Are 'patent trolls' soon to arrive in Europe en masse? These companies, which are very active in the United States, make money by buying up patents with the sole aim of taking anyone who infringes them to court. 'Patent trolls' thus make no commercial use of the patents they own; rather, they use them purely as a way of pressuring other companies into giving them money.

For now, 'patent trolls' are largely an American problem. However, the new EU legislation on patents could change that.

1. How is the Commission preparing for this legislation?

2. Does it have concerns that the law will be abused?

Intellectual property cases may be dealt with by two courts: one focuses on the validity of the patent, while the other establishes whether the patent has been infringed or not. As both courts work independently of each other, a product may be preventively taken off the market before the issue of the patent's validity has been resolved. What is more, this could happen in at least 13 Member States, once the single patent becomes a reality.

3. In view of the major impact such a ban would have, would this not enable plaintiffs to extract considerable sums of money on the basis of poor-quality or even invalid patents?

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

The Commission fails to see how the recent Union legislation on patents, namely Regulations 1257/2012 and 1260/2012, could increase the activity of so called 'patent trolls' in Europe. To the extent that the Honourable Member's question pertains to the Unified Patent Court (UPC), it should be noted that the UPC agreement is an instrument under international law and is not part of Union law. The matter is thus outside the Commission's remit. The Commission will, however, provide the following factual information.

The UPC as a common specialized patent court will increase legal certainty, and a centralized patent revocation procedure will leave less room for 'patent trolls' to exploit current fragmentation.

The UPC Agreement provides for safeguards against 'patent trolls'. No automatic injunctions shall be granted: the UPC has the discretion to weigh the parties' interests and to take into account the potential harm from the grant/refusal of the injunction. The Rules of Procedure (draft of 25 June 2013) foresee a possibility to require reasonable evidence that the patent is valid and being infringed and to order an adequate security for any injury likely to be caused to the alleged infringer if the injunction is later revoked.

The UPC is a single court competent for both patent infringement and revocation actions. A local/regional division has only a possibility, after having heard the parties, to refer a counterclaim for revocation to the central division. The Rules of Procedure provide that in case of a high probability that the patent will be held invalid in the revocation procedure the court must stay the infringement proceedings. The objective is to ensure that the patent validity is dealt with before the infringement action can proceed.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012206/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Blogueur emprisonné

Les autorités algériennes ont arrêté un blogueur sur la base d'accusations de terrorisme et de diffamation après avoir partagé des photos et des caricatures du président et du premier ministre sur son compte Facebook.

1. Quelle est la réaction officielle des autorités européennes?

2. Ne s'agit-il pas là d'un cas flagrant d'une restriction de la liberté d'expression?

3. Des contacts vont-ils être pris avec les autorités nationales sur ce dossier?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(5 décembre 2013)

Les autorités européennes suivent de près le dossier auquel fait référence l'Honorable Parlementaire. Il s'agit du deuxième cas de ce genre; un autre blogueur avait été arrêté sur la base d'accusations similaires, c'est-à-dire pour avoir fait l'apologie du terrorisme, et libéré après neuf mois de détention en avril 2013.

La question de la liberté d'expression est régulièrement soulevée lors de réunions avec les autorités algériennes, comme dans le cadre du sous-comité sur le dialogue politique, la sécurité et les Droits de l'homme. Cette problématique a également été abordée par des membres de la délégation du PE qui s'est rendue récemment (du 28 au 31 octobre 2013) en Algérie.

Les questions liées aux Droits de l'homme, à l'État de droit et à la démocratie font partie intégrante des négociations en cours relatives au plan d'action avec l'Algérie dans le cadre de la politique européenne de voisinage. L'UE insiste sur le plein respect des libertés fondamentales conformément aux normes internationales auxquelles l'Algérie a souscrit pour la plupart.

L'UE entretient aussi un dialogue avec les représentants de la société civile tant en Algérie qu'à Bruxelles; bon nombre d'entre eux suivent la situation dans le pays de près et font part de leur préoccupation concernant les cas avérés de non-respect des libertés fondamentales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012206/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Imprisoned blogger

The Algerian authorities have arrested a blogger on terrorism and defamation charges after he shared photos and caricatures of the President and the Prime Minister on his Facebook account.

1. What is the official reaction of the European authorities?

2. Is this not a blatant restriction of the freedom of expression?

3. Will any contact be made with the national authorities over this case?

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

The European authorities are following closely the issue the Honourable MEP is referring to. This is the second case after another blogger had been arrested with similar charges of praising terrorism and released after nine months of detention in April 2013.

The issue of freedom of expression is regularly raised in meetings with the Algerian authorities such as in the Sub-Committee on political dialogue, human rights and security. During the recent visit of the EP Delegation to Algeria (28-31 October 2013) the issue was equally raised by individual members of the EP Delegation.

In the ongoing negotiations for the action plan with Algeria within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy, human rights, the rule of law and democracy constitute an integral part of the discussions. The EU insists on full respect of fundamental freedoms in accordance with international standards to many of which Algeria has subscribed.

The EU also entertains a dialogue with civil society representatives both in the country and in Brussels; many of them are active in monitoring the actual situation in the country and raise concerns where there is evidence of non-compliance.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012207/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — La Russie et ses migrants

1. L'arrestation et le placement en détention arbitraires de plus de 1 200 migrants lors d'une rafle effectuée le 14 octobre sur un marché de Moscou, en réaction au meurtre d'un Russe, ne peut-il pas être assimilé à des pratiques discriminatoires et excessives dans le domaine du maintien de l'ordre?

Un Azerbaïdjanais, dont l'interpellation n'a pas eu lieu dans le cadre de la récente vague d'arrestations, a été désigné aujourd'hui 15 octobre comme suspect de cet assassinat, qui a déclenché au cours du week-end d'importantes émeutes prenant les migrants pour cible.

2. Quelle est la réaction officielle des autorités européennes?

3. Des contacts vont-ils pris avec les autorités nationales sur ce dossier?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante, au nom de la Commission
(11 décembre 2013)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a suivi avec attention les manifestations qui ont eu lieu à Moscou les 12 et 13 octobre 2013, ainsi que d'autres événements, comme l'arrestation et la détention de plusieurs centaines de migrants et les informations faisant état de crimes de haine à leur encontre. L'Union européenne est en effet préoccupée par la rhétorique constatée, xénophobe et hostile aux migrants.

L'UE profitera de l'occasion offerte par les consultations à venir sur les Droits de l'homme avec la Fédération de Russie, prévues le 28 novembre 2013 à Bruxelles, pour faire part aux autorités russes de ses préoccupations. Le racisme, la xénophobie et la discrimination seront des éléments essentiels de l'ordre du jour de ces consultations.

Ces consultations devraient ainsi permettre à l'UE d'obtenir des informations plus précises au sujet des événements mentionnés et des suites que les autorités comptent y donner.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012207/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Russia and its migrants

1. Over 1 200 migrants were arbitrarily arrested and detained during a raid on a market in Moscow on 14 October in response to the murder of an ethnic Russian. Was this not a discriminatory and excessive use of police powers?

On 15 October an Azerbaijani citizen interrogated independently of the recent wave of arrests was named as a suspect in the murder, which triggered serious anti-migrant disturbances over the previous weekend.

2. What is the official reaction of the European authorities?

3. Will any contact be made with the national authorities over this matter?

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

The HR/VP has carefully followed demonstrations which took place in Moscow on 12-13 October 2013 as well as other developments including the arrest and detention of several hundred migrants and the reports about hate crimes affecting them. The EU is indeed concerned with the xenophobic and anti-migrant rhetoric which has been witnessed.

The EU will take the opportunity of the forthcoming human rights consultations with the Russian Federation, planned on 28 November 2013 in Brussels, to raise its concerns with the Russian authorities. The issues of racism, xenophobia and discrimination will feature as a key element on the agenda of these consultations.

These consultations should thereby allow the EU to seek clarification about these events and about the follow-up that the authorities intend to give.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012208/13
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: VP/HR — Syriens en Égypte

L'Égypte maintient illégalement en détention des centaines de réfugiés syriens et palestiniens.

Des enfants, dont certains n'ont pas plus d'un an, sont incarcérés depuis des semaines.

Des centaines de personnes ont été expulsées de force vers des pays de la région, notamment la Syrie.

Des familles sont séparées par les expulsions forcées.

Les autorités égyptiennes doivent renoncer à leur politique affligeante consistant à placer illégalement en détention et à expulser de force des centaines de réfugiés ayant fui le conflit armé en Syrie, a déclaré Amnesty International.

1. Quelle est la réaction officielle des autorités européennes?

2. Des contacts sont-ils pris avec les autorités nationales sur ce dossier?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(6 janvier 2014)

L'Union européenne est totalement au fait de la situation des réfugiés syriens et palestiniens, dont des enfants, qui sont incarcérés et expulsés d'Égypte.

La détention de réfugiés, en particulier de mineurs, sans motifs juridiques suffisants, ne respecte pas les normes internationales en matière de Droits de l'homme.

L'Union européenne a soulevé cette question lors de ses contacts avec ses interlocuteurs égyptiens, en leur demandant de clarifier le processus juridique et d'instaurer un régime temporaire pour les visas. La délégation de l'UE suit cette question de près sur le terrain, en y associant les États membres et le coordinateur régional du Haut-Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012208/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Syrians in Egypt

Egypt is illegally detaining hundreds of Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

Children, including some who are only a year old, have been detained for several weeks.

Hundreds of people have been forcibly expelled to other countries in the region, in particular to Syria.

Family members have been separated by these forced expulsions.

The Egyptian authorities must end their appalling policy of unlawfully detaining and forcibly returning hundreds of refugees who have fled the armed conflict in Syria, said Amnesty International.

1. What is the official reaction of the European authorities?

2. Has any contact been made with the national authorities over this matter?

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

The European Union is fully aware of the situation of Syrian and Palestinian refugees, including children, being detained in and being expelled from Egypt.

The detention of refugees, in particular minors, without sufficient legal grounds, does not comply with international human rights standards.

The European Union has raised this issue in its contacts with relevant Egyptian interlocutors asking to clarify the legal process and introduce a temporary visa scheme. The EU Delegation is following this matter closely on the ground, involving Member States and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Regional Coordinator.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012210/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(24. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: EU-Erweiterung am Balkan/Türkei

EU-Kommissionspräsident Barroso gab unlängst bekannt, dass es Ziel sei, alle Länder des Balkanraums in die EU aufzunehmen, um eine dauerhafte Befriedung dieses Raums zu erzielen. Dazu ergeben sich eine Reihe von Fragen:

1. Macht die Kommission dieses Ziel nun unmissverständlich zur Maxime ihres Expansionsgedankens, ungeachtet anderer Bedenken? Wo hat diese Logik dann ein zumindest geografisches Ende — im Donez-Becken, am Kaukasus, im Nahen Osten?

2. Wie soll dieses Ziel angesichts der relativ strengen Aufnahmekriterien realistischerweise durchgesetzt werden? Sollen die Kriterien zur Aufnahme gelockert werden? Wenn ja: inwiefern?

3. Da die EU bereits jetzt im Hinblick auf die Wirtschafts- und Geldpolitik sowie andere Konfliktherde auf eine Zerreißprobe zusteuert, kann die Aufnahme zerstrittener Regionen nicht auch zum Bumerang für die EU werden und ihren Niedergang herbeiführen?

4. Wie ist eine EU-Balkanerweiterung als Taktik in Hinblick auf einen Türkei-Beitritt zu sehen, nachdem Barroso angedeutet hat, dass diese Entwicklungen in mittelbarer Verbindung miteinander stehen? Welche genaue Logik verfolgt die Kommission hier zwischen Balkanerweiterung und Türkei-Beitritt?

5. Ist die Kommission angesichts der Signale aus Ankara (BRICS-Annäherung, keine Fortschrittsbemühungen bei den Beitrittskapiteln) nach wie vor noch überzeugt, dass die Türkei der EU überhaupt beitreten möchte?

Antwort von Herrn Füle im Namen der Kommission
(19. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission weist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf Artikel 49 ([1]) des Vertrags über die Europäische Union hin. Die derzeitige Erweiterungsagenda der EU bezieht sich auf die westlichen Balkanländer, die Türkei und Island.

Der EU-Erweiterungsprozess ist mit strikten, aber fairen Auflagen verknüpft, wobei die Fortschritte auf dem Weg zur Mitgliedschaft von den Maßnahmen abhängen, die jedes Land ergreift, um die geltenden Kriterien zu erfüllen, insbesondere die Kriterien von Kopenhagen, die der Europäische Rat im Jahr 1993 festgelegt hat. Für die Fortschritte jedes Landes sind seine eigenen Leistungen maßgeblich.

Die Erweiterungspolitik der EU trägt nach wie vor zu Frieden, Sicherheit und Wohlstand auf unserem Kontinent bei. Die früheren Erweiterungen haben wirtschaftliche Vorteile sowohl für die beitretenden Länder als auch für die EU insgesamt mit sich gebracht. Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-009970/2012 ([2]).

Was die strategische Verpflichtung der Türkei zum EU-Beitritt betrifft, so verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-010763/2013 ([3]). Die EU und die Türkei haben am 5. November die Beitrittsverhandlungen über Kapitel 22 — Regionalpolitik und Koordinierung der strukturpolitischen Instrumente aufgenommen.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=DE&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%206655%202008%20REV%207&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F08%2Fst06%2Fst06655-re07.de08.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009970&language=EN
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-010763&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012210/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: EU enlargement in the Balkans/Turkey

Commission President Barroso announced recently that the goal is for all the Balkan countries to join the EU in order to achieve lasting peace in this region. This gives rise to a number of questions:

1. Is the Commission now making this goal an unequivocal maxim in its thoughts on enlargement, irrespective of other considerations? Where does this logic end, at least from a geographical point of view — in the Donets basin, the Caucasus, the Middle East?

2. In view of the relatively stringent accession criteria, how, realistically, is this goal to be achieved? Are the criteria for accession to be relaxed? If so, to what extent?

3. Since the EU is already about to face an ordeal in relation to its economic and monetary policy and other sources of conflict, could the accession of fractious regions not have a boomerang effect on the EU and bring about its downfall?

4. How should the EU-Balkans enlargement as a tactical approach be viewed in relation to the accession of Turkey, since Mr Barroso has indicated that these developments are indirectly connected? What exactly is the logical connection that the Commission is making here between enlargement in the Balkans and the accession of Turkey?

5. In view of the signals coming from Ankara (BRICS convergence, lack of effort in making progress on the accession chapters), is the Commission still convinced that Turkey actually wants to join the EU?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to Article 49 ([1]) of the Treaty on European Union. The current EU enlargement agenda covers Western Balkans, Turkey and Iceland.

The EU enlargement process is built on strict but fair conditionality, with progress towards membership dependent on the steps taken by each country to meet the established criteria, in particular the Copenhagen criteria decided by European Council in 1993. The progress of each country is based on its own merits.

The EU's enlargement policy continues to contribute to peace, security and prosperity on our continent. Previous enlargements of the EU have brought economic benefits to both the acceding countries and the EU as a whole. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its previous answer to parliamentary Question E-009970/2012 ([2]).

As regards the Turkish Authorities' strategic commitment to EU accession, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to previous answer to parliamentary Question E-010763/2013 ([3]). On 5 November EU and Turkey started accession negotiations for Chapter 22 — Regional policy & coordination of structural instruments.

([1]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st06/st06655-re07.en08.pdf
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2012-009970&language=EN
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-010763&language=EN

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-012211/13
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) oraz Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(24 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Ekologiczne problemy w Bułgarii

Zwracam uwagę, na sposób przyznawania koncesji w Bułgarii. Preferowane są tam dwie grupy – firmy bułgarskie powiązane ze strukturami oligarchicznymi lub rządowymi, a jeżeli koncesję otrzymuje inna firma, to są to przedsiębiorstwa spoza UE, jak na przykład z Australii czy Kanady. Takie postępowanie pozostaje w głębokiej sprzeczności z interesami UE, a mianowicie wolnego rynku wewnętrznego, zwłaszcza podczas kryzysu gospodarczego.

Bułgaria posiada bogactwa naturalne, których wydobycie jest koncesjonowane, aby wszystko odbywało się zgodnie z prawem. Takie koncesje na wydobycie metali szlachetnych zostały przyznane trzem firmom: kanadyjskiej firmie Dundee Precious Metals, firmie Ełacjte-Med oraz firmie Asarel Medet.

Dowiedziałem się, że działalność tych dwóch firm stoi w pełnej sprzeczności z ustawodawstwem Unii Europejskiej, jak również powodują one ogromne szkody dla środowiska naturalnego w okolicy – ponad 800 hektarów lasu zostało zniszczone, życie wielu dzikich zwierzętom, jak i ludzi, jest poważne zagrożone. W związku z tym chciałbym zapytać Komisję:

1. Czy Komisja zamierza zbadać obydwa przypadki?

2. Jakie działania podejmie Komisja w przypadku wykrycia nieprawidłowości?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Janeza Potočnika w imieniu Komisji
(17 grudnia 2013 r.)

Komisja otrzymała skargi dotyczące działań i projektów przedsiębiorstw wymienionych przez Szanownych Panów Posłów i dokonała wymiany informacji z władzami bułgarskimi. Opierając się na dostępnych informacjach, Komisja nie zidentyfikowała do tej pory żadnego naruszenia odpowiednich przepisów prawa UE.

Sprawy, które są regulowane jedynie przez prawo bułgarskie (np. decyzje dotyczące udzielania koncesji na wydobycie metali szlachetnych) leżą w wyłącznej kompetencji władz bułgarskich.

Komisja będzie nadal ściśle monitorować realizację działań i projektów w zakresie wydobycia metali szlachetnych w Bułgarii w świetle prawodawstwa Unii, a w razie konieczności podejmuje odpowiednie działania.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012211/13
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD), Jacek Włosowicz (EFD), Jacek Olgierd Kurski (EFD) and Zbigniew Ziobro (EFD)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Environmental problems in Bulgaria

Concessions in Bulgaria are granted preferentially to one of two types of company: either Bulgarian companies with links to oligarchic or governmental structures, or companies from countries outside the EU such as Australia or Canada. This is at complete odds with the EU's goal of a free internal market, in particular at a time of economic crisis.

Bulgaria grants concessions for extraction of its natural resources in order to ensure that the law is followed. Concessions of this kind have been awarded to three companies for the extraction of precious metals: the Canadian company Dundee Precious Metals, Ellatzite-Med and Asarel Medet.

It has come to my attention that the activities of these three companies run completely counter to EU legislation and are causing great harm to the surrounding environment. Over 800 hectares of forest have been destroyed and the lives of many wild animals, and indeed human beings, are at great risk. I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

1. Does the Commission intend to examine these three cases?

2. What action will it take if it finds evidence of irregularities?

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

The Commission has received complaints concerning the activities and projects of the companies mentioned by the Honourable Members and has exchanged information with the Bulgarian authorities. Based on the information at its disposal, the Commission has not identified any breaches of the respective EU legislation so far.

Matters which are regulated exclusively by Bulgarian law (e.g. decisions concerning granting concessions for extractions of precious metals) are in the sole competence of the Bulgarian authorities.

The Commission will continue to follow closely the implementation of the activities and projects for extraction of precious metals in Bulgaria in the light of the Union's legislation, and will if necessary take appropriate action.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012212/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(24. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Auftragsvergabe in Bulgarien — Bau der Sporthalle „Arena Armeec"

Im Juli 2011 wurde in Sofia die Sporthalle „Arena Armeec" erbaut. Hierbei handelt es sich um ein durch die EU gefördertes Projekt. Bürgerberichten zufolge nahmen an der Ausschreibung für dieses Projekt die österreichische STRABAG und das bulgarische Unternehmen Glavbolgarstroi (GBS) teil.

Laut den mir vorliegenden Berichten war das Angebot der STRABAG um 3,8 Mio. EUR niedriger als das Angebot der GBS. Auch bei den Parkplätzen lag die STRABAG AG offenbar eindeutig vorne: Gesetzlich waren 1 153 Parkplätze vorgeschrieben, das Angebot der STRABAG AG belief sich auf 1 206 Parkplätze, das der GBS auf nur 1 006.

Bei der Auswertung erzielte die STRABAG daher zunächst deutlich mehr Punkte. Schlussendlich erhielt jedoch die bulgarische GBS den Zuschlag, weil sie im Nachhinein ihr Preisanbot gesenkt hatte.

Laut der Vergaberichtlinie müssten nach einer Änderung einer Ausschreibung alle Unternehmen erneut aufgefordert werden, Angebote zu unterbereiten. Dies ist nach meiner Kenntnis in diesem Fall nicht erfolgt.

1. Ist der Kommission der oben dargestellte Sachverhalt bekannt?

2. Wenn nein: Wird die Kommission die Causa untersuchen?

3. Wenn ja: Wurde gegen EU-Vergaberecht verstoßen?

4. Wie wird die Kommission weiter vorgehen, falls sie zu dem Schluss gelangt, dass das gegenständliche Vergabeverfahren in Bulgarien EU-rechtswidrig war,

5. Gibt es weitere Beispiele für ein ähnliches Vorgehen der bulgarischen Behörden in anderen Vergaberechtsfällen, in denen Unternehmen aus anderen Mitgliedstaaten ungerechtfertigterweise schlechter gestellt wurden als bulgarische Unternehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(7. Januar 2014)

Der vom Herrn Abgeordneten vorgetragene Sachverhalt wurde der Kommission bisher nicht zur Kenntnis gebracht. Daher sieht sie sich nicht in der Lage, eine förmliche rechtliche Analyse des in Rede stehenden öffentlichen Vergabeverfahrens vorzunehmen.

Generell ist der Kommission nicht bekannt, das bulgarische Bieter systematisch zum Nachteil von Bietern aus anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten bevorzugt werden.

Die Kommission hat keine Kenntnis von einer etwaigen finanziellen Beteiligung der EU am Bau der Sporthalle „Arena Armeec".

Die Kommission wird in dieser Sache weitere Informationen einholen und erforderlichenfalls geeignete Maßnahmen treffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012212/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Awarding of contracts in Bulgaria — construction of the 'Arena Armeec' sports hall

In July 2011, the sports hall 'Arena Armeec' was built in Sofia. This was a project that was supported by the EU. According to reports from citizens, the Austrian company STRABAG and the Bulgarian company Glavbolgarstroi (GBS) participated in the call for tenders for this project.

The reports I have received indicate that the tender submitted by STRABAG was EUR 3.8 million lower than the tender submitted by GBS. As regards the parking spaces, too, STRABAG AG was apparently clearly ahead: 1 153 parking spaces were laid down by law; the bid from STRABAG AG provided for 1 206 parking spaces and the one from GBS only 1 006.

In the evaluation, STRABAG therefore obtained significantly more points to start with. In the end, however, the Bulgarian GBS was awarded the contract, because it subsequently reduced the price it was offering.

According to the Procurement Directive, following an amendment to a call for tender, all companies should be invited to submit a new tender. To my knowledge, this did not happen in this case.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the facts described above?

2. If not, will it investigate the matter?

3. If so, was there a violation of EU procurement law?

4. How will the Commission proceed if it should conclude that this tendering procedure in Bulgaria was contrary to EC law?

5. Are there other examples of similar behaviour by the Bulgarian authorities in other procurement cases in which companies from other Member States were unjustifiably placed in a less favourable position than Bulgarian companies?

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

The situation referred to by the Honourable Member has not been brought to the attention of the Commission. The Commission is therefore not in a position to provide a formal legal analysis concerning the corresponding public procurement procedure.

In a general manner, the Commission is not aware of any systematic practice concerning a potential favorable treatment reserved to the Bulgarian bidders to the detriment of bidders from other EU Member States.

The Commission is not aware of any involvement of EU co-financing in the construction of the 'Arena Armeec' sports hall.

The Commission intends to collect further information on this case and, if necessary, take appropriate further actions.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012213/13
à la Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE) et Michel Dantin (PPE)
(24 octobre 2013)

Objet: Projet d'accord de libre-échange entre l'Union européenne et le Canada

La conclusion du projet d'accord bilatéral envisagé entre l'Union européenne et le Canada est suspendue à un accord politique entre les deux parties qui nécessite désormais un vote du Parlement européen.

L'ouverture d'un contingent à droit nul qui y est envisagée pour les exportations bovines canadiennes — que ce soit du côté de la Commission, dont la ligne rouge supposée est de 40 000 tonnes, ou du côté canadien, qui demande a minima 58 000 tonnes — sera, si elle est effective, complètement déstructurante pour la filière européenne.

Outre le fait que les normes de production de part et d'autre de l'Atlantique (réglementations en ce qui concerne le bien-être, en matière sanitaire ou environnementale, etc.) constituent une distorsion de concurrence inacceptable pour la filière bovine européenne, l'ouverture d'un tel contingent à des produits qui ne respectent pas les normes communautaires constitue une grave entorse au principe d'une concurrence loyale et équitable.

Comment la Commission entend-elle gérer ces distorsions de commerce inacceptables?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(16 décembre 2013)

L'accord politique auquel sont parvenus, le 18 octobre 2013, le premier ministre canadien, M. Harper, et le président de la Commission, M. Barroso, envisage l'ouverture, à la date d'entrée en vigueur de l'accord économique et commercial global entre le Canada et l'UE, d'un contingent tarifaire de l'UE en faveur du Canada concernant 45 838 tonnes de viande bovine, exprimées en équivalent poids carcasse, dont 30 838 tonnes de viande bovine fraîche.

La viande bovine est sans aucun doute un produit agricole sensible pour l'UE, et la Commission est consciente que la capacité d'ouvrir le marché de l'UE est limitée. Pour cette raison, dans les négociations commerciales internationales, la Commission réserve un traitement particulier à la viande bovine, et notamment aux morceaux de grande valeur frais et réfrigérés, et chacune des concessions est soigneusement évaluée, comme ce fut le cas pour l'accord économique et commercial global.

En ce qui concerne les normes de production au Canada, en l'absence de normes internationales reconnues dans des domaines tels que le bien-être des animaux, l'UE ne peut pas imposer de restrictions aux importations en provenance de pays tiers en raison de différences de normes. Toutefois, cela n'a pas empêché la Commission de poursuivre un programme audacieux dans ce domaine dans le cadre des négociations bilatérales, par exemple par la promotion de la coopération renforcée entre les parties.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012213/13
to the Commission
Jean-Pierre Audy (PPE) and Michel Dantin (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Draft free trade agreement between the European Union and Canada

The conclusion of the draft bilateral agreement between the European Union and Canada depends on a political agreement between the two parties, which now needs to be voted on in Parliament.

Opening a duty-free quota, as planned for Canadian beef exports — supposedly the Commission's limit is 40 000 tonnes, while the Canadians are demanding a minimum of 58 000 tonnes — will, if it comes into force, be completely devastating for the European beef sector.

Beyond the fact that production standards on both sides of the Atlantic (regulations on welfare, health or the environment, etc.) represent an unacceptable distortion of competition for the European beef sector, opening such a quota for products that do not meet EU standards is a serious infringement of the principle of fair competition.

How does the Commission plan to deal with these unacceptable distortions of trade?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

The political agreement of 18 October 2013 between Canadian Prime Minister Mr Harper and Commission President Mr Barroso envisages the opening, at the date of entry into force of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Canada and the EU, of an EU tariff rate quota in favour of Canada of 45.838 tonnes of beef, expressed in carcass weight equivalent, of which 30.838 tonnes are fresh beef.

Beef is certainly a sensitive agricultural product for the EU and the Commission is conscious that the capacity to open the EU market is limited. For that reason, in international trade negotiations, the Commission reserves a special treatment to bovine meat, and notably to the high value chilled and fresh cuts, and any concession is carefully evaluated, as has been the case for CETA.

As regards production standards in Canada, in the absence of internationally recognised standards in areas such as animal welfare, the EU cannot impose restrictions to imports from third countries on the grounds of different standards. However, this has not prevented the Commission from pursuing an offensive agenda in this field in the framework of bilateral negotiations, for instance by promoting enhanced cooperation between the parties.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012214/13
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Programul de lucru al Comisiei Europene pentru anul 2014

În data de 22 octombrie a fost aprobat Programul de lucru al Comisiei Europene pentru anul 2014. Printre altele, Comisia intenționează să propună, conform anexei documentului, o Comunicare privind statul de drept în Uniunea Europeană. Această comunicare va reprezenta un cadru de reflecție care să asigure în viitor un răspuns la eventuale provocări cu care statul de drept s-ar putea confrunta în Uniunea Europeană.

Intenționează Comisia să adopte această comunicare în actualul mandat? Poate oferi Comisia detalii cu privire la principiile care vor sta la baza comunicării? Se are în vedere ca acest document să conțină și o serie de indicatori care să permită o eventuală evaluare a cazurilor în care statul de drept este pus în pericol în Uniunea Europeană?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(8 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia îl invită pe distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul oferit de Comisie la întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-009924/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012214/13
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Commission Work Programme for 2014

The Commission Work Programme for 2014 was approved on 22 October. As part of this, the Commission intends to present, according to the document's annex, a communication on the rule of law in the European Union. This communication will provide a framework for reflection for ensuring in future a response to any challenges which the rule of law might encounter in the European Union.

Does the Commission intend to adopt this communication during the present mandate? Can the Commission provide details of the principles which the communication will be based on? Does this document also intend to include a series of indicators allowing a possible assessment of the instances where the rule of law is at risk in the European Union?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(8 January 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-009924/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012215/13
a la Comisión
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D) y María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(24 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Aplicación de la Directiva sobre cogeneración

La Directiva 2004/8/CE sobre cogeneración es un importante instrumento para que Europa logre responder a los desafíos energéticos. A medida que avanza en su control de la incorporación de la Directiva a las respectivas legislaciones nacionales, la Comisión ha ido tomando conciencia de los obstáculos administrativos y de otro tipo que entorpecen la expansión de la cogeneración en los Estados miembros.

En el caso español, uno de los principales aspectos por los que la cogeneración no ha tenido un progreso significativo en los últimos años es la transitoriedad de los regímenes económicos y legales. Es indudable la necesidad de un marco legal estable que garantice una rentabilidad razonable a largo plazo para los promotores de plantas de cogeneración. ¿Puede la Comisión informar de las medidas que el Estado español ha adoptado en este sentido?

Otro punto importante para la viabilidad de cualquier proyecto consiste en disponer de conexión a la red. El hecho de que las compañías eléctricas que gestionan la red sean en ocasiones las mismas que compiten como suministradores de energía eléctrica con proyectos de cogeneración ha llevado a situaciones de falta de competencia. A este respecto, ¿puede informar la Comisión de si el Estado español ha llevado a cabo la necesaria articulación de mecanismos administrativos de control para el cumplimiento del derecho de acceso a la red?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

Según la evaluación de la Comisión, España ha cumplido sus obligaciones jurídicas en virtud de la Directiva 2004/8/CE ([1]), sobre cogeneración. La Directiva 2012/27/UE ([2]), sobre la eficiencia energética, que ha derogado la Directiva sobre cogeneración, establece normas más concretas para fomentar la cogeneración. Estas normas incluyen la exigencia de tomar las medidas adecuadas para desarrollar el potencial de rentabilidad de la cogeneración de alta eficiencia (artículo 14), así como la de asegurar un acceso prioritario o garantizado a la red de la electricidad producida mediante cogeneración de alta eficiencia (artículo 15, apartado 5). La Comisión evaluará la conformidad de las medidas de aplicación adoptadas por España tras la finalización del plazo para la transposición general el 5 de junio de 2014.

([1]) Directiva 2004/8/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de febrero de 2004, relativa al fomento de la cogeneración sobre la base de la demanda de calor útil en el mercado interior de la energía y por la que se modifica la Directiva 92/42/CEE, DO L 52 de 21.2.2004.

([2]) Directiva 2012/27/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2012, relativa a la eficiencia energética, por la que se modifican las Directivas 2009/125/CE y 2010/30/UE, y por la que se derogan las Directivas 2004/8/CE y 2006/32/CE, DO L 315 de 14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012215/13
to the Commission
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: The application of the directive on cogeneration

Directive 2004/8/EC on cogeneration is an important tool intended to enable Europe to meet its energy challenges. As it monitors the implementation of the directive into national law across the EU, the Commission has become aware of administrative and other obstacles that hinder the expansion of cogeneration in the Member States.

In the case of Spain, one of the main obstacles hindering the progress of cogeneration in recent years has been the transitory nature of economic and legal systems. There is a clear need for a stable legal framework that guarantees reasonable long-term profitability for the promoters of cogeneration plants. Can the Commission state what steps Spain has taken in this regard?

The availability of a connection to the grid is another factor that affects the viability of any project. In certain cases, the fact that the electricity companies that manage the grid are sometimes competing as electricity suppliers with cogeneration projects has led to a lack of competition. In view of the above, can the Commission state whether Spain has implemented the administrative mechanisms required to monitor compliance with the right to access the grid?

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

According to the Commission's assessment, Spain has complied with its legal obligations under Directive 2004/8/EC ([1]) on cogeneration. Directive 2012/27/EU ([2]) on energy efficiency, which has repealed the Cogeneration Directive sets more detailed rules to promote cogeneration. These rules include a requirement that adequate measures are taken to develop the cost-effective potential for high-efficiency cogeneration (Art. 14) and a requirement to ensure priority or guaranteed access to the grid of electricity from high-efficiency cogeneration (Art. 15.5). The Commission will assess the conformity of Spain's implementation measures after the general transposition deadline of 5 June 2014.

([1]) Directive 2004/8/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 February 2004 on the promotion of cogeneration based on a useful heat demand in the internal energy market and amending Directive 92/42/EEC, OJ L 52, 21.2.2004.

([2]) Directive 2012/27/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on energy efficiency, amending Directives 2009/125/EC and 2010/30/EU and repealing Directives 2004/8/EC and 2006/32/EC Text with EEA relevance, OJ L 315, 14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012216/13
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Funding for environmental projects

Will the Commission make funding available to Member States to enable them to fund nationally implemented environmental projects such as the National Parks and Wildlife Scheme (NPWS)?

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

Although EU regulations for the next multi-annual financial framework have still to be finalised, the Commission's proposals include funding opportunities for environment projects in the key EU funds. As the competent authority in Ireland for EU nature legislation the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) will have a particular interest in EU funds that support nature and biodiversity projects, especially for the management and restoration of sites in the Natura 2000 network of protected areas. Ireland has already developed a prioritised action framework for Natura 2000, indicating its priorities for action and potential use of EU funding. It will be for the Irish authorities to avail themselves of the EU funding opportunities, having regard to the rules governing the use of the funds. For example, this may be through the EU rural development programme for Ireland or making applications for projects under the future LIFE programme.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012217/13
adresată Comisiei
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: Reducerea investițiilor efectuate de către autoritățile locale

În Uniunea Europeană autoritățile locale și regionale sunt responsabile pentru 65% din investițiile publice. Conform unui studiu publicat în 2013 de către Banca Europeană de Investiții și de Comitetul Regiunilor, criza economică a afectat capacitățile de investiții ale municipalităților și ale regiunilor. Doar câteva state membre susțin în continuare investițiile la nivel local, în timp ce alte state membre au decis să înghețe sau să suspende sprijinul acordat investițiilor efectuate de către autoritățile locale.

Aceste reduceri afectează investițiile în dezvoltare regională, comerț și piața muncii, agricultură, transport și cercetare. Măsurile prelungite de austeritate și reducerea bugetelor publice înseamnă că autoritățile locale nu sunt în măsură să întreprindă acțiunile necesare realizării obiectivelor Europa 2020.

Ce măsuri întreprinde Comisia pentru a îmbunătăți dispozițiile în vigoare astfel încât autoritățile locale din regiunile cele mai afectate de criză să-și poată îmbunătăți capacitatea de absorbție fondurilor structurale și de coeziune, pentru a putea fi în măsură să sprijine în continuare investițiile la nivel local?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(16 decembrie 2013)

Începând cu anul 2008, Comisia a introdus o serie de măsuri pentru a îmbunătăți capacitatea autorităților locale de a absorbi fondurile acordate în cadrul politicii de coeziune. În acest sens, o măsură esențială este creșterea ratelor de cofinanțare cu 10 puncte procentuale în cazul țărilor care beneficiază de asistență financiară, reducând astfel contribuția națională într-o perioadă caracterizată de constrângeri bugetare severe. Un alt exemplu este reprogramarea (deplasarea fondurilor între diferite priorități din cadrul programelor) care a avut loc în numeroase țări, facilitând astfel investițiile UE, sporind gradul de absorbție a fondurilor și furnizând rezultate mai bine orientate. Un ultim exemplu al măsurilor pe care Comisia le-a luat în considerare în cazul țărilor celor mai afectate de criza economică este cel al eliberării mai rapide a fondurilor UE și al plăților în avans suplimentare.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012217/13
to the Commission
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Reduction in investment by local authorities

In the European Union, local and regional authorities are responsible for 65% of public investment. According to a study published in 2013 by the European Investment Bank and the Committee of the Regions, the economic crisis has affected the investment capacities of cities and regions. Only a few Member States continue to support local investment, while others have decided to freeze or stop financial support for investments led by local authorities.

These cuts affect investment in regional development, commercial and labour affairs, agriculture, transport and research. The prolonged austerity measures and cuts in public budgets mean that local authorities are not able to take the action needed to achieve the Europe 2020 targets.

What is the Commission doing to improve the existing provisions so that local authorities from the regions most affected by the crisis can improve their capacity to absorb structural and cohesion funds, so as to be able to continue to invest at local level?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(16 December 2013)

Since 2008, the Commission has introduced several measures to improve the capacity of local authorities to absorb cohesion policy funding. Most notable is the increase of co-financing rates of 10 percentage points for countries under financial assistance, which reduces the national contribution at a time of severe budget constraints. Another example is reprogramming (the moving of funds between different priorities within programmes) which has taken place in many countries, thus facilitating EU investments and increasing the absorption of funds and providing more targeted results. A final example of the measures the Commission has taken in consideration of the countries most affected by the economic crisis, was the quicker release of EU funding and additional advance payments.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-012218/13
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 octombrie 2013)

Subiect: VP/HR — Restricții financiare impuse unor înalți oficiali sudanezi responsabili de încălcări grave ale drepturilor omului

În septembrie 2013, forțele de securitate sudaneze au reprimat un val de proteste îndreptate împotriva regimului autoritar al lui Omar al-Bashir. Peste 800 de activiști au fost arestați și până la 100 de persoane au fost ucise, inclusiv tineri și copii. Aceste noi încălcări ale drepturilor omului confirmă faptul că regimul sudanez va continua să ignore standardele internaționale și voința sudanezilor, așa cum a făcut-o și în trecut.

Decizia 2011/423/PESC a Consiliului privind măsuri restrictive împotriva Sudanului și a Sudanului de Sud a reintrodus sancțiuni financiare și limitarea dreptului de călătorie „împotriva persoanelor care împiedică procesul de pace, constituie o amenințare la adresa stabilității în Darfur și în regiune, încalcă dreptul internațional umanitar sau dreptul internațional al drepturilor omului sau comit alte atrocități, încalcă embargoul asupra armelor și/sau se fac responsabile de survolări militare cu caracter ofensiv în regiunea Darfur și deasupra acesteia". Cu toate acestea, doar patru persoane se află pe această listă, care nu a fost actualizată din 2005.

Date fiind gravele încălcări ale drepturilor omului de care se face responsabil regimul sudanez, intenționează Comisia să actualizeze lista cu persoanele care sunt supuse restricțiilor, astfel încât să includă și alți înalți oficiali ce se fac vinovați de încălcări ale dreptului internațional al drepturilor omului sau de comiterea altor atrocități?

Răspuns dat de dna Ashton Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele Comisiei, în numele Comisiei
(18 decembrie 2013)

Într-o declarație din data de 30 septembrie, Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele Comisiei și-a exprimat profunda îngrijorare cu privire la rapoartele privind violențele și pierderea semnificativă de vieți omenești în cadrul protestelor desfășurate în orașe din Sudan în septembrie, condamnând violența și îndemnând toate părțile implicate să dea dovadă de reținere maximă. Înaltul Reprezentant/Vicepreședintele Comisiei a solicitat, în special, guvernului Sudanului să se abțină de la utilizarea excesivă a forței și să respecte libertatea de exprimare, accesul la mass-media și dreptul la întrunire pașnică. Persoanelor reținute ar trebui să li se ofere posibilitatea de a beneficia de un proces echitabil, mass-media ar trebui să fie autorizată să își desfășoare liber activitatea și ar trebui efectuată o investigare credibilă a incidentelor care au dus la pierderea de vieți omenești, vătămări grave sau daune materiale.

Aspectele menționate în această declarație sunt monitorizate de către Delegația UE din Sudan, iar drepturile omului sunt promovate în cadrul contactelor dintre reprezentanții UE și cei ai guvernului Republicii Sudan.

Decizia 2011/423/PESC a Consiliului pune în aplicare Rezoluția 1591 (2005) a Consiliului de Securitate al ONU (CSONU) și deciziile adoptate de Comitetul de sancțiuni instituit în temeiul acestora. CSONU analizează în mod constant situația din Sudan, inclusiv prin discutarea rapoartelor periodice elaborate de Comitetul de sancțiuni. UE și-a exprimat recent, prin intermediul statelor sale membre în cadrul CSONU, dorința ca Comitetul de sancțiuni să prezinte recomandări privind o mai mare eficace a regimului de sancțiuni. În eventualitatea în care vor fi făcute și puse în aplicare astfel de recomandări, Decizia 2011/423/PESC a Consiliului va fi adaptată în consecință.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012218/13
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Monica Luisa Macovei (PPE)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: VP/HR — Financial restrictions on senior Sudanese officials responsible for serious human rights breaches

In September 2013 the Sudanese security forces repressed a wave of protests against the authoritarian regime of Omar al-Bashir. More than 800 activists were arrested and up to 100 people were killed, including young people and children. These new human rights violations confirm that the Sudanese regime will continue to ignore international standards and the will of its people, as it has done in the past.

Council Decision 2011/423/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Sudan and South Sudan reinstated financial sanctions and travel limitations for 'individuals who impede the peace process, constitute a threat to stability in Darfur and the region, commit violations of international humanitarian or human rights law or other atrocities, violate the arms embargo and/or are responsible for offensive military overflights in and over the Darfur region'. However, only four individuals are on this list, which has not been updated since 2005.

Given the serious human rights violations for which the Sudanese regime is responsible, does the Commission intend to update the list of individuals who are subject to restrictions, so as to include other senior officials responsible for committing violations of international human rights law or other atrocities?

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

In a Statement issued on 30 September the HR/VP expressed her deep concern over reports of violence and significant loss of life during protests in cities across Sudan in September, condemning violence and urging all parties to exercise maximum restraint. The HR/VP called in particular on the Government of Sudan to refrain from excessive use of force and to respect the freedom of expression, media access and the right of 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.

The HR/VP follows up on this Statement through the EU Delegation in Sudan and by promoting human rights in EU contacts with representatives of the Government of Sudan.

Council Decision 2011/423/CFSP implements UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1591 (2005) and the decisions of the Sanctions Committee established thereunder. The UNSC keeps the situation in Sudan under constant consideration, including by discussing regular reports of the Sanctions Committee. The EU through its Member States at the UNSC has recently expressed its wish that the Sanctions Committee makes recommendations on how to make the sanctions regime more effective. Should those recommendations be made and put into practice, Council Decision 2011/423/CFSP would be adapted accordingly.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012220/13
a la Comisión
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D)
(24 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Situación actualizada del complejo Ciudad de la Luz en Alicante

La Decisión de la Comisión de 8 de mayo de 2012 fijó los resultados de la investigación sobre la financiación del complejo Ciudad de la Luz por parte de la Generalitat Valenciana. Se concluyó que 265 millones de euros concedidos por la Generalitat Valenciana a los estudios cinematográficos Ciudad de la Luz no se facilitaron en condiciones de mercado y el beneficiario tiene que devolverlos. En la Comunicación de la Comisión sobre la política de recuperación (DO C 272 de 15.11.2007, p. 4.) se expone la manera en que se deben ejecutar las decisiones de la Comisión por las que se ordena a los Estados miembros que recuperen las ayudas estatales ilegales e incompatibles. Sin embargo, la Comisión comunicó a este Parlamento que, habida cuenta de la difícil situación financiera del complejo Ciudad de la Luz, puesta de manifiesto por sus cuentas publicadas y señalada durante años por la Sindicatura de Cuentas de Valencia, el mencionado complejo no podrá reembolsar todo el importe de la ayuda, y la recuperación deberá realizarse a través de su liquidación y la venta de sus activos. Parece ser que Ciudad de la Luz cesó su actividad comercial en febrero de 2013 y está a la venta desde entonces. Se están negociando las condiciones en las que esa venta se hará efectiva de un modo acorde a la legislación europea para impedir, por ejemplo, que haya una transferencia de las ayudas al comprador.

— En la negociación bilateral entre la Comisión Europea y el Reino de España para solventar la cuestión, ¿qué papel juega la Generalitat Valenciana como responsable de las ayudas de estado ilegales?

— ¿Qué soluciones válidas ha propuesto la Generalitat o/y el Reino de España para solventar el problema?

— ¿Qué propuestas del Reino de España o de la Generalitat, en su caso, fueron rechazadas por la Comisión por encontrar que no eran acordes a la legislación europea sobre competencia?

Dado que el cese de la actividad como estudios cinematográficos implica el cese de la distorsión en el mercado pero no exime de la devolución de las ayudas de estado recibidas ilegalmente,

— ¿ha impuesto la Comisión al Reino de España el cese de la actividad como estudios cinematográficos o ha sido una decisión del Reino de España?

— ¿establecerá la Comisión sanciones y, en su caso, cuáles, si finalmente Ciudad de la Luz no puede devolver el dinero público dada su situación financiera?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de diciembre de 2013)

La Comisión quiere destacar que la normativa de la UE no señala qué órgano del Estado miembro afectado debe encargarse de la ejecución práctica de las decisiones de recuperación. A este respecto, la Comisión señala a Su Señoría la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-011152/2013 ([1]), en la que se describe el proceso de negociación con las autoridades españolas sobre los aspectos técnicos del proceso de licitación para la venta del complejo Ciudad de la Luz.

La Comisión desea recordar también que el objetivo de la recuperación se alcanza cuando se ha reembolsado la ayuda ilegal e incompatible y se ha restablecido la situación existente antes de la concesión de la ayuda. En el caso de las empresas insolventes, cuando no se puede recuperar la ayuda en su totalidad, el TJE ha declarado que la liquidación del beneficiario puede considerarse una alternativa aceptable a la plena recuperación. La Comunicación de la Comisión relativa a la recuperación establece que la recuperación puede considerarse debidamente ejecutada cuando se ha liquidado la empresa y sus activos se venden en condiciones de mercado. Ello implica, además, el cese definitivo de las actividades de la empresa que había recibido la ayuda estatal ilegal e incompatible ([2]). Por lo que respecta a la posibilidad de imponer sanciones, el TJE tiene derecho a hacerlo si el Tribunal considera que el Estado miembro en cuestión no ha cumplido sus obligaciones incluso después de una primera sentencia.

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

([2]) Asunto C-610/10, Comisión/España, apartado 104.
Asunto C-610/10, Comisión/España, apartado 104.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012220/13
to the Commission
Josefa Andrés Barea (S&D)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: The current situation of the Ciudad de la Luz complex in Alicante

The Commission decision of 8 May 2012 set forth the results of the investigation into the funding of the Ciudad de la Luz complex by the Valencian Regional Government. It was concluded that the EUR 265 million given by the Valencian Regional Government to the Ciudad de la Luz film studios was not granted under market conditions and that the beneficiary must return the sum in question. The Commission's communication on recovery policy (OJ C 272/4 of 15 November 2007, p. 4) sets down the way in which Commission decisions ordering Member States to recover unlawful and incompatible state aid must be enforced. Bearing in mind the financial difficulties faced by the Ciudad de la Luz complex, which are reflected in its published accounts and have been highlighted for years by the Valencian Court of Auditors, the Commission has informed this Parliament that the complex will be unable to return all of the aid, which must be recovered by winding up the complex and selling its assets. Ciudad de la Luz seems to have ceased commercial activity in February 2013 and has been up for sale ever since. The conditions under which this sale will take place are being negotiated in accordance with European legislation to prevent aid from being transferred to the purchaser.

— In the bilateral negotiations held between the Commission and the Spanish Government to settle this matter, what role is being played by the Valencian Regional Government as the provider of the unlawful state aid?

— What valid solutions has the Valencian Regional Government and/or the Spanish Government proposed to resolve the problem?

— What proposals made by Spain or by the Valencian Regional Government have been rejected by the Commission because they contravened European competition law?

Although the complex is no longer distorting the market since it has ceased to operate as a film studio, it is still obliged to return the unlawfully obtained state aid.

— In view of the above, was the decision to force the complex to cease operating as a film studio taken by the Commission or by the Spanish Government?

— If the Ciudad de la Luz complex ultimately proves to be unable to return the public funds due to its financial situation, will the Commission impose penalties? If so, which?

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

The Commission would like to emphasise that EC law does not prescribe which organ of the Member State concerned should be in charge of the practical implementation of a recovery decision. In this respect, the Commission draws the attention of the Honourable Member to the reply to Written Question E-011152/2013 ([1]), describing the process of negotiation with the Spanish authorities on the technicalities of the tender process for the sale of the Ciudad de la Luz complex.

The Commission wishes to recall also that the purpose of recovery is accomplished once the unlawful and incompatible aid is repaid and the situation as it existed prior to the granting of the aid is restored. In the case of insolvent companies, where it is not possible fully to recover the aid, the ECJ has stated that the liquidation of the beneficiary can be regarded as an acceptable alternative to full recovery. The Commission's Recovery Notice stipulates that recovery can be considered properly executed when the company is liquidated and its assets are sold under market conditions ([2]). Furthermore, it implies the definitive cessation of the activities of the undertaking, which has received the illegal and incompatible state aid ([3]). As for the possibility to impose penalties, the ECJ has the right to do so if the Court finds that the Member State in question has failed to fulfil its obligations even after a first judgment.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) §61-63 of the Recovery Notice 2007/C0272/05.
([3]) Case 610/10, Commission v Spain, para 104.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012221/13
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(24 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Vervolgvragen (4) subsidieverlening aan Egypte

Op 24 oktober 2013 heeft de heer Füle namens de Commissie antwoord gegeven op schriftelijke vraag E-009928/2013. Daarin schrijft hij onder andere: „In het verslag [van de Rekenkamer] is er sprake van „tekortkomingen", die volgens de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger het gevolg waren van externe factoren waarop zij geen invloed hadden. De Rekenkamer erkende in haar verslag dat de EU-steun onder moeilijke omstandigheden is verleend, maar gaf geen concrete aanwijzingen dat efficiëntere alternatieven beschikbaar of mogelijk waren."

1. Welke „tekortkomingen" betreft het hier, en van welke „externe factoren" waren deze het gevolg? Waarom hadden de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger hier geen invloed op?

2. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het feit dat zowel zijzelf als de hoge vertegenwoordiger geen invloed hadden op de „externe factoren", die leidden tot „tekortkomingen", bevestigt dat de subsidieverlening aan Egypte een foutieve beslissing is geweest? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat de combinatie van „onder moeilijke omstandigheden" en het gebrek aan „efficiëntere alternatieven" eveneens bevestigt dat de subsidieverlening „duister" en foutief is geweest? Zo ja, is de Commissie er derhalve toe bereid dit direct terug te draaien?

Voorts schrijft de heer Füle: „[Dankzij] de aanhoudende druk van de Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger werd bijvoorbeeld een subcomité mensenrechten opgericht en werd 10 % van de bilaterale begroting gereserveerd voor de ondersteuning van mensenrechten, goed bestuur en democratie, met inbegrip van steun voor kinder- en vrouwenrechten. Dit heeft concrete positieve en meetbare gevolgen gehad."

3. Hoe specificeert de Commissie de hier genoemde „concrete positieve en meetbare gevolgen"? Waarin uiten de door de Commissie geïmpliceerde positieve ontwikkelingen zich wat betreft „mensenrechten, goed bestuur en democratie, met inbegrip van steun voor kinder- en vrouwenrechten"?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(18 december 2013)

1. Het verslag van de Rekenkamer vermeldt tekortkomingen met betrekking tot het beheer van de overheidsfinanciën, waarbij wordt erkend dat langzaam vooruitgang wordt gemaakt met name in het informatiesysteem voor financieel beheer door de overheid of het uitgavenkader op middellange termijn. De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger hebben ook gewezen op de nodige geleidelijke verwezenlijking van zulke doelstellingen voor de middellange termijn en de institutionele en op de politieke instabiliteit die sinds 2011 heerst.

2. De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger zijn niet van mening dat het verlenen van subsidies aan Egypte een verkeerde beslissing is geweest. Zij hebben veeleer de steun aangepast aan de veranderende situatie. Sinds augustus 2011 werden nog geen nieuwe begrotingssteunmaatregelen vastgesteld. Overigens zijn de interne regels van het verlenen van begrotingssteun in januari 2013 verscherpt. De Commissie en de hoge vertegenwoordiger hebben dan ook de derde uitbetaling van 41 miljoen EUR van het programma voor sectorale steun voor het onderwijs opgeschort. Zoals de Raad Buitenlandse Zaken het benadrukte, waren de meeste aanbevelingen van de Rekenkamer sinds de verslagperiode al opgevolgd.

3. De EU heeft de meest tastbare resultaten bereikt in het kader van het programma voor de bevordering en de bescherming van de rechten van de mens, waarin met name de volgende problemen voor het eerst op grote schaal zijn aangepakt: genitale verminking van vrouwen (belangrijke rechtszaken werden met succes ondersteund, een gemeenschappelijke verklaring op het gebied van gezinsempowerment werd uitgebracht, verschillende mediacampagnes werden gevoerd om acties van conservatieve fundamentalistische groeperingen te neutraliseren, in 10 gouvernementen werd een dialoog op gang gebracht via 20 niet-gouvernementele organisaties (ngo's)) en waarborging van de rechten en verbetering van de bestaansmiddelen van vrouwen (een nationaal statistisch overzicht werd ontwikkeld, met de regering werd overeengekomen om de afgifte van 67 000 identiteitskaarten te versoepelen en een sociale mediacampagne werd opgezet en is nog steeds aan de gang).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012221/13
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(24 October 2013)

Subject: Follow-up questions (4) concerning subsidies granted to Egypt

On 24 October 2013, Mr Füle replied on behalf of the Commission to Written Question E-009928/2013. In the answer, he stated, amongst other things, that 'The [Court of Auditors' (CoA) report] mentions "shortcomings", which in the view of the Commission and the High Representative (HR) resulted from external factors outside their control. The CoA recognised in its report that EU support has been provided under difficult conditions, and did not provide concrete evidence that more effective alternatives were available or possible.'

1. What were the 'shortcomings' in question, and from what 'external factors' did they result? Why did the Commission and the High Representative not have any influence on this?

2. Does the Commission share the view that the fact that both it and the High Representative had no influence on the 'external factors' that gave rise to 'shortcomings' confirms that granting subsidies to Egypt was the wrong decision? Does the Commission share the view that the combination of 'difficult conditions' and the lack of 'more effective alternatives' similarly confirms that the granting of subsidies was 'dubious' and mistaken? If so, is the Commission therefore prepared to revoke the granting of such subsidies immediately?

Mr Füle went on to say that, 'The continuous pressure of the Commission and the HR has led e.g. to the establishment of a subcommittee on human rights, the earmarking of 10% of the bilateral budget to support human rights, good governance and democracy, including support for children's and women's rights, with concrete positive and measureable impact.'

3. Can the Commission specify the 'concrete positive and measureable impact' to which it refers? How do the positive developments implied by the Commission in relation to 'human rights, good governance and democracy, including support for children's and women's rights' manifest themselves?

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

1. The Court's report mentions shortcomings with regard to Public Finance Management, while acknowledging 'slow' progress for example in the Government Financial Management Information System or Medium Term Expenditure Framework. The Commission/HR also underlined the gradual process required to achieve such medium-term objectives as well as the institutional and political instability prevailing since 2011.

2. The Commission/HR do not share the view that granting subsidies to Egypt was the wrong decision. Rather, it adapted its assistance as the situation evolved. No new Budget Support (BS) operations have been decided since August 2011. Besides, given the strengthening of its internal rules for granting BS, effective since January 2013, it suspended the 3rd disbursement worth EUR 41 million of the Education Sector Support Programme. As underlined by the Foreign Affairs Council, a majority of the Court's recommendations had already been acted upon since the reporting period.

3. The EU has achieved the most tangible results under the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights programme, in which the following issues have been tackled for the first time on a large scale, namely Female Genital Mutilation practices (important law cases successfully supported, unified Family Empowerment Declaration developed, several media campaigns conducted to counteract all actions by conservative fundamentalist groups, dialogue activated in 10 governorates through 20 non-governmental organisations (NGOs)) and Securing Rights and Improving Livelihoods of Women (nationwide Statistical Mapping developed, agreement with the Government to facilitate the issuance of 67 000 ID Cards, a Social Media Campaign has been launched and is ongoing).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012222/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Deuda privada insostenible

Según el director de Asuntos Monetarios del FMI, José Viñals, «un 41 % de la deuda empresarial en España tiene unos intereses que superan los beneficios brutos anuales antes de interés de la empresa. Esto es un problema para el dinamismo de la actividad empresarial, ya que esta deuda es impagable a menos que se acuda a refinanciaciones» ([1]).

Si esta afirmación es cierta, significaría que las entidades bancarias están retrasando la reestructuración de estas deudas mediante refinanciaciones para mejorar su balance. Reconocer estas pérdidas subyacentes podría acarrear nuevas recapitalizaciones bancarias en el Estado español.

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Conoce la Comisión los datos de los que habla este alto ejecutivo del FMI?

¿Cree la Comisión que la deuda privada en el Estado español es sostenible?

Teniendo en cuenta los citados datos, ¿cree la Comisión que será necesaria una quita de deuda privada para hacer sostenible su pago?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de diciembre de 2013)

1. Sí.

2. La Comisión presentó un análisis detallado de la deuda privada en España en el Examen exhaustivo que se puede hallar en la siguiente dirección en Internet:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2013:0116:FIN:ES:PDF

Los informes de examen al amparo del programa de ayuda financiera proporcionan un análisis adicional útil (véase: http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op163_en.htm).

3. La deuda de las empresas está descendiendo como resultado del incremento de sus ahorros netos y del saneamiento de los bancos.

([1]) http://vozpopuli.com/blogs/3524-juan-laborda-montoro-en-su-realidad-paralela

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012222/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Unsustainable private debt

According to José Viñals, the director of the IMF's Monetary and Capital Markets Department, '41% of corporate debt in Spain incurs interest in excess of the company's gross annual income before interest. This has an adverse effect on the dynamism of business activity, since this debt is unpayable without refinancing' ([1]).

If this statement is correct, it would mean that banks are delaying the use of refinancing to restructure these debts in order to improve their balances. The identification of these underlying losses could lead to new rounds of bank recapitalisation in Spain.

Is the Commission aware of the information cited by José Viñals?

Does the Commission believe that private debt in Spain is sustainable?

In view of the facts cited above, does the Commission believe that private debt should be relieved to make the payment of it sustainable?

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

1. Yes.

2. The Commission presented a detailed analysis of private debt in Spain in the 2013 In-depth review that can be found at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=SWD:2013:0116:FIN:EN:PDF

The review reports under the financial assistance programme provide additional useful analysis (see http://wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.cec.eu.int:8080/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2013/op163_en.htm).

3. Companies' debt is falling as a result of their increased net savings and banks' write-offs.

([1]) http://vozpopuli.com/blogs/3524-juan-laborda-montoro-en-su-realidad-paralela

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-012223/13
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(25 octobre 2013)

Objet: Pertinence du programme REFIT pour rendre cohérente la politique énergétique

J'ai interpellé récemment la Commission européenne sur l'incohérence des objectifs en matière d'environnement, d'énergie et de climat. Ces objectifs, pris de manière isolés, sont louables. Mais conjugués, ils participent à affaiblir notre compétitivité industrielle.

Cette incohérence se manifeste en particulier avec les énergies renouvelables. Les subventions dont elles bénéficient, faussent le marché et obligent à un recours prioritaire à ces sources d'énergie, qui sont par nature intermittentes. Le résultat aujourd'hui est qu'elles affaiblissent notre sécurité énergétique.

C'est d'ailleurs l'un des messages forts que dix de nos fleurons énergétiques ont envoyés, il y a deux semaines, aux dirigeants européens. J'ai soutenu cet appel pour une politique énergétique européenne forte, qui est avant tout dans l'intérêt des citoyens que je représente.

Si j'interpelle une nouvelle fois la Commission aujourd'hui, c'est parce que le programme REFIT lancé au début du mois, visant à simplifier et alléger le droit européen, me semble être une excellente occasion pour s'attaquer à ces incohérences d'objectifs. L'idée de conserver un seul objectif, celui de la réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre, donnerait en particulier une plus grande souplesse au marché au profit d'une meilleure efficacité.

Je déplore toutefois que dans le programme de travail de la Commission pour 2014, publié il y a deux jours, il n'y ait aucune trace d'une volonté d'avancer dans ce sens. Pire, la Commission fait de la détermination de nouveaux objectifs pour 2030 une priorité, ajoutant de la contradiction à la contradiction.

La Commission peut-elle par conséquent justifier ses choix et nous dire comment elle simplifiera et rendra plus cohérents à brève échéance ces objectifs énergétiques, environnementaux et climatiques?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(9 décembre 2013)

Comme cela avait déjà été prévu lors de l'élaboration et de l'adoption du train de mesures pour l'horizon 2020, il existe effectivement une interaction entre les grands objectifs. Les mesures visant à promouvoir l'efficacité énergétique et les énergies renouvelables contribuent généralement, par exemple, à la réduction des émissions de GES (gaz à effet de serre) tandis que les mesures visant à réduire les émissions de GES encouragent quant à elles habituellement à la fois le développement des énergies renouvelables et les économies d'énergie. La Commission est d'avis qu'il n'existe pas de contradiction intrinsèque entre ces objectifs et qu'ils contribuent tous à la compétitivité, à la décarbonisation et à l'utilisation efficace des ressources.

Pour ce qui est des sources d'énergie renouvelables (SER), la directive sur les énergies renouvelables ([1]) a permis la réalisation de progrès importants concernant la pénétration des SER dans le mix énergétique de l'Union, ce qui a créé croissance et emplois dans ce secteur, a permis une réduction des émissions de CO_2 et enfin, et surtout, s'est traduit par une diminution de la dépendance vis-à-vis des importations. De ce point de vue, les SER contribuent à accroître la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en Europe. Les efforts déployés pour promouvoir les SER ont également permis de réduire considérablement les coûts des technologies y afférentes.

Toutefois, il est nécessaire de revoir les régimes d'aide en faveur des SER et d'assurer leur coordination dans l'ensemble de l'Union afin d'en améliorer la rentabilité. C'est précisément l'objectif de la communication adoptée le 5 novembre ([2]). De plus, la communication REFIT d'octobre 2013 ([3]) annonce la réalisation d'une évaluation de la directive sur les énergies renouvelables au titre de REFIT.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 avril 2009 relative à la promotion de l'utilisation de l'énergie produite à partir de sources renouvelables et modifiant puis abrogeant les directives 2001/77/CE et 2003/30/CE (JO L 140 du 5.6.2009).

([2]) Communication intitulée «Réaliser le marché intérieur de l'électricité et tirer le meilleur parti de l'intervention publique» et accompagnée entre autres par les lignes directrices de la Commission européenne concernant la conception des régimes d'aides en faveur des énergies renouvelables: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_fr.htm

([3]) Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen, au Conseil, au Comité économique et social européen et au Comité des régions — Programme pour une réglementation affûtée et performante (REFIT): Résultats et prochaines étapes, COM(2013) 685 du 2.10.2013.

En ce qui concerne la période postérieure à 2020, il convient d'offrir aux opérateurs économiques et aux parties prenantes une certaine sécurité à propos du futur cadre réglementaire en matière d'énergie et de climat. La Commission met la dernière main à une proposition de cadre pour les politiques en matière de climat et d'énergie à l'horizon 2030. La fixation d'objectifs cohérents figure parmi les principales questions traitées.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012223/13
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Relevance of the REFIT programme for harmonising energy policy

I recently asked the Commission a question about the discrepancies between environmental, energy and climate targets. These targets, individually, are commendable. However, together they combine to weaken our industrial competitiveness.

This inconsistency is particularly obvious when it comes to renewable energy. Subsidies for renewable energy distort the market and force people to prioritise using energy sources that are naturally intermittent. The result is that they are currently weakening our energy security.

That is also one of the main messages sent out to EU leaders by 10 of our flagship energy companies two weeks ago. I supported that call for a robust European energy policy, which is, above all, in the interest of the citizens I represent.

I am questioning the Commission once again today, but it is because I think that the REFIT programme, launched in early October 2013 with the aim of simplifying and easing European legislation, provides an excellent opportunity to tackle these inconsistent targets. The idea of keeping a single target, that of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, would, in particular, give the market greater flexibility, promoting greater efficiency.

However, I regret that the Commission's working programme for 2014, published two days ago, does not hint at any desire to go down this route. Worse still, the Commission's priority is to establish new targets for 2030, piling contradiction upon contradiction.

Can the Commission therefore justify its choices and say how it will simplify these energy targets and make them more consistent in the near future?

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

As foreseen already when the 2020 package was prepared and adopted, there is indeed an interaction between the headline targets. Measures to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy generally contribute e.g. to reductions in GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emissions and on the other hand measures to reduce GHG emissions generally also incentivise both renewables development and energy savings. In the Commission's opinion, there is no intrinsic contradiction between these targets and they all contribute to competitiveness, decarbonisation and resource efficiency.

As far as Renewable energy (RES) is concerned, the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) has contributed to good progress in penetration of RES in the EU energy mix, bringing about growth and jobs in this sector, reduction of CO_2 emissions and last but not least reduction of our import dependency. In this sense, RES are helping increase our security of supply in Europe. The efforts to promote RES have also significantly reduced the costs of these technologies.

However RES support schemes need to be revised and coordinated across the EU, in order to make them more cost-efficient. This is exactly the purpose of the communication adopted on 5 November ([2]). Furthermore, the REFIT Communication of October 2013 ([3]) announces a REFIT evaluation of the Renewable Energy Directive.

As for the period post-2020 economic operators and stakeholders need to have certainty about the future energy and climate regulatory framework. The Commission is finalising a proposal for a climate and energy policy framework for 2030. Consistent target setting is one of the key issues addressed.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC of the European parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources and amending and subsequently repealing Directives 2001/77/EC and 2003/30/EC, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

([2]) Communication 'Delivering the Internal market and making the most of public intervention' notably accompanied by European Commission Guidance for the design of renewable support schemes http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/internal_market_en.htm

([3]) Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT): Results and Next Steps, COM(2013) 685 final, 2.10.2013.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-012225/13
do Komisji
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(25 października 2013 r.)

Przedmiot: Spadająca populacja pszczół w Europie

Komisja Europejska w ciągu ostatnich kilkunastu miesięcy podjęła szereg działań mających na celu zahamowanie spadku populacji pszczół w Europie. Służyć temu miały głównie ograniczenia w stosowaniu trzech substancji czynnych z grupy neonikotynoidów, które w ocenie Europejskiej Agencji ds. Bezpieczeństwa Żywności (EFSA) w szczególności zagrażają populacji pszczół w Europie.

Według szacunków, z powodu zbyt długiej zimy, w przeciągu ostatniego roku populacja pszczół w Polsce zmalała o przeszło 20 %. To o ok. 5-10 % więcej niż w latach ubiegłych. Spadająca populacja pszczół przyczynia się nie tylko do zmniejszenia produkcji miodu, lecz także ma niebagatelne znaczenie dla rolnictwa, gdyż pszczoły zapylając rośliny podnoszą plony m.in.: rzepaku (30 %) i słonecznika (45 %). W województwie lubelskim, które jest regionem rolniczym, sprawa ta jest bardzo ważna i wywołuje duże zainteresowanie zarówno wśród pszczelarzy, jak i producentów produktów rolnych.

Chciałabym zapytać Komisję, jakie inne dalsze kroki ma zamiar podjąć Komisja, aby zahamować proces spadającej populacji pszczół w państwach Unii Europejskiej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(5 grudnia 2013 r.)

Informacje o różnych działaniach podejmowanych dla dobra populacji pszczół znajdują się w odpowiedziach Komisji na pytania wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-02739/2012, E-10355/2012, E-11092/2012, E-3944/2013, E-8017/2013, E-8771/2013, E-9457/2013, E-6069/2013 oraz E-6194/2013 ([1]). Ponadto niedawno zostało przyjęte rozporządzenie wykonawcze (UE) nr 781/2013 ([2]) w sprawie fipronilu.

Komisja jest świadoma usługi ekosystemowej, którą wykonują owady zapylające. Zachowanie i odbudowa usług ekosystemowych jest jednym z głównych celów strategii UE w dziedzinie różnorodności biologicznej. Cel 3 tej strategii wspiera przejście do zrównoważonego rolnictwa.

Nowa wspólna polityka rolna ([3]) stanowi, co następuje: W nowym rozporządzeniu dotyczącym jednolitej wspólnej organizacji rynku utrzymano możliwość przedkładania krajowych programów dotyczących pszczelarstwa. Wykaz środków współfinansowanych przez te programy został uaktualniony. Na mocy nowego rozporządzenia w sprawie programu rozwoju obszarów wiejskich państwa członkowskie mogą zastosować szereg środków w celu dalszego wspierania sektora pszczelarskiego. Ponadto wiele środków w ramach zreformowanej wspólnej polityki rolnej pośrednio przyniesie korzyści pszczelarstwu. Obowiązkowe środki na rzecz ekologizacji nowego rozporządzenia w sprawie płatności bezpośrednich wspierają utrzymywanie stałych pastwisk, dywersyfikację upraw i utrzymywanie obszarów proekologicznych, umożliwiając lepszą dostępność pożytków dla pszczół.

W kwietniu 2014 r. Komisja zorganizuje też konferencję poświęconą pszczołom i innym owadom zapylającym, która ma wspomóc przekształcanie postępu naukowego w lepsze programy i praktyki.

W siódmym programie ramowym jeden z tematów zaproszenia do składania wniosków na 2013 r. był poświęcony badaniom nad zrównoważonym pszczelarstwem i ochroną genetycznej różnorodności pszczoły miodnej.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji (UE) nr 781/2013 z dnia 14 sierpnia 2013 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie wykonawcze (UE) nr 540/2011 w odniesieniu do warunków zatwierdzenia substancji czynnej fipronil oraz zabraniające stosowania i sprzedaży nasion zaprawionych środkami ochrony roślin zawierającymi tę substancję czynną. Dz.U. L 219 z 15.8.2013, s. 22-25.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012225/13
to the Commission
Lena Kolarska-Bobińska (PPE)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Declining bee population in Europe

In recent months the Commission has taken a series of measures aimed at halting the decline in Europe's bee population. These have focused on restricting the use of three active substances in the neonicotinoid group of pesticides which, according to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), pose a particular threat to the bee population in Europe.

Estimates suggest that last year's long winter caused a decline in Poland's bee population of over 20%, a figure some 5-10% higher than in previous years. The fall in bee numbers not only means that less honey is produced, it also has a significant effect on farming, since plant pollination by bees increases yields of crops such as rape (by 30%) and sunflowers (by 45%). This is a key issue in the agricultural province of Lublin and is causing a great deal of concern among beekeepers and agricultural producers alike.

What further steps does the Commission intend to take in order to halt the decline in the bee population in the Member States?

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

Information on various actions in favour of honey bees has been provided in Commission replies to written questions E-02739/2012, E-10355/2012, E-11092/2012, E-3944/2013, E-8017/2013, E-8771/2013, E-9457/2013, E-6069/2013 and E-6194/2013 ([1]). In addition, Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 781/2013 ([2]) has been adopted recently on fipronil.

The Commission is aware of the ecosystem service delivered by pollinators. Maintenance and restoration of ecosystem services is a key objective of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Target 4 of this strategy supports a transition towards a sustainable agriculture.

The new Common Agricultural Policy ([3]) provides for the following: The new single Common Market Organisation Regulation continues with the possibility to submit national apiculture programmes. The list of measures co-financed through these programmes has been updated. With the new Rural Development Programme Regulation, Member States can use a series of measures to further support the apiculture sector. Finally, several measures in the reformed CAP will be indirectly in favour of beekeeping. The compulsory greening measures of the new Direct Payment Regulation support the maintenance of permanent grasslands, crop diversification and ecological focus areas, allowing a better availability of feed for bees.

In April 2014 the Commission will also organise a conference on bees and other pollinators aimed at helping to translate scientific progress into better policies and practices.

In the Seventh Framework Programme, a topic in the 2013 call for proposals was dedicated to research on sustainable apiculture and conservation of honey bee genetic diversity.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 781/2013 of 14 August 2013 amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011, as regards the conditions of approval of the active substance fipronil, and prohibiting the use and sale of seeds treated with plant protection products containing this active substance, OJ L 219, 15.8.2013, p. 22-25.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-012226/13
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Medicación en pacientes crónicos

Según han asegurado diversos expertos, reunidos en el 58° Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Farmacia Hospitalaria (SEFH), cinco de cada diez pacientes crónicos no cumplen el tratamiento prescrito. Las causas son diversas, debido a la edad, la duración de la terapia, los efectos adversos de los fármacos o el hecho de que la enfermedad no se llegue a curar ([1]). El reto no es otro que contribuir a mejorar su calidad de vida, evitando muchos de los problemas causados por un uso inadecuado de los medicamentos. Normalmente, el paciente crónico suele convivir con diversas enfermedades y los expertos han alertado de que a los riesgos de la polimedicación hay que unir las comorbilidades propias que presentan estos pacientes, su valoración funcional y situación social. «La cronicidad debe abordarse centrándose en el paciente y no en la enfermedad. Hay que tener en cuenta que el estado de salud del paciente crónico es dinámico», ha explicado la coordinadora del Grupo Cronos de la SEFH, María García-Mina.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión sobre este tema?

¿Conoce la Comisión algún «proyecto de buenas prácticas» en algún Estado miembro para minimizar este problema en el Estado español?

¿Puede proponer la Comisión algunas recomendaciones para solucionar este problema?

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

La Comisión es consciente de que las recetas inadecuadas y la falta de rigor en el seguimiento de los tratamientos farmacológicos y no farmacológicos constituyen un problema de salud pública.

En junio de 2012, la Comisión organizó una conferencia internacional sobre esta cuestión que ayudó a concienciar a este respecto. También está facilitando la labor sobre recetas y cumplimiento terapéutico en el marco de la Cooperación de Innovación Europea sobre el Envejecimiento Activo y Saludable, en la que partes interesadas de diez Estados miembros están trabajando para detectar intervenciones e iniciativas eficaces en relación con el cumplimiento terapéutico, la medicación excesiva y la información y capacitación del usuario, así como la investigación y la metodología.

Este grupo de partes interesadas ha acordado un plan de acción sobre la manera de mejorar las recetas y el cumplimiento terapéutico y recientemente concluyó un ejercicio de detección en el que identificaron sesenta y una prácticas en curso destinadas a abordar algunas de las barreras que conducen a unas recetas y un cumplimiento terapéutico inadecuados. Algunas de esas prácticas provienen de España.

La Comisión y las partes interesadas presentaron este trabajo en la segunda conferencia de socios de la Cooperación de Innovación Europea sobre el Envejecimiento Activo y Saludable, celebrada el 25 de noviembre de 2013.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/salud/noticia-cinco-cada-diez-pacientes-cronicos-no-cumplen-tratamiento-prescrito-20131023185919.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012226/13
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Medication for chronically ill patients

According to various experts at the 58th Congress of the Spanish Society of Hospital Pharmacies (SEFH), five out of every ten chronically ill patients do not comply with their prescribed treatment. The reasons for this include age, the duration of the therapy, the adverse effects of medication and the fact that the illness is not cured ([1]). The challenge in question involves helping to improve the quality of patients' lives, avoiding many of the problems caused by improper use of medication. Chronically ill patients normally suffer from several illnesses and experts have warned that the risks of polypharmacy must be considered alongside the comorbidity experienced by these patients as well as functional evaluations of their condition and their social situations. 'Chronicity must be tackled by focusing on the patient and not on the illness. It must be borne in mind that the state of chronically ill patients' health is dynamic,' explained María García-Mina, the coordinator of the SEFH's Cronos Group.

Is the Commission aware of this problem?

Does the Commission know of any 'good-practice plans' in any Member State that might minimise this problem in Spain?

Could the Commission make any recommendations that would resolve this problem?

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

The Commission is aware that inappropriate prescription and poor adherence to pharmacological and non-pharmacological medical plans is an issue of public health concern.

In June of 2012, the Commission organised an international Conference on this issue that helped raise awareness. The Commission is also facilitating work on 'Prescription and Adherence to medical plans', under the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, where stakeholders from 10 EU Member States are working on the identification of successful interventions and initiatives in the area of adherence, polypharmacy, user information and empowerment, and research and methodology.

This group of stakeholders has agreed on an action plan on 'how to improve prescription and adherence to medical plans' and recently completed a mapping exercise which resulted in the identification of 61 ongoing practices aiming to address some of the existing barriers to inappropriate prescription and adherence. Some of these practices are from Spain.

The Commission and stakeholders have presented this work at the second Conference of Partners of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing on 25 November 2013.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/salud/noticia-cinco-cada-diez-pacientes-cronicos-no-cumplen-tratamiento-prescrito-20131023185919.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012228/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(25. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Überarbeitung Verordnung Fluggastrechte

Kritischen Medienberichten zufolge würden die geplanten Neuerungen im Bereich Fluggastrechte das bestehende Schutzniveau für Passagiere deutlich mindern. Laut Kommissionsvorschlag hätte der Gast erst bei längeren Verspätungen als bisher das Recht, Entschädigungszahlungen geltend zu machen. Das würde bedeuten, ein Passagier müsste fünf Stunden warten, bevor er überhaupt einen Anspruch auf jegliche Entschädigung hätte. Des Weiteren sind andere Ansprüche, wie zum Beispiel die Ausgleichszahlungen bei Überbuchungen oder Annullierungen eines Fluges, die nach der geltenden Verordnung 2004 geregelt sind, nicht mehr in der Novelle vorgesehen.

1. Wie steht die Kommission zu diesen Kritikpunkten?

2. Verspätungen sollten in die Risikosphäre der Fluglinie fallen, nicht in die des Passagiers, denn dem Fluggast ist es sicher am wenigsten zumutbar, allfällige Probleme (Technik, Witterungsbedingungen, Streiks usw.), die die Flugzeit beeinflussen könnten, zu antizipieren. Wie rechtfertigt es die Kommission, dass nun der Passagier Verspätungen von bis zu fünf Stunden ohne entsprechende Entschädigung in Kauf nehmen muss?

3. Auch Annullierungen und überbuchte Flüge liegen in der Risikosphäre des Flugunternehmens. Wie kommt der Fluggast dazu, diese Ausfälle einfach ohne entsprechende Ausgleichszahlung hinzunehmen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Zu Frage 1 und 2: Der Vorschlag zur Überarbeitung der Verordnung über Fluggastrechte ([1]) zielt vor allem darauf ab, die Anwendung und Durchsetzung dieser Rechte zu verbessern. So sollen die nationalen Durchsetzungsstellen beispielsweise ihre Arbeit besser koordinieren und proaktivere Überwachungs- und Sanktionierungsmaßnahmen treffen. Die Fluggäste erhalten wirksamere Möglichkeiten, ihre individuellen Rechte durchzusetzen, da die Luftfahrtunternehmen unter anderem zur Anwendung klarer, strenger Verfahren zum Umgang mit Beschwerden verpflichtet werden.

Zudem werden in dem Vorschlag eine Reihe neuer Fluggastrechte eingeführt und mehrere vorhandene rechtliche Bestimmungen zugunsten der Passagiere geklärt. Insbesondere ist vorgesehen, die Definition des Begriffs „außergewöhnliche Umstände" eng zu fassen, um die Zahl der Fälle, in denen die Fluggesellschaften Ausgleichszahlungen vermeiden können, zu verringern. Da die meisten technischen Probleme nicht als außergewöhnliche Umstände zu betrachten sind, wird vorgeschlagen, den Zeitraum, nach dem ein Ausgleichsanspruch besteht, zu verlängern, um den Luftfahrtunternehmen ausreichend Zeit zur Behebung dieser Fehler zu geben und zu verhindern, dass Änderungen an den Vorschriften zu Annullierungen und höheren Ticket-Preisen führen. Diese Fragen wurden in der Folgenabschätzung ([2]) zu dem Vorschlag sorgfältig analysiert.

3. Im Vorschlag der Kommission werden die derzeitigen Rechte auf Betreuungs-, Unterstützungs- und Ausgleichsleistungen bei Nichtbeförderung oder Annullierung beibehalten. Ferner wird vorgeschlagen, auch für Fluggäste, deren Flug verschoben wurde, Maßnahmen vorzusehen, um deren Schutz ebenfalls sicherzustellen.

([1]) Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates zur Änderung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 261/2004 über eine gemeinsame Regelung für Ausgleichs- und Unterstützungsleistungen für Fluggäste im Fall der Nichtbeförderung und bei Annullierung oder großer Verspätung von Flügen und der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2027/97 über die Haftung von Luftfahrtunternehmen bei der Beförderung von Fluggästen und deren Gepäck im Luftverkehr (KOM(2013)0130 endg.).

([2]) SWD(2013)062 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012228/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Revision of the Air Passenger Rights Regulation

According to critical media reports, the planned amendments in the area of air passenger rights significantly reduce the current level of protection for passengers. According to the Commission's proposal, passengers would have the right to apply for compensation only in the event of a longer delay than is currently the case. This would mean that a passenger would have to wait five hours before he or she was even entitled to any compensation. Moreover, other entitlements, such as compensation payments in the event of overbooking or cancellation of a flight, which are regulated in the current Regulation from 2004, are no longer provided for in the revised version.

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to these criticisms?

2. Delays ought to fall within the airlines' sphere of risk, not in that of the passengers, as it is surely least reasonable to expect passengers to anticipate any potential problems (technology, weather conditions, strikes, etc.) that could affect the flight time. How does the Commission justify the fact that passengers will now have to put up with delays of up to five hours without suitable compensation?

3. Cancellations and overbooked flights also fall within the sphere of risk of the airlines. How can passengers simply accept these losses without appropriate compensation?

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

1-2. The proposal to revise air passenger rights ([1]) mainly aims at improving the application and the enforcement of air passengers' rights. For example, the work of the national enforcement bodies will be better coordinated and their monitoring and sanctioning policies will become more pro-active. Passengers will be given more effective means to enforce their individual rights, such as the imposition of clear and stringent complaint-handling procedures on the airlines.

The proposal also introduces a series of new passenger rights and clarifies a number of existing legal provisions in favour of passengers. It is notably proposed to introduce a strict defnition of extraordinary circumstances which reduces the number of cases where airlines can avoid paying compensation. As most technical failures will not be considered as extraordinary, it is proposed to increase the time threshold which gives a right to compensation in order to give the air carrier a reasonable amount of time to cope with such failures and avoid that changes to the rules would lead to cancellations and higher ticket prices. These issues were carefully analysed in the impact assessment ([2]) accompanying the proposal.

3. The Commission maintained in its proposal the current rights to assistance, care and compensation which apply to cases of denied boarding and cancellation. It further proposed to include measures for passengers whose flight is rescheduled, to ensure that they are equally protected.

([1]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 261/2004 establishing common rules on compensation and assistance to passengers in the event of denied boarding and of cancellation or long delay of flights and Regulation (EC) No 2027/97 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air COM/2013/0130 final — 2013/0072 (COD).
([2]) SWD(2013) 062 final.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012229/13
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE), Alojz Peterle (PPE) en Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(25 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Behandelingen met ATMP's (geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie)

De laatste tijd zijn in de hele wereld met succes geavanceerde-therapiebehandelingen met gekweekt weefsel, gemanipuleerde cellen en/of genproducten (ATMP's) uitgevoerd en dit is voor patiënten een hoopgevende ontwikkeling. Biotechnologiebedrijven werken aan de productie van ATMP's middels het gebruik van allogene menselijke cellen of weefsel, of fungeren als productieorganisaties op contractbasis, waarbij ze patiëntspecifiek materiaal gebruiken. Onder de bestaande regelgeving, die al vele jaren van kracht is, zijn slechts vier ATMP's goedgekeurd om op de markt te worden gebracht, wat erop duidt dat het bijzonder moeilijk is om aan de eisen van de regelgeving te voldoen.

De productie van nieuwe ATMP's in universiteitsziekenhuizen is een andere waardevolle wijze van het ontwikkelen van geavanceerde-therapiebehandelingen, en heeft als bijkomend voordeel dat de kennis die met fundamenteel wetenschappelijk onderzoek wordt opgedaan ingang vindt in de klinische praktijk in de desbetreffende ziekenhuizen. ATMP's in universiteitsziekenhuizen worden in de meeste gevallen per patiënt vervaardigd, met andere woorden op zeer kleine schaal. Daarnaast zijn er niche-indicaties voor geavanceerde-therapiebehandelingen met ATMP's die voor biotechnologiebedrijven nooit interessant zullen zijn. De productie van ATMP's in universiteitsziekenhuizen concurreert niet met, maar vormt een aanvulling op de activiteiten van biotechnologiebedrijven.

De bestaande ATMP-regelgeving maakt geen onderscheid tussen de kleinschalige, sterk gepersonaliseerde productie van ATMP's in universiteitsziekenhuizen en de grootschalige, industriële ontwikkeling daarvan. ATMP's kunnen ook onder de zogenaamde „ziekenhuisuitzondering" worden geproduceerd, maar in dat geval kunnen de gegevens niet voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek worden gebruikt, kunnen geen klinische proeven worden gehouden en is de productie beperkt tot „niet-routineuze" productie.

Dit alles betekent dat de wetenschappelijke ontwikkeling van geavanceerde-therapiebehandelingen, waarbij ATMP's in een ziekenhuis worden ontwikkeld, en de validering van hun doeltreffendheid in klinische proeven voor weesziekten waarbij geavanceerde-therapiebehandelingen onderdeel uitmaken van multimodale, vaak ingewikkelde behandelingsprotocollen (met inbegrip van therapieoptimaliseringsstudies) op grond van de bestaande regelgeving voor ATMP's bijna helemaal onmogelijk is. Hierdoor staat Europa zwak ten opzichte van andere delen van de wereld.

Toch ligt de toekomst in gepersonaliseerde behandelingen voor patiënten, en de productie van ATMP's voor patiënten met speciale nichebehoeften in universiteitsziekenhuizen is de sleutel tot het waarborgen van universele volksgezondheid. De kloof in de regelgeving die verhindert dat wetenschappelijke ontwikkelingen in universiteitsziekenhuizen hun weg naar de patiënt vinden, moet zo snel mogelijk worden gedicht.

Hoe denkt de Commissie de productie van patiëntspecifieke ATMP's in ziekenhuizen te bevorderen en het mogelijk te maken dat passende klinische proeven in universiteitsziekenhuizen kunnen worden gehouden zodat daar nieuwe, innovatieve behandelingen tot wasdom kunnen komen en in een vervolgstadium aan alle Europese burgers kunnen worden aangeboden, waarmee Europa op het gebied van innovatieve geavanceerde therapiebehandelingen ook weer concurrerend wordt?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(16 december 2013)

De handel in geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie in de EU is geregeld in Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 ([1]), die sinds 30 december 2008 van toepassing is.

De omzetting van onderzoeksactiviteiten in geneesmiddelen die voor patiënten beschikbaar zijn, vormt voor alle soorten geneesmiddelen een grote uitdaging. Slechts voor een fractie van de moleculen die als potentiële geneesmiddelen worden onderzocht wordt uiteindelijk een vergunning voor het in de handel brengen verleend. Het traject van identificatie van een werkzame stof tot geneesmiddelenvergunning vergt doorgaans meer dan tien jaar, maar dit proces is cruciaal om te waarborgen dat de geneesmiddelen die alom beschikbaar zijn voor patiënten in de EU werkzaam en veilig zijn. Dit betekent dat het feit dat sinds de inwerkingtreding van Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 voor slechts vier geavanceerde therapieën een vergunning is verleend, op zichzelf niet op een tekortkoming in de regelgeving hoeft te wijzen.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad betreffende geneesmiddelen voor geavanceerde therapie en tot wijziging van Richtlijn 2001/83/EG en Verordening (EG) nr. 726/2004 (PB L 324 van 10.12.2007, blz. 121).

De actieve betrokkenheid van universitaire ziekenhuizen bij de ontwikkeling van geavanceerde therapieën is een positieve ontwikkeling. Andere partijen die zich bezighouden met de ontwikkeling van geavanceerde therapieën zijn organisaties zonder winstoogmerk en kleine en middelgrote ondernemingen. Het is belangrijk dat het regelgevend kader bijdraagt tot het scheppen van voorwaarden waarin nieuwe geneesmiddelen gemakkelijk beschikbaar kunnen worden, terwijl tegelijkertijd een hoog niveau van bescherming van de volksgezondheid wordt gegarandeerd.

De Commissie verricht momenteel een evaluatie van de toepassing van Verordening (EG) nr. 1394/2007 in het kader van de voorbereiding van het in artikel 25 van die verordening voorgeschreven verslag. In dat verslag zal zij ingaan op de vraag hoe kan worden bevorderd dat werkzame en veilige geavanceerde therapieën beschikbaar komen voor patiënten in de EU.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-012229/13
za Komisijo
Ivo Belet (PPE), Alojz Peterle (PPE) in Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(25. oktober 2013)

Zadeva: Zdravljenje z zdravili za napredno zdravljenje

Napredno zdravljenje pacientov, pri katerem se uporabljajo namensko proizvedeno tkivo, spremenjene celice in/ali genski proizvodi (zdravila za napredno zdravljenje), in uspešna uporaba teh zdravil v zadnjem času vzbujata upanje za paciente po vsem svetu. Biotehnološka podjetja razvijajo proizvodnjo zdravil za napredno zdravljenje z uporabo alogenskih človeških celic ali tkiva oziroma nastopajo kot pogodbeni proizvajalci, ki uporabljajo pacientu prilagojen material. V skladu z obstoječo uredbo, ki velja že veliko let, je bilo dovoljenje za promet izdano za samo štiri zdravila za napredno zdravljenje, kar kaže na to, da je izpolnjevanje zahtev uredbe močno ovirano.

Tudi proizvodnja novih zdravil za napredno zdravljenje v univerzitetnih bolnišnicah je pomemben način razvijanja naprednega zdravljenja, saj se tam dognanja iz temeljnih znanstvenih raziskav prenesejo v prakso. V univerzitetnih bolnišnicah se zdravila za napredno zdravljenje večinoma razvijajo za posameznega pacienta, torej v zelo majhnem obsegu. Poleg tega napredno zdravljenje z namenskimi zdravili vključuje zelo specifične indikacije. To so niše, ki za biotehnološka podjetja ne bodo nikoli zanimive. Proizvodnja zdravil za napredno zdravljenje v univerzitetnih bolnišnicah ne pomeni konkurence za dejavnosti biotehnoloških podjetij, pač pa jih dopolnjuje.

V skladu z veljavno uredbo o zdravilih za napredno zdravljenje proizvodnjo posamezniku prilagojenih zdravil v zelo majhnem obsegu v okviru univerzitetne bolnišnice in obsežno industrijsko proizvodnjo urejajo enaka pravila oz. v njej obstaja možnost izjeme glede bolnišnic, pri kateri pa se podatki ne smejo uporabiti v znanstvene namene, klinično preskušanje ni dovoljeno, proizvodnja pa je omejena le na nerutinsko proizvodnjo.

Veljavna uredba skoraj v celoti onemogoča akademsko razvijanje naprednega zdravljenja, pri katerem se zdravila zanj razvijajo v bolnišnicah, in klinično preskušanje njihove učinkovitosti pri redkih boleznih, pri katerih je napredno zdravljenje del multimodalnih in velikokrat zapletenih protokolov zdravljenja (vključno s študijami o njegovi optimizaciji). V tem pogledu je Evropa v primerjavi z drugimi deli sveta v veliko šibkejšem položaju.

Prihodnost pa vendarle temelji na posamezniku prilagojenem zdravljenju, zato je proizvodnja zdravil za napredno zdravljenje pacientov z zelo specifičnimi potrebami v univerzitetnih bolnišnicah ključnega pomena za zagotavljanje splošnega javnega zdravja. Vrzel, ki ovira translacijske dejavnosti v univerzitetnih bolnišnicah, je treba nujno odpraviti.

Kako namerava Komisija olajšati proizvodnjo posamezniku prilagojenih zdravil za napredno zdravljenje v bolnišnicah in omogočiti izvajanje ustreznega kliničnega preskušanja v univerzitetnih bolnišnicah, da bi bilo mogoče v njih razvijati inovativno zdravljenje, ki bi nato postalo dostopno vsem evropskim državljanom, s čimer bi Evropa spet postala konkurenčna na področju inovativnega naprednega zdravljenja?

Odgovor komisarja Borga v imenu Komisije
(16. december 2013)

Promet z zdravili za napredno zdravljenje v EU ureja Uredba 1394/2007 ([1]), ki se uporablja od 30. decembra 2008.

Prenos raziskovalnih dejavnosti na področju zdravil, ki so na voljo bolnikom, predstavlja izziv za vse vrste zdravil. Le majhen del molekul, ki se preiskujejo kot potencialna zdravila, sčasoma pridobi dovoljenje za promet. Od identifikacije aktivne snovi do pridobitve dovoljenja za promet z zdravilom običajno traja več kot deset let, vendar je ta proces bistven, da se zagotovi, da so zdravila, ki so na voljo bolnikom EU, učinkovita in varna. Zato dejstva, da je bilo od začetka veljavnosti Uredbe št. 1394/2007 dovoljenje za promet izdano za samo štiri zdravila za napredno zdravljenje, ni mogoče šteti za slabo ureditev.

Dejavna udeležba univerzitetnih bolnišnic pri razvoju zdravil za napredno zdravljenje kaže na pozitiven razvoj. Drugi sektorji, ki so dejavni v razvoju zdravil za napredno zdravljenje, so nepridobitni subjekti ter mala in srednje velika podjetja. Pomembno je, da regulativni okvir prispeva k ustvarjanju pogojev, ki olajšujejo nastajanje novih zdravil, hkrati pa zagotavlja visoko raven varovanja javnega zdravja.

Komisija zdaj pri pripravi poročila v skladu s členom 25 Uredbe št. 1394/2007 ocenjuje njeno uporabo. V tem poročilu bo Komisija preučila, kako prispevati k temu, da bodo bolnikom v EU na voljo učinkovita in varna zdravila za napredno zdravljenje.

([1]) Uredba (ES) št. 1394/2007 Evropskega parlamenta in Sveta o zdravilih za napredno zdravljenje ter o spremembi Direktive 2001/83/ES in Uredbe (ES) št. 726/2004 (UL L 324, 10.12.2007, str. 121).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012229/13
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE), Alojz Peterle (PPE) and Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: ATMP (advanced therapy medicinal product) treatments

Advanced therapy treatments for patients using engineered tissue, manipulated cells and/or gene products (ATMPs) create hope for patients worldwide thanks to the recent successful applications of these products. Biotech companies are developing the manufacturing of ATMPs using allogeneic human cells or tissue, or acting as contract manufacturing organisations using patient-specific material. Under the current regulation, which has been in place for many years, only four ATMPs have received marketing authorisation, indicating that huge obstacles exist to meeting the requirements of the regulation.

The manufacturing of novel ATMPs in university hospitals provides another valuable avenue for developing advanced therapy treatments, insights from basic scientific research being translated into clinical practice in such hospitals. ATMPs in university hospitals are mostly manufactured on a per-patient basis, that is to say on a very small scale. Moreover, there are niche indications for advanced therapy treatments with ATMPs that will never be of interest to biotech companies. The manufacture of ATMPs in university hospitals is not in competition with, but complementary to, the activities of biotech companies.

Under the current ATMP regulation, the manufacturing of highly personalised ATMPs on a small scale within a university hospital is governed by the same rules as large-scale industrial manufacture, or can be conducted under 'hospital exemption'. However, in the latter case, the data cannot be used for scientific research, no clinical trials can be performed and manufacturing is restricted to 'non-routine' production.

As such, the academic development of advanced therapy treatments, where ATMPs are developed in a hospital, and the validation of their efficacy in clinical trials for orphan diseases where advanced therapy treatments are part of multimodal, often complex treatment protocols (including therapy optimisation studies), are almost entirely prevented by the current regulation on ATMP. This makes Europe much weaker in comparison with other parts of the world.

Nevertheless, the future lies in personalised treatments for patients, and ATMP manufacturing for patients with particular niche requirements in university hospitals is the key to ensuring universal public health. The gap which weakens translational pipelines in university hospitals needs to be bridged as a matter of urgency.

How does the Commission intend to facilitate the manufacture of patient-specific ATMPs in hospitals, making it possible to conduct appropriate clinical trials in university hospitals so that new innovative treatments can be developed there and subsequently made available to all European citizens, putting Europe back into a competitive position in the field of innovative advanced therapy treatments?

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

The marketing of advanced therapy medicinal products in the EU is governed by Regulation 1394/2007 ([1]), which applies since 30 December 2008.

The translation of research activities into medicinal products available to patients is challenging for all type of medicinal products. Only a small fraction of the molecules investigated as potential medicinal products eventually obtain a marketing authorisation. The path from identification of an active substance to the authorisation of the medicinal product typically takes more than 10 years but this process is essential to ensure that medicines that are widely made available to EU patients are efficacious and safe. Accordingly, the fact that only four advanced therapies were granted a marketing authorisation since the entry into force of Regulation 1394/2007 cannot be considered per se as evidence of regulatory failure.

The active involvement of university hospitals in the development of advanced therapies is a positive development. Other sectors actively engaged in the development of advanced therapies are non-for-profit entities and small and medium enterprises. It is important that the regulatory framework contributes to creating conditions that facilitate the appearance of new medicinal products, while ensuring a high level of public health protection.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council on advanced therapy medicinal products and amending Directive 2001/83/EC and Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 (OJ L324, 10.12.2007, p.121).

The Commission is currently assessing the application of the regulation 1394/2007 in the context of the preparation of the report mandated under Article 25 thereof. In this report, the Commission will reflect on how to facilitate that efficacious and safe advanced therapies are made available to patients in the EU.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor P-012231/13
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(25. listopada 2013.)

Predmet: Potpora ribarskom sektoru

Nove odredbe Fonda za pomorstvo i ribarstvo izglasane su 23. listopada na plenarnom zasjedanju u Strasbourgu. Neke od odredbi uključuju potporu održivom ribolovu i zaštiti ribljeg fonda. Istodobno novim odredbama prestaju se poticati dodatna povećanja ribarske flote, a postojeća flota će se morati prilagoditi unaprijeđenim ekološkim i sigurnosnim standardima. Ribarima i ribarskom sektoru diljem Europske unije poslana je jasna poruka da nastupaju promjene.

I prije nego što je Fond za ribarstvo i pomorstvo podržan od strane Parlamenta, Europska komisija poticala je prekvalifikaciju ribara. 18. listopada je završio natječaj za prikupljanje projekata Europske komisije — Čuvari mora — (MARE/2013/09), kojim se ribare poticalo za izlazak iz ribarstva i bavljenje drugim poslovima vezanima uz more. Natječaj za projekte bio je otvoren za sedam zemalja članica, uključujući Hrvatsku, a budžet natječaja iznosio je svega 1.200.000,00 EUR. Opseg budžeta, kojim se inicijalno planiralo bespovratno financirati svega 4 ili 5 projekata, nije ni adekvatan ni dostatan. Planira li Komisija objavu novih programa i natječaja sličnog sadržaja, ali većeg budžeta?

Uzimajući u obzir nedavno izglasane odredbe, kakve konkretne mjere i programe Komisija planira provesti kako bi financijski potpomogla ribarima da se prilagode novim odredbama uspostavljanja uravnoteženijeg odnosa između ribarske flote i raspoloživih ribljih resursa, kao i smanjenju ribarske flote, uz istovremeno osiguravanje radnih mjesta u priobalnim zajednicama?

Odgovor gđe Damanaki u ime Komisije
(5. prosinca 2013.)

Poziv na prijavu pilot-projekata u području „Čuvari mora" temelji se na posebnoj dodjeli sredstava koja je Komisiji stavio na raspolaganje Europski parlament. Službe Komisije trenutačno ocjenjuju prijedloge projekata. Te će se aktivnosti provesti u eksperimentalne svrhe te obuhvaćati područja poput praćenja i očuvanja morskog ekosustava, skupljanja otpada i izgubljene ribolovne opreme, rekreativnih i turističkih usluga te prikupljanja podataka.

Od 2014. većina tih aktivnosti ispunjavat će uvjete za financiranje iz Europskog fonda za pomorstvo i ribarstvo (EMFF). Potpora će biti dostupna za diversifikaciju unutar i izvan sektora ribarstva kako bi se omogućili dodatni izvori prihoda za aktivne ribare te za one koji žele napustiti taj sektor i širu ribarstvenu zajednicu.

EMFF će ovisno o rezultatu pregovora između Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća vjerojatno poduprijeti diversifikaciju i otvaranje radnih mjesta. To može obuhvaćati dopunske aktivnosti poput usluga povezanih s okolišem (uključujući upravljanje, obnovu i praćenje zaštićenih područja), skupljanja otpada, obrazovnih aktivnosti i turizma te otvaranje poduzeća izvan područja komercijalnog ribarstva, ponovnu izobrazbu i prilagodbu ribarskih plovila za aktivnosti izvan ribarstva.

EMFF će najvjerojatnije nastaviti s podupiranjem Lokalnih akcijskih skupina u ribarstvu na temelju lokalnog razvoja u ribarstvenim područjima kojim upravlja lokalna zajednica. EMFF će po mogućnosti tim skupinama omogućiti odabir projekata kojima će se ojačati položaj sektora ribarstva u lancu opskrbe i lokalnom gospodarstvu ili koji će pridonijeti gospodarskoj diversifikaciji i otvaranju radnih mjesta pomoću inicijativa kao što je turizam povezan s ribarstvom.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012231/13
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(25 October 2013)

Subject: Support for the fisheries sector

The new rules governing the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund were approved by Parliament at its plenary sitting in Strasbourg on 23 October. Some of the rules are designed to support sustainable fishing and protect fish stocks. Under the new arrangements, moreover, the incentives for further expansion of the fishing fleet are to be removed, and the existing fleet will be called upon to adapt to advanced environmental and safety standards. Fishermen and the fisheries sector in all parts of Europe have been sent a clear message that changes are on the way.

Before Parliament voted to endorse the Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the Commission started the moves to retrain fishermen, one notable date being 18 October, the deadline for submitting applications for 'Guardians of the Sea' (MARE/2013/09), a call for proposals organised by the Commission with a view to encouraging fishermen to leave the fishing industry for other maritime occupations. The call for proposals was open to seven Member States, Croatia included, and its total budget amounted to EUR 1 200 000, a sum intended initially to finance grants for four or five projects in all, but which is neither appropriate nor sufficient. Will the Commission issue new programmes and calls for proposals covering similar subject matter, but with a larger budget?

Taking into account the newly adopted rules, what specific measures and programmes will the Commission implement in order to support fishermen financially and in that way help them adapt to the new provisions whereby the fishing fleet and the fishery resources available are to be maintained in a balanced relationship and fleets are to be scaled down, but without undermining the aim of preserving jobs in coastal communities?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(5 December 2013)

The call for pilot projects in the field of 'Guardians of the Sea' is based on a special allocation made available to the Commission by the European Parliament. The project proposals are currently being evaluated by the Commission services. These actions will be of an experimental nature and cover fields such as the monitoring and conservation of the marine ecosystem, the collection of litter and lost fishing gear, leisure and tourist services and data collection.

From 2014 most of these actions will be eligible for funding under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Support will be available for both diversification within and beyond the fisheries sector, to provide additional sources of income for active fishermen, as well as for those wishing to leave the sector and the wider fisheries community.

The EMFF, depending on the outcome of negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council, is likely to support the facilitation of diversification and job creation. This could include complementary activities such as environmental services — including the management, restoration and monitoring of protected areas — the collection of waste, educational activities and tourism, as well as business start-ups outside commercial fishing, re-training and the adjustment of fishing vessels for activities outside fishing.

The EMFF will most likely continue to support Fisheries Local Action Groups through community-led local development in fisheries areas. The EMFF will likely allow these groups to select projects that will strengthen the position of the fisheries sector in the supply chain and in the local economy, or that will contribute to economic diversification and job creation through initiatives such as pesca-tourism.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012233/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(28 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Ανακοίνωση πακέτου εκδημοκρατισμού της Τουρκίας — Επαναλειτουργία Θεολογικής Σχολής της Χάλκης

Ο Πρωθυπουργός της Τουρκίας παρουσίασε στα τέλη Σεπτεμβρίου το λεγόμενο «πακέτο εκδημοκρατισμού» της χώρας. Σε αυτό δεν περιελήφθη εν τέλει η άρση της απαγόρευσης λειτουργίας της Θεολογικής Σχολής της Χάλκης, παρά τις μέχρι προσφάτως δηλώσεις Τούρκων αξιωματούχων περί του αντιθέτου.

Υπό το φως των ανωτέρω και δεδομένου ότι το ζήτημα του σεβασμού από το τουρκικό κράτος της θρησκευτικής ελευθερίας περιλαμβάνεται σταθερά στις εκθέσεις προόδου της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για την Τουρκία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πώς κρίνει τη μη άρση της απαγόρευσης λειτουργίας της Θεολογικής Σχολής της Χάλκης;

2. Τι ενέργειες προτίθεται να αναλάβει προς τις τουρκικές αρχές ώστε να λυθεί επιτέλους το σοβαρό ζήτημα της επαναλειτουργίας της Θεολογικής Σχολής της Χάλκης που, όσο παραμένει άλυτο, συνιστά ευθεία προσβολή του σεβασμού της θρησκευτικής ελευθερίας στη Τουρκία;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή είναι ενήμερη για το θέμα και το υπογράμμισε στη Έκθεση Προόδου για την Τουρκία του 2013: *Οι περιορισμοί στην εκπαίδευση του κλήρου παρέμειναν. Ούτε η τουρκική νομοθεσία, ούτε το σύστημα δημόσιας εκπαίδευσης προβλέπουν ανώτερη θεολογική εκπαίδευση για τις επιμέρους κοινότητες. Παρά τις εξαγγελίες των αρχών, η Ελληνορθόδοξη Θεολογική Σχολή της Χάλκης παρέμεινε κλειστή* (σ. 55).

Η Επιτροπή λυπάται για το γεγονός ότι η δέσμη μέτρων εκδημοκρατισμού του Σεπτεμβρίου δεν έχει αντιμετωπίσει το ζήτημα, και προτίθεται να ανακινήσει το ζήτημα στις τουρκικές αρχές με κάθε κατάλληλη ευκαιρία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012233/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Announcement of Turkey democratisation package/reopening of Chakli Seminary

The Turkish prime minister presented his country's 'democratisation package' at the end of September. It does not lift the ban on the Chalki Seminary, despite recent statements by Turkish officers to the contrary.

In view of the above and given that the question of respect by the Turkish state for religious freedom is a persistent topic in European Commission progress reports on Turkey, will the Commission say:

1. What is its opinion of the failure to lift the ban on the Chalki Seminary?

2. What action does it intend to take with the Turkish authorities in order to resolve once and for all the serious issue of the reopening of the Chalki Seminary which, until such time as it is resolved, represents a direct violation of respect for religious freedom in Turkey?

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

The Commission is aware of the issue and has underlined it in the Turkey Progress Report 2013: 'Restrictions on the training of clergy remained. Neither Turkish legislation nor the public education system provide for higher religious education for individual communities. Despite announcements by the authorities, the Halki (Heybeliada) Greek Orthodox seminary remained closed' (page 55).

The Commission regrets that the September democratisation package has not addressed the issue, and intends to raise it with the Turkish authorities on all appropriate occasions.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012234/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Tatsächliche Internet-Kapazität und deren regionale Verteilung

Laut einer EU-Studie erhalten Internet-Benutzer von ihren Providern nicht die Download-Geschwindigkeit, sondern nur zwei Drittel der Kapazität, für die sie zahlen. Die Mobilfunkanbieter sichern sich in den Verträgen mit Klauseln wie Bandbreitenkorridor entsprechend ab.

Naturgemäß ist die tatsächliche Übertragungsgeschwindigkeit von einer Reihe von Faktoren abhängig: Abstand von der Schaltstelle, Kabelqualität, elektrische Anlagen in der Nähe, Anzahl der Anschlüsse … Mit einem Leistungseinbruch zwischendurch kann man leben, solange dies nur selten vorkommt. In den ländlichen Regionen — also gerade dort, wo viele auf gute Anbindung angewiesen sind, um mangels lokaler Arbeitsplatzangebote ihren Lebensunterhalt mit Heimarbeit zu verdienen — klagen die User anscheinend besonders oft über mangelnde Internet-Geschwindigkeit.

1. Wurde die regionale Verteilung im Zuge besagter Studie mit untersucht?

2. Falls ja, zu welchem Ergebnis kam die Studie?

3. Falls nein, ist eine Untersuchung der regionalen Verteilung im Rahmen von Folgestudien geplant?

4. Wie ist der Stand der Aktionspläne zur besseren Internet-Erschließung ländlicher Regionen?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(9. Dezember 2013)

Die Leistungsbeschreibung für die von SamKnows Limited durchgeführte Studie zur Qualität der Breitbanddienste in der EU ([1]) umfasste keine Aufschlüsselung der Ergebnisse nach Regionen. Eine Aufgliederung der Ergebnisse nach städtischen und ländlichen Gebieten wurde zwar angefordert, war jedoch nicht möglich, da keine detaillierten Informationen über die Länge der Anschlussleitungen zwischen der Vermittlungsstelle und den Räumlichkeiten der Teilnehmer zur Verfügung standen. Daher war es nicht möglich, Schlussfolgerungen auf regionaler Ebene zu ziehen.

Die Berichte für 2013 und 2014 zur Qualität der Breitbanddienste werden dasselbe Format wie der Bericht für 2012 haben und deshalb ebenfalls keine Aufgliederung der Ergebnisse nach Regionen enthalten.

Die nationalen Breitbandpläne werden regelmäßig von der Europäischen Kommission überprüft ([2]) und die Fortschritte auf dem Weg zum Erreichen der Ziele der Digitalen Agenda durch den Anzeiger zur Digitalen Agenda (Scoreboard) überwacht ([3]). Die Bereitstellung eines besseren Internetzugangs für Gebiete, in denen der Markt versagt hat — was häufig ländliche Gebiete betrifft –, wird im kommenden Finanzierungszeitraum 2014-2020 hauptsächlich von den europäischen Struktur- und Investitionsfonds (ESIF) abhängig sein. Es wird davon ausgegangen, dass IKT-Infrastrukturen (Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie) im Rahmen der künftigen ESIF über alle regionalen Kategorien hinweg zuschussfähig sein werden und ein Plan für ein nationales oder regionales Netz der nächsten Generation (NGN) dürfte bis dahin vorliegen, weil er eine Fördervoraussetzung ist.

([1]) http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CDAQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fec.europa.eu%2Finformation_society%2Fnewsroom%2Fcf%2Fdae%2Fdocument.cfm%3Fdoc_id%3D2319&ei=4gOOUp_NCoLStQbgzoCgAg&usg=AFQjCNE-TnV9VFl3qeWq9wtOhywO1yV79g&bvm=bv.56987063,d.Yms

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/commission-staff-working-document-implementation-national-broadband-plans

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012234/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Actual Internet capacity and its regional distribution

According to an EU study, Internet users do not receive from their providers the download speeds they are paying for; they only receive two-thirds of the capacity. Mobile telephone operators cover themselves appropriately in their contracts with clauses referring to a bandwidth range, for example.

The actual transmission speed is naturally dependent on a range of factors: distance from the exchange, cable quality, nearby electrical installations, number of connections, etc. People can live with the occasional loss of power, provided it is only a rare occurrence. In rural regions — that is to say precisely the places where many people are dependent on good connections in order to earn their living by working at home on account of a lack of local jobs — users appear to complain particularly often of poor Internet speeds.

1. Was the regional distribution investigated as part of the aforementioned study?

2. If so, what conclusion did the study reach?

3. If not, is an investigation of the regional distribution planned in any follow-up studies?

4. What is the status of the action plans for better Internet provision for rural regions?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(9 December 2013)

The terms of reference of the Sam Knows study on Quality of Broadband in the EU ([1]) did not include a breakdown of results by regions. A split of results by urban and rural areas was requested but was not possible because detailed information on the length of the access line from the exchange to the panellists' premises was not available. As a result it was not possible to reach conclusions at regional level.

The 2013 and 2014 reports on the quality of broadband services will keep the same format as the 2012 report and will not contain any breakdown of results by regions.

National broadband plans are regularly reviewed by the European Commission ([2]), and their progress towards the Digital Agenda targets is monitored through the Digital Agenda scoreboard ([3]). Better Internet provision for areas affected by market failure — often corresponding to rural areas — in the coming 2014-2020 financing period will rely mostly on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). Under the future ESIF, ICT (Information and Communication Technology) infrastructures are expected to be eligible across all categories of regions and the related *ex-ante* conditionality should provide for a national or regional NGN(Next-Generation Network) plan to be in place.

([1]) http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CDAQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fec.europa.eu%2Finformation_society%2Fnewsroom%2Fcf%2Fdae%2Fdocument.cfm%3Fdoc_id%3D2319&ei=4gOOUp_NCoLStQbgzoCgAg&usg=AFQjCNE-TnV9VFl3qeWq9wtOhywO1yV79g&bvm=bv.56987063,d.Yms

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/commission-staff-working-document-implementation-national-broadband-plans

([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/scoreboard

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012236/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: NSA-Skandal — Mitlesen von Email-Kommunikation

In der Vergangenheit hieß es, dass die E-Mails von Gmail-Kunden lediglich auf Spam und Viren gescannt werden und für die Schaltung personalisierter Daten verwendet werden. Im Zusammenhang mit der NSA-Affäre meinte Google ganz lapidar, kein Gmail-Nutzer dürfe erwarten, dass der Inhalt persönlicher E-Mails privat bleibt.

Es muss eindeutig klargestellt werden, dass beim Versenden von E-Mails ebenso wie beim Schicken von Briefen das Postgeheimnis gilt, also kein Anbieter mitlesen darf. Ebenso haben die Kunden haben ein Recht zu erfahren, welche Nutzerdaten an Sicherheitsbehörden weitergegeben werden.

1. Welche Haltung nimmt die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang ein?

2. Wird auf EU-Ebene daran gearbeitet, dass die Kunden erfahren sollen, welche Nutzerdaten an Sicherheitsbehörden weitergegeben werden?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(17. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-011733/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012236/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: NSA scandal — reading of emails

In the past it was said that the emails of Gmail customers were merely scanned for spam and viruses and were used for the connecting of personal data. In connection with the NSA affair, Google stated quite tersely that no Gmail user should expect the content of personal emails to remain private.

It needs to be made absolutely clear that, when sending emails, just as when sending letters, the secrecy of communications applies, that is to say no service provider may read these communications. Customers also have the right to know which user data are passed on to security authorities.

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

2. Is work being done at EU level to ensure that customers will know which user data are passed on to security authorities?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-011733/13.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012238/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: E-Government — Datensicherheit

Der intelligente Einsatz von Technologien ist sicherlich eine Möglichkeit, Kosten zu senken, und das nicht nur im grenzüberschreitenden Bereich. Dass E-Government zu mehr Effizienz führen kann, mag stimmen, und in einem gewissen Ausmaß mag auch ein Mehr an Bürgerservice dadurch entstehen. Allerdings muss gerade angesichts des jüngsten NSA-Skandals durch entsprechende Sicherheitsmaßnahmen gewährleistet sein, dass etwa die US-Sicherheitsbehörden nicht bei sämtlichen Schriftstücken gleich mitlesen und sensible Daten so in die falschen Hände gelangen.

1. Welche Begleitmaßnahmen werden im Zusammenhang mit den E-Government-Initiativen wie E-Justice usw. auf EU-Ebene ergriffen, um die Datensicherheit zu gewährleisten?

2. Welche Maßnahmen sind in diesem Zusammenhang noch geplant?

3. Inwieweit findet dieser Aspekt in der internen Kommunikation zwischen EU-Institutionen und -Agenturen Berücksichtigung?

Antwort von Herrn Šefčovič im Namen der Kommission
(6. Januar 2014)

Zunächst möchte die Kommission auf den Europäischen Interoperabilitätsrahmen (EIF) für europäische öffentliche Dienste ([1]) verweisen. Die Mitgliedstaaten wurden aufgefordert, ihre nationalen Interoperabilitätsrahmen bis Ende 2013 an den EIF anzupassen, was die meisten von ihnen auch bereits getan haben. Eines der Grundprinzipien des EIF (Abschnitt 2.5) besteht darin, dass die Mitgliedstaaten Sicherheits- und Datenschutzanforderungen bei der Einrichtung europäischer öffentlicher Dienste umfassend berücksichtigen. Insbesondere umfasst der EIF ein Konzeptmodell für öffentliche Dienste, das der Notwendigkeit eines gesicherten Datenaustauschs Rechnung trägt (Abschnitt 3.2.2).

Für den Informationsaustausch mit anderen EU-Organen und Mitgliedstaaten verwendet die Kommission das hochsichere Netz sTESTA ([2]), das die Verfügbarkeit, Integrität und Vertraulichkeit der übertragenen Daten auf bestmögliche Weise gewährleistet: Es ist nicht mit dem Internet verbunden, wird durch in der EU entwickelte Verschlüsselungstechniken gesichert, die von mindestens zwei nationalen Sicherheitsbehörden in der EU zertifiziert wurden, und unterliegt strengen Sicherheitsvorgaben, die regelmäßig überprüft werden.

Bei der Entwicklung von Informationssystemen zur Unterstützung von EU-Maßnahmen wendet die Kommission Sicherheitsstandards und -vorgaben an, die sich international bewährt haben und regelmäßig überprüft werden. Nach diesen Standards muss der Eigentümer der Daten die Anforderungen hinsichtlich Vertraulichkeit und Integrität der Daten prüfen, die Daten entsprechend klassifizieren und angemessene Schutzmaßnahmen treffen.

([1]) Anhang 2 zur Mitteilung der Kommission vom 16. Dezember 2010 an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat, den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und den Ausschuss der Regionen „Interoperabilisierung europäischer öffentlicher Dienste“, KOM(2010)744 endg.

([2]) sTESTA = Secured Trans European Services for Telecommunications between Administrations.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012238/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: E-Government — data security

The intelligent use of technologies is surely one means of reducing costs, and not only in the cross-border sector. It may be true that e-Government can lead to greater efficiency, and to a certain extent it may also give rise to a better service for citizens. However, in view of the recent NSA scandal in particular, it needs to be ensured, through appropriate security measures, that the US security authorities, for example, do not immediately read all documents, thus allowing sensitive data to fall into the wrong hands.

1. What accompanying measures are being taken at EU level in connection with the e-Government initiatives, such as e-Justice, etc., to ensure data security?

2. What other measures are planned in this regard?

3. To what extent is this aspect taken into account in the internal communications between EU institutions and agencies?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 January 2014)

The Commission draws the Honourable Member's attention to the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) for European Public Services ([1]). Member States have been invited to align their national interoperability frameworks with the EIF by end 2013, and the majority of them have already done so. One of the underlying principles of the EIF (Section 2.5) calls on Member States to consider carefully security and privacy requirements when establishing European Public Services. More specifically, the EIF puts forward a conceptual model for such services, which addresses the need for secure exchange of data (Section 3.2.2).

As regards exchange of information between EU institutions, but also with Member States, the Commission has implemented a highly secured network called sTESTA ([2]), which guarantees in the best possible way the availability, integrity and confidentiality of the data it transports: it is not connected to the Internet; it is secured by EU-made cryptographic means certified by at least two EU national security agencies; and it implements a strict security policy which is audited on a regular basis.

When developing information systems to support EU policies, the Commission applies security standards and policies based on international best practices, which are regularly reviewed. These require the data owner to assess the requirements for data confidentiality and integrity, decide on the proper classification level and adopt adequate protective measures.

([1]) Annex 2 to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions 'Towards interoperability for European public services' (COM(2010) 744 final) of 16 December 2010.

([2]) sTESTA = Secured Trans European Services for Telecommunications between Administrations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-012239/13
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Finanziamenti europei per integrazione Rom

Può la Commissione indicare quante risorse siano state destinate all'Italia e alla Regione Toscana nei periodi di programmazione 2000-2006 e 2007-2013 per l'integrazione dei Rom?

Può inoltre precisare quale sia l'eventuale dotazione prevista nel prossimo Quadro finanziario pluriennale 2014-2020 a tal fine?

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

Il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) e il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) sono attuati attraverso programmi operativi (PO) sotto la responsabilità di un'autorità di gestione (AG) a livello nazionale o regionale.

I programmi operativi del FSE non hanno un bilancio dedicato per l'integrazione del popolo Rom. Queste misure sono finanziate in primo luogo dall'asse prioritario inclusione sociale (si veda la tabella in allegato). Non è quindi possibile fornire cifre sulla quota di risorse attribuite a progetti destinati specificamente ai Rom. La Commissione invita inoltre l'onorevole parlamentare a consultare la pubblicazione «European Social Fund and Roma» (il Fondo sociale europeo e Rom) ([1]).

Per quanto riguarda il periodo 2014-2020, il progetto di regolamento FSE comprende una priorità di investimento relativa alla «integrazione socioeconomica delle comunità emarginate, come i Rom». Si prevede che l'Italia presenterà il suo accordo di partnership (AP) per l'attuazione dei Fondi strutturali e di investimento europei (FSIE) durante il periodo di programmazione 2014-2020 nei prossimi mesi. L'AP dovrebbe comprendere informazioni sulla quota di risorse FSIE dedicate e sui principali risultati previsti per gli interventi nell'ambito di questa priorità di investimento.

Il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) cofinanzia azioni a favore dei Rom in quattro regioni della convergenza attraverso il programma operativo nazionale 2007-2013 «Sicurezza per lo sviluppo». Dal momento che i progetti costituiscono parte di una strategia generale destinata ai migranti, non è possibile fornire informazioni sui fondi specificamente destinati ai Rom. La AG Toscana ha inoltre di recente proposto di utilizzare il FESR per cofinanziare interventi integrati nel settore degli alloggi a favore dei Rom, comprendenti circa 200 persone dei comuni di Pistoia, Lucca e San Giuliano Terme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/docs/esf_roma_it.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012239/13
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: EU funding for integration of Roma

Can the Commission say how much funding has been allocated to Italy and the Region of Tuscany in the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods for the integration of Roma people?

Can it also say what the budget might be in the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 for this purpose?

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

The European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) are implemented through Operational Programmes (OPs) under the responsibility of a managing authority (MA) at national or regional level.

ESF OPs do not have a dedicated budget for the integration of Roma people. Such measures are primarily funded from the social inclusion priority axis (see table at annex). It is therefore not possible to provide figures on the share of resources allocated to projects specifically targeting Roma. The Commission would also refer the Honourable Member to the publication 'European Social Fund and Roma' ([1]).

As for the 2014-20 period, the draft ESF Regulation includes an investment priority dealing with the 'socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma'. Italy is expected to submit its Partnership Agreement (PA) for the implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) during the 2014-20 programming period in the upcoming months. The PA should include information on the share of ESIF resources dedicated to, and on the main results expected from interventions under such an investment priority.

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) co-finances actions in favour of Roma in the four convergence regions through the 2007-2013 'Security for Development' national OP. As the projects are part of an overall strategy for migrants, it is not possible to provide information on funds specifically allocated to Roma. In addition, the Tuscany MA has recently proposed to use the ERDF to co-finance integrated housing interventions in favour of Roma, covering approximately 200 persons in the municipalities of Pistoia, Lucca and San Giuliano Terme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/docs/esf_roma_en.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-012240/13
a la Comisión
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Exclusión de menores en un programa de tiempo libre

Dos menores de 10 años de Olazagutía (Navarra) que estudian el modelo B con la mayoría de las asignaturas en lengua vasca han sido excluidas, por parte de la Mancomunidad de Alsasua, Olazagutía y Ciordia, del programa de tiempo libre en euskera Larunblai, por no estudiar en el modelo D de enseñanza íntegra en lengua vasca.

Los padres han recurrido al Defensor del Pueblo y no descartan poner en conocimiento del Defensor del Menor lo que consideran una marginación, cuando en los últimos dos años las niñas ya habían asistido al mismo programa sin ningún tipo de problema.

El artículo 14 de la Convención Europea de Derechos Humanos dice: «El goce de los derechos y libertades ha de ser asegurado sin distinción alguna, especialmente por razones de sexo, raza, color, lengua, religión, opiniones políticas u otras, origen nacional o social, pertenencia a una minoría nacional, fortuna, nacimiento o cualquier otra situación».

¿Cree la Comisión que se trata de un acto segregador, excluyente e injusto?

¿Cree la Comisión adecuado que una administración pública local aplique a sus programas criterios de exclusión por razón de lengua?

¿Cree la Comisión adecuado que un ente local pueda cohibir la libertad de los padres a elegir la educación de sus hijos mediante este tipo de exclusiones sin fundamento legal?

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

De conformidad con el artículo 2 del Tratado de la Unión Europea, el respeto de los derechos de las personas pertenecientes a minorías constituye uno de los valores fundacionales de la Unión Europea. Además, los artículos 21 y 22 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea prohíben la discriminación basada en la pertenencia a una minoría nacional y establecen el respeto por parte de la Unión de la diversidad cultural, religiosa y lingüística.Dentro del ámbito del Derecho de la Unión Europea, la Comisión garantiza que los Estados miembros, al aplicar tal Derecho, respetan los derechos fundamentales establecidos en la Carta.

Sin embargo, tal y como se explica en la respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-006204/2013, la Comisión no tiene competencias generales en lo que respecta a las personas pertenecientes a minorías. Con respecto a la cuestión concreta del derecho de las personas pertenecientes a minorías a hablar y utilizar sus propias lenguas, cabe señalar que esta cuestión es competencia exclusiva de los Estados miembros, competencia sujeta a las garantías de derechos fundamentales del orden constitucional nacional y a las obligaciones derivadas del Derecho internacional, incluidos los instrumentos pertinentes del Consejo de Europa.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012240/13
to the Commission
Pablo Zalba Bidegain (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Exclusion of children from a leisure programme

Two children under the age of 10 from Olazagutía (Navarra), who are studying under Model B with most of their subjects in the Basque language, have been excluded by the Association of Municipalities of Alsasua, Olazagutía and Ciordia from the Larunblai leisure programme in the Basque language because they are not studying under Model D, in which pupils are taught fully in Basque.

Their parents have reported the matter to the Ombudsman and they are considering informing also the Ombudsman for Children about what they consider to be an issue of marginalisation, when in the previous two years the little girls had followed the same programme without any problems.

According to Article 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights: 'The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.'

Does the Commission not agree that this is a segregating, exclusionary and unfair act?

Does the Commission consider it appropriate for a local public authority to apply to its programmes exclusion criteria based on language?

Does the Commission consider it appropriate for a local authority to restrict the freedom of parents to choose their children's education by means of such exclusions without any legal basis?

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

According to Article 2 of the Treaty on the EU, the respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities constitutes one of the founding values of the EU. Furthermore, Articles 21 and 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU prohibit discrimination based on membership of a national minority and provide for the respect by the Union of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. Within the scope of EC law, the Commission ensures that Member States, when implementing this law, respect fundamental rights laid down in the Charter.

However, as explained in its reply to Written Question E-006204/2013, the Commission has no general powers as regards people belonging to minorities. As regards the specific issue of the right of persons belonging to minorities to speak and use their own languages, this is a competence for the Member States alone, subject to fundamental rights guarantees of the national constitutional order and obligations under international law, including the relevant instruments of the Council of Europe.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012241/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Aiuti UE al terzo mondo

Secondo un recente rapporto di un importante think tank del settore, gli aiuti europei ai paesi poveri sono in stallo a due anni dalla scadenza del programma «Obiettivi di sviluppo del Millennio» delle Nazioni Unite. Secondo il rapporto, l'ammontare degli aiuti è stato tagliato o è rimasto stabile in 19 Stati membri dell'Unione. Il rapporto prende in esame la qualità e la quantità degli aiuti dell'UE e fa un'analisi che dimostra che il deficit di finanziamento per raggiungere l'obiettivo delle Nazioni Unite si attesta oggi a 36 miliardi di euro. La UE a 27 nel 2012 ha elargito aiuti per oltre 50 miliardi di EUR, lo 0,39 % del reddito nazionale lordo dell'UE, in calo del 4 % rispetto all'anno precedente. L'aiuto dell'UE nel suo complesso è sceso al livello più basso dal 2007.

Pochi Stati membri dell'Unione vanno contro tendenza: i maggiori incrementi relativi si sono registrati in Lettonia (17 %), Lussemburgo (14 %), Polonia (14 %), Austria (8 %), Lituania (8 %) e Regno Unito (7 %). I paesi che hanno già raggiunto l'obiettivo dello 0,7 % sono Danimarca (0,8 %), Lussemburgo (1 %) e Svezia (0,99 %) e nel 2013 il Regno Unito si unirà a loro raggiungendo lo 0,7 %. Un ulteriore problema deriverebbe dal fatto che i 50 miliardi di EUR di aiuti della UE sarebbero un dato gonfiato in quanto una buona parte dei fondi non ha mai raggiunto i paesi in via di sviluppo: il rapporto svela che solo 45 miliardi di dollari (0,35 % del PIL) ha raggiunto i paesi beneficiari.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

— se intende riferire in merito ad eventuali revisioni dei programmi di stanziamento di aiuti internazionali ed eventuali provvedimenti per i Paesi inadempienti;

— se intende approfondire e riferire in merito alla questione della mancata consegna ai beneficiari degli aiuti stanziati?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(17 dicembre 2013)

Nel 2012 l'UE e i suoi Stati membri hanno continuato a essere i principali donatori mondiali, fornendo più della metà degli aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo ([1]) segnalati dai membri dell'OCSE ([2])/CAS ([3]). L'impegno dell'UE supera di gran lunga quello degli altri principali donatori ([4]).

Tuttavia, stando ai dati preliminari, la crisi economica e le severe restrizioni di bilancio cui deve far fronte la maggior parte dei paesi sviluppati hanno avuto un impatto negativo sui livelli degli APS su scala mondiale nel 2012. Per il secondo anno consecutivo, l'UE ha visto calare il proprio livello collettivo di APS, che sono passati dai 56,3 miliardi di EUR del 2011 (0,45 % dell'RNL ([5])) ai 55,2 miliardi di EUR del 2012 (0,43 % dell'RNL). Il totale degli APS dei 28 Stati membri, considerati singolarmente, è diminuito, passando da 52,8 miliardi di EUR (0,42 % dell'RNL) a 50,6 miliardi di EUR (0,39 % dell'RNL) ([6]).

La Commissione continuerà a esortare tutti gli Stati membri a rispettare i loro impegni e monitorerà i progressi compiuti dall'Unione attraverso le relazioni di responsabilità dell'UE ([7]).La Commissione valuta positivamente il fatto che, nelle Conclusioni del Consiglio sulla prima relazione annuale al Consiglio europeo sugli obiettivi in materia di aiuti allo sviluppo dell'UE (del 29 maggio 2013), gli Stati membri «riaffermano tutti i loro impegni individuali e collettivi di APS, tenendo conto della situazione di bilancio eccezionale» ([8]).

([1]) APS — Aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo.
([2]) Organizzazione per la cooperazione e lo sviluppo economico.
([3]) Comitato per l'aiuto allo sviluppo.
([4]) Va rilevato che nel 2012 anche i Paesi Bassi hanno superato lo 0,7 % di APS/RNL (0,71 %).
([5]) Reddito nazionale lordo.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/documents/accountability-report-2013/accountability-report-2013-02_en.pdf, pag. 68.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/documents/financing_for_dev_2013_council_conclusions_en.pdf

La Commissione non sottoscrive la dichiarazione secondo cui gli attuali livelli degli aiuti dell'UE sono «gonfiati». Alcune spese ufficiali per la gestione a livello dei donatori, l'alleggerimento del debito, le attività di sensibilizzazione al tema dello sviluppo, i programmi culturali e sociali orientati allo sviluppo, gli studenti, i rifugiati e la ricerca sono attualmente da considerarsi aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo. A questo proposito, la Commissione rimanda l'onorevole deputato alle direttive dell'OCSE/CAS in materia di notifica ([9]). Gli aiuti pubblici allo sviluppo totali non rappresentano al momento una categoria oggetto di segnalazione e l'UE non ha assunto impegni in tal senso. La Commissione non ha pertanto alcun motivo di estendere il monitoraggio a tale questione.

([9]) http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DCD-DAC(2013)15-FINAL-ENG.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012241/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: EU aid for the developing world

According to a recent report by a leading think tank in the sector, EU aid for poor counties has stalled two years ahead of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals expiring. According to the report, the amount of aid has been cut or has remained unchanged in 19 EU Member States. The report looks at the quality and quantity of EU aid and presents an analysis showing that EUR 36 billion in funding is now required in order to reach the United Nations target. In 2012, the EU-27 increased aid to over EUR 50 billion, 0.39% of the EU's GDP, down by 4% from the previous year. EU aid as a whole has fallen to its lowest level since 2007.

Few EU Member States buck this trend: the largest relative increases have been seen in Latvia (17%), Luxembourg (14%), Poland (14%), Austria (8%), Lithuania (8%) and the United Kingdom (7%). The countries that have already achieved the goal of 0.7% are Denmark (0.8%), Luxembourg (1%) and Sweden (0.99%), and the United Kingdom will join them when it reaches 0.7% in 2013. Another problem is the fact that the figure of EUR 50 billion put on EU aid is inflated, since a large proportion of the funds have never reached developing countries: the report reveals that only USD 45 billion (0.35% of GDP) reaches beneficiary countries.

Does the Commission plan to comment on any revisions to international aid allocation programmes and any steps for non-compliant countries?

Does it plan to look into and report on the issue of beneficiaries not receiving allocated aid?

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

The EU and its Member States remained the world's largest donor in 2012, providing more than half of the ODA ([1]) reported by the members of the OECD ([2]) DAC ([3]). The EU effort exceeds by far that of the other major donors ([4]).

However, the economic crisis and the severe budgetary constraints facing most developed countries had a negative impact on global ODA levels in 2012 according to preliminary figures. The EU has seen its collective ODA level go down for a second year in a row from EUR 56.3 billion in 2011 (0.45% of GNI ([5])) to EUR 55.2 billion in 2012 (0.43% of GNI). The total ODA of the 28 Member States alone decreased from EUR 52.8 billion (0.42% of GNI) to EUR 50.6 billion (0.39% of GNI). ([6])

The Commission will continue to call on all Member States to respect their commitments and will continue to monitor EU progress through the annual EU Accountability Reports ([7]). The Commission is pleased that, in the Council Conclusions on the 2013 Annual Report to the European Council on EU Development Aid Targets (29 May 2013), Member States 'reaffirmed all their individual and collective ODA commitments, taking into account the exceptional budgetary circumstances' ([8]).

The Commission does not subscribe to the statement about current EU aid levels being 'inflated'. Some official expenditure on donor administration, debt relief, development awareness activities, development-oriented social and cultural programmes, students, refugees and research currently qualifies as ODA. In this respect, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the OECD/DAC Reporting Directives ([9]). Total in-donor ODA is currently not a reporting category, and the EU has taken no commitments in that respect. The Commission therefore has no basis to extend monitoring to this issue.

([1]) Official Development Assistance.
([2]) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
([3]) Development Assistance Committee.
([4]) Note that in 2012 the Netherlands also exceeded 0.7% ODA/GNI (0.71%).
([5]) Gross National Income.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/documents/accountability-report-2013/accountability-report-2013-02_en.pdf p. 68.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/index_en.htm
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/financing_for_development/documents/financing_for_dev_2013_council_conclusions_en.pdf
([9]) http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DCD-DAC(2013)15-FINAL-ENG.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012242/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Chemioterapia: quali farmaci possono essere dannosi per la salute

Secondo recenti studi, alcuni farmaci utilizzati nelle terapie ospedaliere di lotta ai tumori potrebbero essere nocive per la salute in misura superiore agli effetti collaterali dichiarati.

Già da tempo se ne conoscono gli effetti collaterali. In campo chemioterapico, infatti, il primo e più noto fallimento dell'oncologia riguarda il farmaco DES usato per molti tipi di cancro e soprattutto per il cancro alla mammella. Questo farmaco dava effetti collaterali anche nel lungo termine ed era stato già indicato da alcuni oncologi come «farmaco pericoloso».

Nuovi studi si sono quindi incentrati sul Tamoxifen, farmaco che è andato a sostituire il DES in alcune chemioterapie, dapprima approvato dalla FIDA (autorità per i medicinali e gli alimenti degli USA) per essere usato come pillola per il controllo delle nascite, poi per la prevenzione del tumore al seno.

Questi studi indicano che questo farmaco si rivela invece promotore di neoplasie particolarmente aggressive all'utero ed al fegato, causa di fatali coagulazioni del sangue ed ostacolo a numerose altre funzioni.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, può la Commissione far sapere quale posizione intenda assumere circa l'utilizzo del suddetto farmaco in terapie chemioterapiche e se intende predisporre uno studio aggiornato sulla valutazione dei rischi e benefici derivanti dalla sua assunzione, secondo i parametri previsti dalla UE e in particolare da EMA?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(20 dicembre 2013)

Un prodotto medicinale può essere immesso sul mercato dell'UE soltanto se ha ottenuto previamente un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione ([1]) dall'autorità competente di uno Stato membro o dalla Commissione. Un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione è concessa per un prodotto medicinale una volta che ne sia stata valutata la qualità, sicurezza ed efficacia e che si sia effettuato un bilancio positivo rischi/benefici in relazione al suo uso. L'informazione sul prodotto, che fa parte dell'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione, indica l'uso approvato del medicinale, comprese le sue indicazioni, le controindicazioni e, se del caso, le precauzioni particolari da adottare e le avvertenze.

Dopo il rilascio dell'autorizzazione iniziale la sicurezza del prodotto è seguita lungo il suo intero ciclo di vita nel contesto della farmacovigilanza. La farmacovigilanza dell'UE è stata ulteriormente rafforzata con la revisione della legislazione nel 2010 e 2012. È stato istituito un nuovo comitato di valutazione dei rischi per la farmacovigilanza facente capo all'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, incaricato di monitorare e valutare gli indicatori di sicurezza legati all'uso dei prodotti medicinali.

Prodotti medicinali contenenti dietilstilbestrolo (DES) e tamoxifen sono stati autorizzati dagli Stati membri. I rischi legati a queste sostanze attive menzionate dall'Onorevole deputato sono noti ed essi dovrebbero pertanto essere stati trattati nell'informazione sul prodotto approvata dagli Stati membri. Per queste sostanze attive non sono stati identificati nuovi indicatori di sicurezza ([2]) ed attualmente non è previsto nessun intervento normativo a livello di UE.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 726/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 31 marzo 2004, che istituisce procedure comunitarie per l'autorizzazione e la sorveglianza dei medicinali per uso umano e veterinario, e che istituisce l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali, GU L 136 del 30.4.2004; direttiva 2001/83/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 6 novembre 2001, recante un codice comunitario relativo ai medicinali per uso umano, GU L 311 del 28.11.2001.

([2]) Elenco degli indicatori di sicurezza discussi a partire dal settembre 2012, http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/regulation/document_listing/document_listing_000375.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac0580727d1c#section2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012242/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Chemotherapy: which drugs may be harmful to health

According to recent studies, several drugs used in hospital-based cancer treatment could do more harm to health than the declared side effects.

The side effects have been known for some time. In chemotherapy, the main and most well-known oncological drug failure involves the drug DES, used for many types of cancer and particularly for breast cancer. This drug also has long-term side effects and has already been branded a 'dangerous drug' by some oncologists.

New studies have thus focused on tamoxifen, a drug that has replaced DES in some forms of chemotherapy, initially approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the US for use as a birth-control pill, then for preventing breast cancer.

According to these studies, this drug promotes particularly aggressive tumour growth in the uterus and in the liver, causes fatal blood clots and blocks a number of other functions.

Can the Commission say what position it plans to adopt in relation to the use of the aforementioned drug in chemotherapy and does it plan to arrange an updated study analysing the risk/benefit ratio associated with taking it, in accordance with parameters laid down by the EU, and in particular by the European Medicines Agency?

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

A medicinal product can be placed on the EU market only after a marketing authorisation has been granted ([1]) either by the competent authority of a Member State or by the Commission. A marketing authorisation is granted to a medicinal product after its quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. Product information, which is part of the marketing authorisation, states the approved use of the medicine, including its indications, contraindications and as appropriate, special precautions and warnings.

After the initial authorisation, safety of the product is followed during its whole life-cycle within a framework of pharmacovigilance. EU pharmacovigilance has been further strengthened with the revision of legislation in 2010 and 2012. A new Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee at the European Medicines Agency, responsible for monitoring and assessment of safety signals related to use of medicinal products, has been established.

Medicinal products containing diethylstilbestrol (DES) and tamoxifen have been authorised by the Member States. The risks of these active substances mentioned by the Honourable Member are known, therefore it is expected that they are addressed in the product information approved by the Member States. No new safety signal on these active substances has been identified ([2]) and no EU regulatory action is currently foreseen.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004; Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

([2]) List of safety signals discussed since September 2012, http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/index.jsp?curl=pages/regulation/document_listing/document_listing_000375.jsp&mid=WC0b01ac0580727d1c#section2

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012243/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuova tecnologia per aspirare lo smog urbano

Recentemente l'OMS ha inserito lo smog nel gruppo delle sostanze cancerogene (tra cui amianto e benzene), che evidenziano un effetto sulla salute superiore a quello del fumo passivo. Tale decisione è stata presa a seguito di uno studio che, raccogliendo più di mille ricerche, dimostra chiaramente tale effetto nocivo. In particolare dallo studio si evince che l'esposizione all'inquinamento provoca il cancro ai polmoni e aumenta il rischio di contrarlo alla vescica: in media muoiono infatti circa 800.000 persone ogni anno a causa dello smog.

Inoltre, si stima che ogni cittadino europeo perda circa 8,6 mesi di vita e il dato peggiore si riscontra nella Pianura padana, dove si calcola che i cittadini perdano potenzialmente, ogni anno, 2-3 anni di vita. Questa area del Nord Italia abbracciata dal sistema montuoso delle Alpi a Nord e degli Appennini a Sud, non presenta un costante flusso di correnti d'aria tale da poter garantire il ricambio necessario per ridurre l'inquinamento. Pochi giorni fa è stata presentata una tecnologia frutto di un progetto olandese che permetterebbe di aspirare lo smog urbano. Il meccanismo comporta l'utilizzo di bobine in rame poste nel terreno allo scopo di creare un debole campo elettrostatico che attrae le particelle di particolato, creando un «vuoto» di aria pulita sopra di esse. Questo progetto è stato pensato per alcuni paesi dell'Est asiatico, come le cittadine cinesi che hanno un alto tasso di inquinamento.

Considerato che:

— si stima che una riduzione del 20 % delle concentrazioni di Pm10 e di NO_2 determinerebbe una riduzione del 30 % della mortalità a breve termine e dei ricoveri ospedalieri;

— il progetto suddetto è ancora in una fase iniziale, per cui sono necessari ulteriori 18 mesi per mettere a punto tale meccanismo;

può la Commissione riferire se:

— è a conoscenza di quest'innovazione tecnologica;

— intende finanziare e supportare lo sviluppo di questa tecnologia per impiegarla soprattutto sul territorio europeo, ed eventualmente procedere alla vendita del brevetto in Asia;

— qualora gli esiti siano positivi, ritiene utile testare tale progetto come soluzione di breve termine nelle città europee più inquinate, all'interno di una strategia globale di riduzione dell'inquinamento?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(7 gennaio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza di questa tecnica di riduzione in quanto viene largamente utilizzata per la riduzione delle emissioni di particelle provocate dagli impianti industriali e di combustione. Tuttavia non ha ancora ricevuto informazioni sull'applicazione di questa tecnologia nell'aria ambiente. Inoltre, non sono disponibili informazioni relative all'efficacia, ai benefici e ai costi connessi all'applicazione di questa tecnologia come mezzo per la riduzione dell'inquinamento urbano. Pertanto, la Commissione non ritiene che possa rappresentare una soluzione a breve termine per questo problema.

L'UE promuove la ricerca e l'innovazione, attraverso l'attuale 7° programma quadro per la ricerca e il futuro programma Orizzonte 2020, al fine di sviluppare e applicare opzioni e strategie tecnologiche a favore di una gestione integrata delle politiche in materia di qualità dell'aria e di cambiamenti climatici negli Stati membri dell'UE. La riduzione delle emissioni alla fonte è un obiettivo primario. Pur ritenendo fondamentale elaborare e attuare le misure e le prassi più adeguate per la riduzione dell'inquinamento, la Commissione ritiene che la tecnologia specifica cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato possa avere solo un impatto limitato per affrontare il problema dell'inquinamento atmosferico su larga scala.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012243/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: New technology for vacuuming urban smog

The World Health Organisation recently added smog to the list of carcinogens (among which are asbestos and benzene) which have more of an effect on health than passive smoking. This decision was taken following a study that collated over 1 000 pieces of research, clearly demonstrating this harmful effect. In particular, the study shows that exposure to pollution causes lung cancer and increases the risk of developing bladder cancer: on average, around 800 000 people die every year because of smog.

Moreover, it is estimated that the life expectancy of every EU is shortened by around 8.6 months, but the worst statistic is found in the Po plain, where it is calculated that citizens potentially lose 2-3 years off their life every year. This part of northern Italy, enclosed by the mountain system of the Alps to the north and the Apennines to the south, does not have a constant airflow such as to enable the air exchange required to reduce pollution. A few days ago, a technology developed by a Dutch project was unveiled, which would make it possible to vacuum urban smog. The system involves the use of copper coils placed on the ground to create a weak electrostatic field that attracts particulates, creating a 'vacuum' of clean air above them. The project was conceived for several east Asian countries, such as China, which has very high levels of pollution.

It is estimated that a 20% reduction in PM10 and NO_2 concentrations would cut deaths by 30% in the short term and hospital admissions.

The aforementioned project is still in the early stages, so it will take another 18 months to develop the system.

Is the Commission aware of this technological innovation?

Will it finance and support the development of this technology in order to use it in the EU, and eventually sell the patent in Asia?

If the results are positive, does the Commission think that this project should be tested as a short-term solution in the most polluted European cities, as part of a global pollution reduction strategy?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 January 2014)

The Commission is aware of the abatement technique as this is widely applied to particulate matter emissions from industrial and combustion installations. It has not yet received information about this particular application on ambient air. Furthermore, no information is available related to the effectiveness, benefits and costs related to the application of this technology as a means to reduce smog in an urban environment. Therefore, the Commission does not consider the technology as a short term solution to urban smog.

The EU promotes research and innovation — through the current 7th Research Framework Programme and the future Horizon 2020 Programme — for the development and application of technological options and strategies in support of integrated air quality and climate change governance in EU Member States. The reduction of emissions at source is a primary goal. Supporting the design and implementation of the most adequate abatement strategies and practices is certainly a key objective, however the specific technology to which the question refers to may have a limited impact to tackle the problem of air pollution at large scale.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012245/13
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Nuovi dispositivi per il rilascio di farmaci tramite impulsi luminosi

Un'importante università americana ha recentemente messo a punto alcuni dispositivi equipaggiati con cellule sintetiche che permettono di rilasciare farmaci tramite l'utilizzo della luce.

Tali impianti, inseriti all'interno del corpo umano, sono collegati con fibre ottiche che consentono di far passare la luce e di metterle in comunicazione con le cellule sintetiche, le quali, attivate dall'impulso luminoso, rilasciano farmaci a comando o segnalano la presenza di sostanze tossiche.

Tali dispositivi sono stati sperimentati su topi diabetici, utilizzando una luce blu allo scopo di stimolare le cellule sintetiche a «fabbricare» una proteina che stimola la produzione di insulina. In un altro esperimento, le cellule sintetiche hanno emesso una luce verde fluorescente in presenza di tossine come i metalli pesanti.

Considerato che:

— l'OMS stima che nel 2030 nel mondo ci saranno 360 milioni di persone diabetiche (rispetto ai 170 milioni del 2000), con evidenti ripercussioni sulla vita dei pazienti e delle loro famiglie e sui costi e l'organizzazione dei sistemi sanitari e i test eseguiti dimostrano che i dispositivi hanno efficacemente regolato i livelli di glucosio nel sangue degli animali diabetici;

può la Commissione riferire se:

— è a conoscenza di questa ricerca scientifica;

— ritiene che l'utilizzo di tale tecnologia non riguardi solamente tale patologia, ma potrebbe divenire uno strumento estremamente utile nella cura di differenti patologie;

— ritiene opportuno sviluppare tale studio su scala più vasta, al fine di pervenire a risultati più esaustivi, rendendo utilizzabili tali impianti anche per il trattamento di altre patologie?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(11 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della recente pubblicazione a cura di un gruppo di ricercatori della Harvard Medical School sullo sviluppo di un nuovo dispositivo *in vivo* costituito da sensori ottici e delle relative applicazioni terapeutiche.

Sebbene i risultati di tale studio possano aprire nuove strade per la cura del diabete, è necessario compiere ulteriori progressi nelle attività di ricerca e sviluppo prima che questo dispositivo terapeutico possa essere facilmente disponibile a scopi clinici. È tuttavia prevedibile che nel lungo termine, questa tecnologia possa rivelarsi utile anche per trattare malattie diverse.

Orizzonte 2020, il nuovo programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([1]), prevede un ulteriore sostegno alla ricerca in materia di terapie e tecnologie avanzate, in particolare nel contesto della sfida della società «sanità, cambiamenti demografici e benessere».

I fondi di ricerca dell'Unione europea sono attribuiti sulla base di inviti a presentare proposte concorrenziali pubblicati assieme ai relativi programmi di lavoro. I ricercatori interessati sono invitati a cogliere tali opportunità per proporre progetti in grado di elaborare ulteriormente la prova di concetto (*proof of concept*) e volti a stabilire se tale nuova terapia possa essere più efficace rispetto alle terapie esistenti.

([1]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012245/13
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: New devices for delivering drugs via light impulses

A major US university has recently developed devices containing synthetic cells which make it possible to deliver drugs by using light.

The devices, which are implanted in the human body, are connected to optic fibres that allow light to pass through and connect them to synthetic cells, which, when activated by a light impulse, deliver drugs on command or emit a warning when toxins are detected.

The devices have been tested on diabetic mice, using a blue light to stimulate the synthetic cells to 'produce' a protein that stimulates insulin production. In another experiment, the synthetic cells emitted a fluorescent green light when toxins such as heavy metals were detected.

According to World Health Organisation estimates, 360 million people worldwide will have diabetes in 2030 (compared with 170 million in 2000), with obvious repercussions for the life of patients and their families and for the costs incurred by health systems and how they are organised. The experiments carried out show that the devices have effectively regulated blood sugar levels in diabetic animals.

Is the Commission aware of this scientific research?

Does it think that this technology can be used not only for diabetes, but could become an extremely useful instrument in treating different diseases?

Does it think this study should be developed on a wider scale, in order to obtain more comprehensive results, meaning these devices can also be used for treating other diseases?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of the recent publication by a Harvard Medical School research team on the development of a new device for *in vivo* optical-sensing and therapy applications.

Although the cited results may open a new avenue for the treatment of diabetes, further research and development will be needed before such a promising therapeutic device would be readily available for clinical use. It is, however, conceivable that in the long-term, such technology could also be useful to treat different diseases.

Horizon 2020, the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), ([1]) envisages further support for research into advanced therapies and technologies, especially under its Societal Challenge 'Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing'.

EU research funding is granted based on competitive calls for proposals published with relevant Work Programmes. Interested researchers are encouraged to make use of these opportunities to propose projects that may develop further the proof of concept and assess whether such a new therapy could be more effective than existing treatments.

([1]) www.ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-documents

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012246/13
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Industrial wind turbines

At present, a number of issues are being raised regarding the installation of wind turbines in Ireland. The most controversial issues relate to what constitutes a safe, appropriate distance between industrial wind turbines and residential properties, and the potential environmental and health impacts on those living close to the turbines.

In light of the above, could the Commission clarify:

1. What is a safe, appropriate distance between industrial wind turbines and residential properties?

2. What potentially adverse health effects are associated with living close to industrial wind turbines?

3. Whether or not Ireland has breached the Aarhus Convention by not holding a public consultation process before contracting landowners to allow the installation of turbines on their properties, without any environmental impact assessments being carried out?

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

1. Apart for the Renewable Energy Directive ([1]) there is no specific EU legislation for the construction of wind farms; no European-level definition exists on what constitutes a safe or appropriate distance. When planning the location and construction of wind farms, the EU environmental legislation ([2]) needs to be taken into account.

National regulations and guidelines exist, mainly on noise levels. Ireland's Department of Environment Community and Local government provides a list ([3]) of recommended distances in relation to various impacts arising from the presence of wind farms. The Irish Wind Energy Association has also published design constraints for wind farms ([4]).

2. Scientific studies and government reports ([5]) have so far not found substantial evidence that wind turbines put public health at risk. Existing environmental planning guidelines are generally believed to be sufficient to prevent potential adverse health effects. Significant efforts are underway to reduce sound levels emitted by wind turbines. The EU-funded ENNAH coordination action concluded that 'studies are needed to quantify the impact of emerging noise sources such as high speed rail and wind turbine noise, as well as the effectiveness of intervention measures to reduce noise' ([6]).

3. Art. 6 of the Aarhus Convention is primarily concerned with public consultation in relation to development consent procedures which are distinct from prior contingent private arrangements. Any such contractual arrangements are without prejudice to correct application of the decision making procedures and their outcomes.

([1]) Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, OJ L 140, 5.6.2009.

([2]) The Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:020:0007:0025:EN:PDF Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1992:206:0007:0050:EN:PDF
Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:1992:206:0007:0050:EN:PDF
Directive 97/11/EC: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31997L0011:EN:NOT Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (2001/42/EC).
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:197:0030:0037:EN:PDF

([3]) http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/FileDownLoad,1633,en.pdf

([4]) http://www.iwea.com/index.cfm/page/iweabestpracticeguidelines

([5]) CMOH 2010: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/wind_turbine/wind_turbine.pdf
NHMRC 2010: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/new0048_evidence_review_wind_turbines_and_health.pdf
AWEA&CanWEA 2009: http://www.transalta.com/sites/default/files/Wind%20turbine%20sound%20and%20health%20effects%20report.pdf

([6]) European Network on Noise and Health — http://www.ennah.eu/assets/files/ENNAH-Final_report_online_19_3_2013.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-012247/13
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(28 de octubre de 2013)

Asunto: Ayudas del Fondo Social Europeo en Canarias

El principal objetivo y la mayor preocupación de la UE en estos momentos es combatir el desempleo. Para tal fin, el Fondo Social Europeo (FSE) destina fondos que se materializan a través de las políticas activas de empleo y que son gestionados por los diferentes Estados miembros. España es uno de los Estados acreedores de esos fondos.

La UE, en una estrategia de apoyo claro a la lucha contra el desempleo, ha creado para el periodo 2014-2020, un eje social del cual España recibirá 1 100 euros por desempleado.

La gestión de los fondos europeos corresponde a los Estados. Por la particular configuración del Estado español, corresponde a las Comunidades Autónomas recibir en última instancia estos fondos y gestionarlos. Estas actuaciones deben ser ejercidas siempre bajo la aplicación del principio de subsidiariedad, lo que significa que la UE delega en la medida de lo posible en los Estados miembros y en las autoridades regionales y locales. Por todo ello, la Comisión Europea no puede desentenderse cuando esos fondos no llegan a sus destinatarios.

Sin embargo, en este contexto, el Gobierno de España, uno de los Estados con más altas tasas de paro, tiene retenida a día de hoy, casi al final del ejercicio, la dotación de fondos del FSE sin haberlos distribuido y sin una causa que lo justifique.

Canarias tiene la segunda tasa de paro más alta de España, con un 35 % y casi 400 000 desempleados, siendo especialmente preocupante las tasas de desempleo entre la población joven de las islas, que llega casi al 70 %. A esta realidad hay que sumar su especificidad como Región Ultraperiférica de la UE, que provoca que nuestro mercado laboral sufra las consecuencias de unas dificultades estructurales reconocidas tanto por la legislación española, como por la Constitución de nuestro Estado, y por el Tratado de la UE —en su artículo 349 TFUE—, pero que sin embargo, no parecen ser tenidas en cuenta por el Gobierno de España.

Esta tasa de desempleo crea una fractura social en Canarias sin precedentes, por ello se requiere con toda urgencia la distribución de estos fondos y la puesta en práctica de las políticas activas de empleo en toda España, y en especial en nuestra región. Es necesario por tanto que la Comisión Europea vigile de manera más efectiva el reparto de los fondos en el Estado español, en especial los relativos al FSE, para que estos lleguen de manera urgente y sin cortapisas a sus destinatarios finales.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión Europea de que las partidas del FSE destinadas a políticas activas de empleo están retenidas a fecha de hoy por el Gobierno de España, impidiendo que lleguen a sus destinatarios?

¿Prevé adoptar la Comisión algún mecanismo para subsanar la actual situación?

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

En el momento presente, la Comisión no tiene información oficial sobre las asignaciones por región y por Fondo Estructural y de Inversión Europeo (FEIE) efectuadas por las autoridades españolas para el periodo de programación 2014-2020. En lo que se refiere al FSE para el periodo 2007-2013, el porcentaje de gasto se eleva al 68,32 %. La Comisión no tiene conocimiento de que se estén reteniendo fondos.

A la vista de los niveles preocupantemente elevados de desempleo y, en especial, de desempleo juvenil y de larga duración, la Comisión está realizando un estrecho seguimiento de la preparación de los acuerdos de asociación sobre los FEIE y exigirá una asignación adecuada de los fondos para poder hacer frente a los retos en materia de empleo, inclusión social y educación.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-012247/13
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: European Social Fund assistance for the Canaries

Measures to combat unemployment are currently the EU's principal objective and concern. To this end, the European Social Fund (ESF) is earmarking appropriations for active employment policies to be administered by the recipient Member States, including Spain.

As part of its strategy of providing firm support to contain unemployment, the EU has created a social pillar for the period 2014-2020, from which Spain is to receive EUR 1 100 for each unemployed person.

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, it is the responsibility of the Member States (or the autonomous communities in Spain), as final recipients, to administer the funding. In other words, the EU delegates responsibility to the Member States and the regional and local authorities. This does not, however, exempt the Commission from involvement should the funds fail to reach their intended recipients.

In this instance, the Government of Spain, one of the Member States with the highest levels of unemployment, has, almost at the end of the financial year, unjustifiably failed to release ESF appropriations for distribution.

The Canaries have the second highest unemployment rate in Spain, that is to say 35% or almost 400 000, rising to an alarming level of just under 70% among young people. Given the particular situation of the Canary Islands as an outermost EU region, their labour market also suffers the consequences of structural difficulties, as recognised under Spanish legal and constitutional provisions, as well as the EU Treaty (Article 349 TFEU). This does not, however, appear to have been taken into account by the Spanish Government.

Such high rates of unemployment are creating an unprecedented social divide in the Canaries, where it is therefore particularly urgent to distribute the funding and implement the active employment polices badly needed throughout Spain. The Commission must therefore monitor more effectively the allocation of funding within Spain, particularly ESF appropriations, ensuring that they reach their intended recipients effectively and without delay.

Is the Commission aware that ESF appropriations earmarked for active employment policies are still being withheld by the Spanish Government from their intended recipients?

Will the Commission take action to remedy matters?

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

At present the Commission has no official information on the allocations by region and European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) made by the Spanish authorities for the 2014 — 2020 programming period. Regarding the ESF for the period 2007-2013, the rate of spending is at 68.32%. The Commission is not aware of funds being upheld.

In view of the very worrying levels of unemployment and especially the youth and long term unemployment, the Commission is closely following the preparation of the Partnership agreements on the ESIF and will request an adequate allocation of funds to respond to the challenges in the employment, social inclusion as well as education sectors.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012248/13
alla Commissione
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Discarica «Cava Spinelli» — Quarto (NA)

Considerato che:

— tra il 2010 e il 2011 la provincia di Napoli, per far fronte al riacutizzarsi del problema dell'emergenza per la raccolta e lo smaltimento dei rifiuti solidi urbani in Campania, aveva individuato una serie di siti da adibire ad aree di stoccaggio provvisorie o a vere e proprie discariche;

— uno dei siti individuati come potenziali discariche era la cava di tufo dismessa in località Spinelli, nel Comune di Quarto (Na);

— la cava Spinelli è sita nel cuore della cosiddetta Terra dei Fuochi, il pezzo di territorio della Campania compreso tra le province di Napoli e Caserta, dove negli ultimi 20 anni sono stati smaltiti illegalmente, con l'ausilio della criminalità organizzata, rifiuti tossici e speciali provenienti dagli scarti del ciclo industriale delle aziende del nord Italia;

— la stessa cava Spinelli tra il 2008 e il 2011 è stata sottoposta a sequestro preventivo (RGNR n. 23984/08 PM) in quanto utilizzata come sito non autorizzato di smaltimento di rifiuti speciali non pericolosi (materiale di risulta da lavorazioni edili);

— nel 2011 è stato disposto il dissequestro e la giunta regionale della Campania, attraverso il decreto dirigenziale n. 131 del 14/7/2011, ha autorizzato la società Liccarblock S.a.S., con sede a Marano di Napoli, alla ricomposizione ambientale del sito;

— tutti i monitoraggi a cura dell'Arpac o di studiosi indipendenti, come il prof. Franco Ortolani, ordinario di Geologia, direttore del dipartimento di Pianificazione e Scienza del Territorio dell'Università di Napoli Federico II, hanno dimostrato l'inidoneità tecnica di cava Spinelli a ospitare una discarica per lo stoccaggio e lo smaltimento dei rifiuti solidi urbani.

Si chiede:

— se la Commissione è a conoscenza di detta situazione e se essa è presa in considerazione nell'ambito della procedura di infrazione in corso contro l'Italia;

— quali provvedimenti e iniziative intende avviare, se del caso, per la bonifica e messa in sicurezza del sito, anche nell'ambito della riprogrammazione dei fondi dell'Unione 2007-2013;

— se intende attivare, per il medesimo fine, specifici canali di finanziamento nell'ambito della prossima programmazione dei fondi dell'Unione (2014-2020).

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(18 dicembre 2013)

Per quanto riguarda la cava Spinelli a Quarto (Napoli) la Commissione osserva che, sulla base delle informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato, le autorità italiane hanno adottato misure volte a garantire che il sito non sia utilizzato come discarica e che sia soggetto a una ricomposizione ambientale ([1]).

Per quanto riguarda la questione generale dello smaltimento illegale di rifiuti in Campania, si rimanda l'onorevole deputato alla risposta della Commissione alle interrogazioni scritte E-12030/2013 ed E-12131/2013.

([1]) Con il decreto dirigenziale n. 131 del 14/7/2011 (pubblicato sulla gazzetta ufficiale della Regione Campania n. 48 del 25/7/2011), la giunta regionale ha autorizzato la realizzazione di un progetto volto al recupero ambientale del sito. Il decreto stabilisce esplicitamente che sul sito è vietata la realizzazione di discariche di rifiuti, durante i lavori di ricomposizione, saranno svolti dei test che saranno inviati alle autorità competenti per garantire che i materiali usati per la ricomposizione non siano contaminati.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012248/13
to the Commission
Andrea Cozzolino (S&D)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: 'Cava Spinelli' landfill in Quarto (province of Naples)

Between 2010 and 2011, in order to tackle the worsening emergency concerning the collection and disposal of solid urban waste in Campania, the Naples provincial authorities identified a number of sites to be used as temporary storage areas or as actual landfills.

One of the sites identified as a potential landfill was the decommissioned Spinelli tuff quarry, in the municipality of Quarto (province of Naples).

The Spinelli quarry is right in the middle of the 'land of fires', the area of Campania between the provinces of Naples and Caserta, where toxic and special industrial waste from companies in northern Italy has been illegally dumped for the last 20 years, in collaboration with organised criminal groups.

Between 2008 and 2011, the Spinelli quarry was under preventive seizure (General Criminal Records Registry No 23984/08 PM) for being used as an unauthorised dumping site for non-hazardous special waste (construction waste).

In 2011, the quarry was released from seizure and the Campania Regional Government adopted Executive Decree No 131 of 14/07/2011 to authorise the company Liccarblock S.a.S., based in Marano di Napoli, to carry out environmental rehabilitation of the site.

All monitoring by the Campania Regional Environmental Protection Agency (Arpac) or independent researchers, such as Prof. Franco Ortolani, professor of geology and head of the land use planning and science department of the Federico II University of Naples, has shown that the Spinelli quarry is technically unsuitable as a landfill site for storing and disposing of solid urban waste.

Is the Commission aware of this situation and has it taken it into consideration in the ongoing infringement proceedings against Italy?

What measures and initiatives will it take, as appropriate, to clean up the site and make it safe, including as part of the reprogramming of EU funds for 2007-2013?

Does it plan to open specific funding channels in the next EU funds programming period (2014-2020), for the same purpose?

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

As concerns the Cava Spinelli site in Quarto (Naples), the Commission observes that, based on the information provided by the Honourable Member, the Italian authorities have taken measures aimed at ensuring that the site is not used as a landfill and that it undergoes environmental restoration ([1]).

As concerns the general issue of the illegal disposal of waste in Campania, the Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's reply to Written Questions E-12030/2013 and E-12131/2013.

([1]) By Decree N. 131 of 14/7/2011 (published on the Campania Official Journal N. 48 of 25/7/2011) the Campania Regional Government has authorised the execution of a project aimed at the environmental restoration of the site. The Decree explicitly states that the site cannot be used as a landfill and that, during the restoration works, tests will be carried out and sent to the competent authorities to ensure that the materials used for the restoration are not contaminated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-012249/13
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(28 ottobre 2013)

Oggetto: Chiarimenti in merito alle richieste del visto E-1 per commercio e investimento negli Stati Uniti

Da qualche tempo mi stanno giungendo, da parte di diversi cittadini europei, segnalazioni relative a difficoltà inerenti l'ottenimento del visto E1 per commercio e investimento negli Stati Uniti.

In particolare, un caso emblematico è quello di A.F., un cittadino italiano che nell'aprile 2013 decise di aprire una sua azienda negli Stati Uniti. Firmò un contratto di agenzia in esclusiva (come rappresentante monomandatario) con una delle aziende leader al mondo nel settore in cui ha sempre lavorato da otto anni a questa parte, diventando l'unico venditore autorizzato nel sud est degli Stati Uniti. Consegnati tutti i documenti per l'ottenimento del nuovo visto, A.F. ricevette risposta negativa da parte del consolato senza alcuna valida motivazione. Ora, il mancato rilascio del visto comprometterà il fatturato dell'azienda e l'attività dello stesso A.F., che negli Stati Uniti possiede un immobile e che quasi sicuramente perderà il lavoro. La vicenda di A.F. e di tutti coloro che si trovano nella sua situazione appare oggi ancora più paradossale, dal momento che con un certo entusiasmo da parte di entrambe le parti, l'Unione e gli Stati Uniti stanno avviando negoziati per quello che è stato definito il «Transatlantic Trade and investment Partnership» (TTIP), che si dovrebbe concludere con un vero accordo di libero scambio.

Pertanto, non ritiene la Commissione che simili restrizioni sui visti per gli uomini d'affari vadano nella direzione opposta rispetto all'auspicato e imminente TTIP? Infine, ha recentemente potuto constatare un aumento dei casi di mancato rilascio del visto, se possibile con dati statistici a riguardo, ed è a conoscenza di un generale inasprimento della concessione di questo tipo di visto da parte degli USA?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(12 dicembre 2013)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle diverse difficoltà tra cui si dibattono gli uomini d'affari sulle due sponde dell'Atlantico ma non dispone di dati statistici sulle tendenze in merito al rilascio da parte degli Stati Uniti dei visti E-1 destinati ai cittadini dell'UE.

Nell'ambito dei negoziati per il partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti (TTIP) la Commissione intende concordare misure che consentano di agevolare la mobilità dei prestatori di servizi e ritiene che le misure che consentono il trasferimento temporaneo del personale chiave presso le consociate estere, nell'ambito di una società di capitali (la cosidetta modalità 4), costituirebbero un elemento importante del futuro accordo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012249/13
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Clarifications regarding applications for the E-1 visa for trade and investment in the United States

For some time now, I have been receiving reports from a number of European citizens about the difficulties faced in obtaining an E-1 visa for trade and investment in the United States.

In particular, a prime example is the case of A.F., an Italian national who, in April 2013, decided to open a branch of his company in the United States. He signed an exclusive agency contract (as a sole agent) with one of the world's leading companies in the sector he has worked in for the last eight years, to become the only authorised seller in the south-eastern United States. Having provided all the documents to obtain the new visa, A.F. was turned down by the consulate for no good reason. Now, being denied a visa will harm the company's turnover and the business of A.F., who owns a property in the United States and is almost sure to lose his job. The case of A.F. and all those who are in his situation is now even more absurd, given that the EU and the United States, both with a certain degree of relish, are starting negotiations for what was has been dubbed the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which should lead to a real free trade agreement.

Does the Commission therefore not think that such restrictions on visas for businesspeople are at odds with the imminent TTIP that is being sought? Lastly, has it recently noticed an increase in cases where visas have not been issued, if possible supported by statistics, and is it aware of fewer visas of this kind being issued by the United States in general?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(12 December 2013)

The Commission is aware of various challenges that business people encounter on both sides of the Atlantic but does not have statistics on trends regarding issuance of E-1 visas by the United States to EU citizens.

In the framework of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations, the Commission is aiming at agreeing on measures allowing for easier mobility of service providers and considers that measures allowing the temporary transfer of key staff to foreign affiliates, within a corporation (so called mode 4), would be an important component of the future agreement.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012338/13
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(30. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Durchführungsverordnung Ökodesignrichtlinie — gedrosselte Leistung von Staubsaugern

Aktuellen Medienberichten zufolge werden aufgrund einer entsprechenden Durchführungsverordnung der Ökodesignrichtlinie ab September 2014 nur noch Staubsauger mit weniger als 1 600 Watt Leistung auf den Markt gebracht. Demnach dürften künftig nur noch Geräte verkauft werden, die weniger als 1 600 Watt Leistung erbringen. 2017 werden die Geräte auf 900 Watt gedrosselt. Deklariertes Ziel ist die Verringerung des Stromverbrauches. Um den Verbraucher über den Erwerb eines energieeffizienten Staubsaugers zu informieren, werden Energieverbrauchskennzeichen am Gerät angebracht. Auch kleine und mittlere Unternehmen sind dazu verpflichtet in Zukunft Etiketten anzubringen, die den Konsumentenüber über den Verbrauch des Gerätes informieren.

1. Kritikern zu Folge würde durch die gedrosselte Leistung umso öfter gesaugt werden müssen, um das übliche Ergebnis zu erzielen, was den Energieverbrauch wiederum steigere. Wie steht die Kommission dazu?

2. Welche Hersteller haben im angestrebten Segment der Niedrig-Watt-Staubsauger besonders hohe Marktanteile? Werden diese von der Umsetzung der Richtlinie profitieren?

3. Welche Auswirkungen haben die Änderungen auf KMU?

4. Werden in Zukunft auch bei anderen Geräten des täglichen Bedarfs die Leistungen gedrosselt? Wenn ja, welche Geräte sind konkret betroffen?

Gemeinsame Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(18. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission ist nicht der Ansicht, dass die Verbraucher infolge der Verordnungen zur umweltgerechten Gestaltung ([1]) und Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung ([2]) von Staubsaugern mehr Zeit für das Staubsaugen aufwenden müssen. So ist vielen Verbrauchern nicht bewusst, dass Staubsauger mit einer hohen Leistungsaufnahme oft nicht unbedingt eine bessere Saugleistung aufweisen. Neben den Vorschriften zur Leistungsaufnahme enthält die Ökodesign-Verordnung daher auch Vorgaben für die Staubaufnahme, nach denen Staubsauger mit einer schlechten Saugleistung und somit einer langen Saugdauer in der EU nicht mehr in Verkehr gebracht werden dürfen. Zudem basiert die Skala des Energieetiketts von A-G auf dem Energieverbrauch, bei dessen Berechnung sowohl die Leistungsaufnahme als auch die Staubaufnahme berücksichtigt werden, da der Energieverbrauch auch davon abhängt, wie lange gesaugt werden muss, d. h. wie wirksam ein Staubsauger arbeitet. Unionsmittel werden somit nicht verschwendet.

Modelle mit niedriger Leistungsaufnahme werden von vielen Herstellern angeboten; der Kommission liegen jedoch keine Verkaufszahlen zu einzelnen Modellen vor. Ob sich für bestimmte Hersteller ein Vorteil ergibt, hängt davon ab, wie ihre Staubsauger hinsichtlich aller Parameter abschneiden, die den Verordnungen unterliegen.

Die Verordnungen für Staubsauger werden bis 2020 voraussichtlich zu einer Verringerung des Stromverbrauchs um 19 TWh pro Jahr und somit zu jährlichen Einsparungen von ca. 3,8 Mrd. EUR für die Verbraucher in der EU führen. Die Kommission hat die Folgen für kleine und mittlere Unternehmen untersucht und dabei mögliche positive Auswirkungen auf Bauteilhersteller in der EU festgestellt ([3]).

Verordnungen über die umweltgerechte Gestaltung (Ökodesign) und die Energieverbrauchskennzeichnung wurden für dreißig breit gefasste Produktgruppen erlassen bzw. sind derzeit in Planung. Weitere Einzelheiten enthält der Ökodesign-Arbeitsplan 2012-2014 ([4]).

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 666/2013 der Kommission.
([2]) Siehe Delegierte Verordnung (EU) Nr. 665/2013 der Kommission.
([3]) SWD(2013)240, S. 34.
([4]) SWD(2012)434.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-012250/13
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(28 oktober 2013)

Betreft: Europese Commissie bemoeit zich met het vermogen van stofzuigers

Volgens mediaberichtgeving ([1]) en zoals ook terug te vinden in het publicatieblad van de Europese Unie ([2]) stelt de Europese Commissie eisen vast met betrekking tot het ecologisch ontwerp van stofzuigers. De zogeheten „Verordening (EU) nr. 666/2013 van de Commissie van 8 juli 2013 tot uitvoering van Richtlijn 2009/125/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad wat het vaststellen van eisen inzake ecologisch ontwerp voor stofzuigers betreft".

Eén van de nieuwe eisen waaraan stofzuigers straks moeten voldoen is een maximaal vermogen. Na augustus 2017 moet het nominale ingangsvermogen van een stofzuiger die op de markt gebracht wordt minder dan 900 Watt bedragen.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van haar verordening over het vermogen van stofzuigers?

2. Wat denkt de Commissie met deze bureaucratische idiotie te bereiken?

3. Is de Commissie het met de PVV eens dat het te absurd voor woorden is dat de Commissie zich tot op elke vierkante millimeter wil bemoeien met de producten die mensen kopen en gebruiken? Zo nee, waarom niet? Welke kwalificatie heeft de Commissie dan wel voor haar doorgeslagen betutteling?

4. Dit is het zoveelste keer dat blijkt dat de Commissie tot niet meer in staat is dan nutteloos gemeenschapsgeld verkwisten aan de meest bizarre vormen van ambtelijk tijdverdrijf. Wanneer houdt de Commissie de eer aan zichzelf en stapt zij op?

Antwoord van de heer Oettinger namens de Commissie
(18 december 2013)

De Commissie deelt de mening niet dat consumenten meer tijd nodig zullen hebben om te stofzuigen als gevolg van de verordeningen inzake ecologisch ontwerp ([3]) voor stofzuigers en energie-etikettering ([4]) van stofzuigers. Vele consumenten weten namelijk niet dat stofzuigers met meer zuigkracht niet noodzakelijk betere resultaten opleveren. Naast de zuigkracht regelt de verordening inzake ecologisch ontwerp ook de stofopnameprestaties, waardoor stofzuigers met slechte reinigingsprestaties, en dus met een langere reinigingstijd, van de Europese markt zullen verdwijnen. Voorts is de energie-efficiëntieschaal A-G gebaseerd op het energieverbruik, waarvan de formule niet alleen rekening houdt met de zuigkracht, maar ook met de stofopnameprestaties. Energieverbruik is immers ook afhankelijk van de tijd die nodig is voor het schoonmaken en van de mate waarin een stofzuiger stof kan opnemen. De Commissie verkwist derhalve geen gemeenschapsgeld.

Vele fabrikanten bieden modellen met een laag vermogen aan, maar de Commissie beschikt niet over verkoopgegevens voor specifieke modellen. De vraag of sommige fabrikanten een voordeel zullen hebben, is afhankelijk van de manier waarop hun stofzuigers presteren ten aanzien van alle opgenomen parameters.

Naar verwachting zullen de verordeningen voor stofzuigers tegen 2020 leiden tot een vermindering van het elektriciteitsverbruik met 19 TWh per jaar, waarbij consumenten in de EU bij benadering 3,8 miljard euro per jaar zullen besparen. De Commissie heeft de effecten op het midden- en kleinbedrijf onderzocht en een mogelijk positief effect voor Europese producenten van onderdelen vastgesteld ([5]).

Dertig grote productgroepen worden aan regels onderworpen of komen in aanmerking voor regels inzake ecologisch ontwerp en energie-etikettering. Voor nadere bijzonderheden zie het werkplan inzake ecologisch ontwerp 2012-2014 ([6]).

([1]) http://www.hpdetijd.nl/2013-10-25/draconische-bemoeizucht-eu-uw-stofzuiger-mag-hard-zuigen/.
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:192:0024:0034:NL:PDF.
([3]) Verordening (EU) nr. 666/2013 van de Commissie.
([4]) Zie Gedelegeerde Verordening (EU) nr. 665/2013 van de Commissie.
([5]) SWD (2013) 240, p. 34.
([6]) SWD (2012) 434.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012250/13
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Commission's action regarding the power rating of vacuum cleaners

According to reports in the media ([1]), and as also indicated in the *Official Journal of the European Union* ([2]), the Commission is adopting requirements concerning the ecodesign of vacuum cleaners: Commission Regulation (EU) No 666/2013 of 8 July 2013 implementing Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to ecodesign requirements for vacuum cleaners.

One of the new requirements with which vacuum cleaners will soon have to comply is a maximum power rating. After August 2017, the rated input power of any vacuum cleaner placed on the market must not exceed 900 Watts.

1. Is the Commission aware of its regulation on the power rating of vacuum cleaners?

2. What does the Commission expect to achieve by means of this bureaucratic idiocy?

3. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that it is too absurd for words that the Commission should insist on interfering in every tiny detail of the products that people buy and use? If not, why not? How would the Commission otherwise describe its wildly excessive nannying?

4. This is yet another demonstration that the Commission is incapable of anything other than wasting Community funds on the most bizarre bureaucratic pastimes. When will the Commission take the honourable way out and dissolve itself?

Question for written answer E-012338/13
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(30 October 2013)

Subject: Regulation implementing the Ecodesign Directive — reduced power of vacuum cleaners

According to current media reports, on account of the relevant Regulation implementing the Ecodesign Directive, from September 2014 onwards only vacuum cleaners with a power less than 1 600 W will be placed on the market. Accordingly, only appliances that deliver less than 1 600 W of power may be sold. In 2017, the power of the appliances will be reduced to 900 W The stated aim of this is to reduce electricity consumption. In order to inform consumers that they are purchasing an energy-efficient vacuum cleaner, an energy consumption label will be placed on the appliance. Small and medium-sized enterprises will in future also be obliged to apply these labels informing consumers of the energy consumption of the appliance.

1. According to critics, as a result of the reduction in power, people will have to vacuum more often in order to achieve the result they are used to, which will, in turn, increase energy consumption. What is the Commission's position with regard to this criticism?

2. Which manufacturers have a particularly large share of the market in the targeted segment of low-power vacuum cleaners? Will these manufacturers profit from the implementation of the directive?

3. What impact will the changes have on small and medium-sized enterprises?

4. Will the power also be reduced in future for other everyday appliances? If so, which specific appliances will be affected?

([1]) http://www.hpdetijd.nl/2013-10-25/draconische-bemoeizucht-eu-uw-stofzuiger-mag-hard-zuigen/
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:192:0024:0034:NL:PDF

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(18 December 2013)

The Commission does not share the view that consumers would have to spend longer time on vacuum cleaning as a result of the regulations on ecodesign ([3]) and energy labelling ([4]) of vacuum cleaners. Indeed, many consumers are not aware that vacuum cleaners with higher power do not necessarily perform better. In addition to power, the ecodesign regulation also regulates the dust pick-up performance, removing vacuum cleaners with poor cleaning performance, and thus long cleaning time, from the EU market. Further, the energy label's A-G rating is based on energy consumption, whose formula takes into account power, but also dust pick-up performance, because energy consumption depends also on how long one needs to clean and thus on how well a vacuum cleaner picks up dust. The Commission is thus not wasting Community funds.

Many manufacturers offer models with low power, but the Commission does not have sales data on specific models. Whether certain manufacturers will have an advantage would depend on how their vacuum cleaners perform with regard to all of the parameters regulated.

The regulations for vacuum cleaners are expected to lead to a reduction in electricity consumption of 19 TWh per year by 2020, saving consumers in the EU approximately 3.8 billion euro per year. The Commission investigated the impacts on small and medium-sized enterprises and identified a potential positive effect for EU producers of components ([5]).

Thirty broad product groups are regulated or considered for ecodesign and energy labelling regulation. Further detail is in the Ecodesign Working Plan 2012-2014 ([6]).

([3]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 666/2013.
([4]) Cf. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) no 665/2013.
([5]) SWD(2013) 240, page 34.
([6]) SWD(2012) 434.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-012251/13
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(28 Οκτωβρίου 2013)

Θέμα: Νέα Διευρωπαϊκά Δίκτυα Μεταφορών — Ανάγκη ενημέρωσης και τεχνογνωσίας προς τις χώρες Συνοχής για την αποτελεσματικότερη απορρόφηση κοινοτικών πόρων

Η νέα πολιτική των Διευρωπαϊκών Δικτύων Μεταφορών, σε συνδυασμό με το νέο χρηματοδοτικό εργαλείο «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη», αποτελούν ένα από τα μεγάλα αναπτυξιακά προγράμματα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης που στόχο έχουν την απρόσκοπτη λειτουργία της Ενιαίας Αγοράς με τη δημιουργία ενός σύγχρονου, ενιαίου, λειτουργικού και αποτελεσματικού ευρωπαϊκού δικτύου μεταφορών.

Η συμβολή των ΔΕΔ-Μ στην οικονομική ανάκαμψη, τη βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και την ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης, καθώς και στην κοινωνική και γεωγραφική συνοχή, είναι θεμελιώδους σημασίας. Η διευκόλυνση «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη» προβλέπει επενδύσεις 26 περίπου δισεκατομμυρίων ευρώ κατά την περίοδο 2014-2020 για τη χρηματοδότηση μελετών και κατασκευής έργων που βρίσκονται σε άξονες του ΔΔΜ, την αναβάθμιση των ευρωπαϊκών υποδομών μεταφορών, την κατασκευή των ελλειπόντων κρίκων και την εξάλειψη των σημείων συμφόρησης. Τούτο περιλαμβάνει 10 δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ του Ταμείου Συνοχής που προορίζονται για έργα στον τομέα των μεταφορών στις χώρες Συνοχής.

Η ΕΕ μπορεί να διαδραματίσει καθοριστικό ρόλο στο συντονισμό μεταξύ των κρατών μελών κατά το σχεδιασμό, τη διαχείριση και τη χρηματοδότηση έργων.

Με δεδομένη τη σημασία που έχει η σωστή απορρόφηση των προβλεπόμενων κοινοτικών πόρων από τις χώρες Συνοχής για την πλήρη αξιοποίηση των δυνατοτήτων που παρέχει το νέο νομοθετικό πλαίσιο των Διευρωπαϊκών Δικτύων Μεταφορών, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Ποιες δράσεις αναμένεται να αναλάβει για την πληρέστερη και όσο το δυνατόν καλύτερη προετοιμασία των χωρών Συνοχής, προκειμένου να μπορέσουν να αξιοποιήσουν πλήρως τις επενδυτικές δυνατότητες από το νέο χρηματοδοτικό εργαλείο «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη»;

— Στις δράσεις που έχουν ήδη προβλεφθεί, περιλαμβάνεται η πραγματοποίηση ενημερωτικών επισκέψεων και επαφών εξειδικευμένων εμπειρογνωμόνων της Επιτροπής με αρμόδιους φορείς του δημοσίου και ιδιωτικού τομέα στις χώρες της Συνοχής; Εάν ναι, τότε ποιο αναμένεται να είναι το χρονοδιάγραμμα των εν λόγω ενημερωτικών επισκέψεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Kallas εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(12 Δεκεμβρίου 2013)

Κατά την προετοιμασία του προγραμματισμού της πολιτικής συνοχής για την περίοδο 2014-2020, πρέπει να πληρούνται οι εκ των προτέρων όροι, μεταξύ άλλων, και για τις επενδύσεις στον τομέα των μεταφορών. Αυτοί οι εκ των προτέρων όροι πρέπει να πληρούνται κατά την ημερομηνία υποβολής των επιχειρησιακών προγραμμάτων και, ενδεχομένως, των συμφωνιών εταιρικής σχέσης. Επίσης, οι εκ των προτέρων όροι για τις μεταφορές απαιτούν τον καθορισμό ενός συνολικού σχεδίου μεταφορών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης μιας σειράς λεπτομερών, ώριμων και εφικτών έργων, τα οποία θα αξιολογηθούν με συντονισμένο τρόπο από τις υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής. Η κατάρτιση ενός συνολικού σχεδίου μεταφορών μπορεί να λάβει στήριξη από την τεχνική βοήθεια και, σε ειδικές περιπτώσεις, από το JASPERS (διευκόλυνση της Ευρωπαϊκής Τράπεζας Επενδύσεων που συμφωνήθηκε με την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή).

Ορισμένες μελέτες και προκαταρκτικές εργασίες για την ανάπτυξη της σειράς έργων για την περίοδο 2014-2020 χρηματοδοτούνται από το σημερινό κονδύλιο του προϋπολογισμού για τα ΔΕΔ-Μ, και μελλοντικά μπορεί να χρηματοδοτηθούν από τη διευκόλυνση «Συνδέοντας την Ευρώπη», και, συμπληρωματικά, από την τεχνική βοήθεια που συνδέεται με την εφαρμογή της πολιτικής συνοχής.

Επίσης η Επιτροπή διοργανώνει επισκέψεις στις χώρες· οι δραστηριότητες αυτές αφορούν συχνά διάφορες υπηρεσίες της Επιτροπής, εθνικές αρχές και δυνητικούς δικαιούχους και φορείς υλοποίησης, δημόσιους και ιδιωτικούς.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012251/13
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: New Trans-European Transport Networks/need for information and know-how on effective take-up of Community resources to be passed to cohesion countries

The new Trans-European Transport Network policy, together with the new Connecting Europe Facility, form one of the most ambitious development programmes undertaken by the European Union and is designed to enable the single market to function properly by creating a single, modern, functioning and efficient European transport network.

The contribution made by TEN-T to economic recovery, sustainable growth and employment and to social and geographical cohesion is of vital importance. The Connecting Europe Facility makes provision for investments between 2014 and 2020 totalling approximately EUR 26 billion, in order to finance studies and construct projects along TEN-T routes, upgrade European transport infrastructure, forge missing links and eliminate congestion points. It includes EUR 10 billion from the Cohesion Fund, which has been earmarked for transport projects in the cohesion countries.

The EU can play a decisive role in coordinating the Member States during the design, management and financing of projects.

In view of the importance of the proper take-up of available Community resources by cohesion countries if the full potential of the new legislative framework for Trans-European Transport Networks is to be realised, will the Commission say:

— What action does it expect to take to ensure fuller and, if possible, better preparation of cohesion countries, so that they can fully exploit the potential for investment through the new Connecting Europe Facility?

— Do actions already planned include information visits and contacts between experts from the Commission and the competent public- and private-sector agencies in the cohesion countries? If so, what is the planned timetable for information visits?

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

In the preparation of the 2014-2020 programming for Cohesion Policy, *Ex Ante* Conditionalities have to be fulfilled including for Transport sector investments. These *ex Ante* Conditionalities have to be fulfilled at the date of submission of the operational programmes and, where appropriate, the Partnership Agreements. These *ex Ante* Conditionalities for Transport require defining a comprehensive Transport Plan, including a detailed mature and realistic project pipeline, which will be appraised by the Commission services in a coordinated manner. The preparation of a comprehensive transport plan may be supported by Technical Assistance and, in specific cases, by JASPERS (European Investment Bank facility agreed with the Commission).

Some studies and preliminary works for the development of the project pipeline for 2014-2020 are supported by the current TEN-T Budget line, and in the future may be supported by the Connecting Europe Facility, and, complementarily, by the Technical Assistance linked to Cohesion Policy implementation.

Country visits by the Commission are also organised; these events involve often different departments in the Commission, national authorities and potential beneficiaries and promoters, both public and private.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012257/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Zypern — Reform des Bankensektors

Die Verluste der zypriotischen Banken dürften 2014 wegen der schwächeren Konjunktur und dadurch höherer Kreditausfälle steigen. Insgesamt wird erwartet, dass sich die Branche schrittweise stabilisieren und erholen wird. Der überdimensionierte Bankensektor und das derzeitige zypriotische Geschäftsmodell haben sich als problematisch erwiesen. Mittlerweile hat Zypern eine unabhängige Evaluierung der Einführung der Anti-Geldwäscherichtlinie akzeptiert. Im März musste Zypern als Gegenleistung für internationale Finanzhilfen im Volumen von zehn Milliarden Euro seinen überdimensionierten Finanzsektor umbauen. Eine große Bank wurde geschlossen, und es wurde auf g an die Einlagen der vermögenden Bankkunden zurückgegriffen. Der Einbruch am Bausektor und der Kollaps des Finanzsektors haben sich naturgemäß auch auf die Wirtschaft ausgewirkt und die Arbeitslosenquote steigen lassen.

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission den Stand der Umsetzung der Bankenreform in Zypern?

2. Gibt es hinsichtlich der Vorwürfe im Zusammenhang mit der Auslegung der Geldwäsche Richtlinie bereits Prüfungsergebnisse seitens des Europarates bzw. der Wirtschaftsprüfer von Deloitte?

3. Ist eine fristgerechte schrittweise Abschaffung bzw. Lockerung der eingeführten Kapitalverkehrskontrollen geplant?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(4. Dezember 2013)

1. Die Stabilisierung des Finanzsektors ist bereits im Gang, es wird allerdings noch dauern, bis die langfristige Tragfähigkeit wieder in vollem Umfang hergestellt ist.

2. Die Ergebnisse der unabhängigen Berater (darunter auch Deloitte) wurden für den Entwurf des mit den zyprischen Behörden vereinbarten Aktionsplans verwendet, der Teil des von diesen zugesicherten aktuellen Maßnahmenpakets ist.

3. Die zyprischen Behörden verabschiedeten am 5. August einen Fahrplan mit Eckpunkten für die Aufhebung der bestehenden Kapitalkontrollen. Der jeweils nächste Schritt bei der Lockerung hängt vom Fortschritt der Restrukturierung des Bankensystems sowie von den Auswirkungen der Maßnahmen auf die Finanzstabilität ab und folgt keinem festgelegten Zeitplan. Eine Bewertung findet im Rahmen der Umsetzungsberichte statt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012257/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Cyprus — reform of the banking sector

The losses of Cypriot banks are likely to increase in 2014 on account of the weaker economy and resulting higher credit losses. Overall, the industry is expected gradually to stabilise and recover. The inflated banking sector and the current Cypriot business model have proved to be problematic. Cyprus has now accepted an independent evaluation of the introduction of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive. In March, in return for the international financial aid amounting to EUR 10 billion, Cyprus had to restructure its inflated financial sector. One large bank was closed, and it resorted to [grabbing] the deposits of wealthy bank customers. The slowdown in the construction sector and the collapse of the financial sector have naturally also had an impact on the economy and caused the unemployment rate to rise.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of how the implementation of the banking reform is proceeding in Cyprus?

2. With regard to the accusations relating to the interpretation of the Anti-Money Laundering Directive, are there any results already available from the reviews carried out by the Council of Europe or the Deloitte auditors?

3. Is a timely, gradual abolition or relaxation of the capital controls that were introduced planned?

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

1. Stabilisation of the financial sector is underway, even though the return to full long-term viability will take time.

2. The findings from the independent consultants (incl. Deloitte) were used to develop the action plan agreed with the Cypriot authorities as part of the ongoing measures that they have agreed to implement.

3. The Cypriot authorities on 5 August adopted a milestone-based roadmap for lifting exiting capital controls. Every next relaxation step is determined by progress with the restructuring of the banking system as well as by the impact of the measure on financial stability, rather than set in fixed time-frame. It will be assessed as part of the compliance reports.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012258/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Ganzjährige Sommerzeit

2007 kam die Kommission in einem Bericht über die Auswirkungen des aktuellen Systems der Sommerzeit zu dem Ergebnis, dass dieses keine negativen Auswirkungen hat und ein gewisses Maß an Energieeinsparungen bewirkt. Das österreichische Energieinstitut an der Linzer-Johannes-Kepler-Universität kam nun in einer Studie zu dem Schluss, dass die Sommerzeit in Oberösterreich energetische und wohlstandsökonomische Effekte von rund acht Mio. EUR pro Jahr mit sich bringt. Eine ganzjährige Sommerzeit würde nach Einschätzung der Wissenschaftler hingegen gut das Zehnfache generieren.

1. Wurden im Rahmen des EU-Berichts über das aktuelle System der Sommerzeitsystem Effekte einer ganzjährigen Sommerzeit berücksichtigt?

2. Falls ja, zu welchem Ergebnis kam man auf EU-Ebene?

3. Falls nein, ist die Untersuchung alternativer Systeme noch geplant?

4. Bislang gibt es auf internationaler Ebene keine Koordinierung der Regelungen über die Sommerzeit. Ist die EU angesichts der Tatsache, dass einige Länder eine Änderung der Regelung erwägen bzw. diese bereits durchgeführt haben, bemüht, für eine koordinierte Regelung innerhalb Europas zu sorgen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(18. Dezember 2013)

Gemäß Artikel 5 der Richtlinie 2000/84/EG ([1]) zur Regelung der Sommerzeit hat die Kommission im Jahr 2007 einen Bericht ([2]) mit einer Zusammenstellung der Beiträge der Mitgliedstaaten erstellt; die ganzjährige Sommerzeit wurde darin nicht behandelt.

Kein Mitgliedstaat hat Änderungen der bestehenden Sommerzeitregelung zur Sprache gebracht. Deshalb hat die Kommission derzeit nicht die Absicht, alternative Systeme zu untersuchen.

Die Kommission ist weiterhin der Ansicht, dass die in der Richtlinie 2000/84/EG festgelegte Regelung der Sommerzeit nach wie vor zweckmäßig ist, wie sie in ihren früheren Antworten auf die schriftlichen Antworten E-004523/2013, E-9209-9802/2011 und H-103/2010 ([3]) bereits dargelegt hat.

Auf internationaler Ebene gibt es zwar keine Koordinierung der Sommerzeitregelungen, in der Union wird die Sommerzeit jedoch durch die Richtlinie 2000/84/EG insofern koordiniert, als dort festgelegt ist, dass die Sommerzeit am letzten Sonntag im März um 1:00 Uhr morgens Weltzeit beginnt (Artikel 2) und am letzten Sonntag im Oktober um 1:00 Uhr morgens Weltzeit endet.

([1]) Richtlinie 2000/87/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 19. Januar 2001, ABl. L 31 vom 2.2.2001.
([2]) KOM(2007)739 endg. vom 23.11.2007.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012258/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Summer time all year round

In 2007, in a report on the effects of the current system of summer time, the Commission came to the conclusion that it had no negative effects and to a certain extent helped to save energy. In a study, the Austrian Energy Institute at the Johannes Kepler University in Linz has now come to the conclusion that summer time in Upper Austria brings benefits in terms of energy and economic prosperity of around EUR 8 million per year. The scientists estimate, however, that summer time all year round would generate at least 10 times as much.

1. Were the effects of summer time all year round considered in the EU report on the current system of summer time?

2. If so, what conclusions were reached at EU level?

3. If not, are there still plans to investigate alternative systems?

4. As yet, there is no coordination of summer time arrangements at international level. In view of the fact that some countries are considering changing the system or have already done so, is the EU endeavouring to establish a coordinated system within Europe?

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

In accordance with Article 5 of Directive 2000/84/EC on summer-time arrangements ([1]), the Commission drew up a report in 2007 ([2]) which was a compilation of the contributions received from the Member States and did not cover summer-time application all year round.

No Member State has raised the issue of changes to the existing summer-time arrangements. Therefore the Commission does not for the moment intend to investigate alternative systems.

The Commission continues to believe that the summer time arrangements as established by Directive 2000/84/EC remain suitable, as explained in previous answers to written questions E-004523/2013, E-9209-9802/2011 and H-103/2010 ([3]).

While there is no international coordination of summer-time arrangements, Directive 2000/84/EC coordinates in the Union summer-time by determining the start date of summer-time (Article 2) at 1.00 a.m. GMT on the last Sunday of March and its end date (Article 3) at 1.00 a.m. GMT on the last Sunday of October.

([1]) Directive 2000/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 January 2001, OJ L 31, 2.2.2001.
([2]) COM(2007) 739 final, 23.11.2007.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012259/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Kinderschmuggel zum Zwecke des Sozialbetrugs durch Roma und Sinti

Während das Rätsel, wie die kleine Maria in ein Roma-Lager nahe der griechischen Stadt Farsala kam, weiterhin ungelöst ist, sorgt ein ähnlicher Fall auf der Insel Lesbos für Aufsehen. Eine Roma-Familie hat versucht, einen zweieinhalb Monate alten Jungen beim Standesamt zu registrieren, ohne die erforderlichen Nachweise vorlegen zu können. Kinder als Ware, die hin und her geschoben, gehandelt und verliehen werden, sollen unter den Roma in Griechenland keine Seltenheit sein. In Südosteuropa soll es Kennern zufolge durchaus üblich sein, dass Roma-Familien Kinder weggeben, tauschen oder ausleihen, mitunter über Landesgrenzen hinweg, um Sozialbetrug zu begehen, also etwa vermehrt Kindergeld zu kassieren.

So hatte die vorgebliche Mutter von Maria, die mit zwei Ausweisen als Eleftheria Dimopoulou und Selini Sali auftrat, unter dem ersten Namen fünf und in einer anderen Gemeinde unter dem anderen Namen vier Kinder gemeldet. Ihr Mann meldete in einer dritten Gemeinde weitere fünf Kinder an. So wurden aus fünf Kindern auf dem Papier 14. Nach Angaben aus Polizeikreisen soll das Paar auf diesem Weg 2 800 EUR im Monat kassiert haben.

Bisher war es in Griechenland ein Leichtes, fremde Kinder als eigene registrieren zu lassen. Eine eidesstattliche Erklärung und zwei Zeugen reichten, um ein zu Hause geborenes Kind — selbst Jahre nach einer Geburt — beim Standesamt anzumelden. Künftig soll ein Gentest erforderlich sein.

1. Ist sich die Kommission dieses Problems bewusst?

2. Ist es in anderen Mitgliedstaaten ähnlich leicht, fremde Kinder als eigene auszugeben und somit Sozialhilfe (dann auch in anderen EU-Staaten) zu erschleichen?

3. Inwieweit wird auf EU-Ebene zusammengearbeitet, um gegebenenfalls Kinderschmuggel im Rahmen der Migration von Roma und Sinti einzudämmen?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(16. Dezember 2013)

Nach Eurostat-Angaben waren 12 % der nachweislichen oder mutmaßlichen Opfer von Menschenhandel in der EU in den Jahren 2008 bis 2010 Mädchen und 3 % Jungen.

Die Kommission ist nach wie vor zutiefst besorgt über die Opfer von Menschenhandel für Zwecke der Ausbeutung, einschließlich sexueller Ausbeutung, Kinderarbeit, illegaler Adoptionen, Zwangsehen, des Verkaufs von Kindern oder Leistungsmissbrauchs.

Die Rechtsvorschriften und die Politik der EU basieren auf den Menschenrechten, sind umfassend und tragen dem Wohl des Kindes Rechnung.

Die Richtlinie 2011/36/EU ([1]) enthält Rechtsvorschriften, die gewährleisten, dass Opfer im Kindesalter uneingeschränkten Schutz erhalten und unterstützt werden, sowie Verpflichtungen, um dem Menschenhandel durch die Reduzierung der Nachfrage vorzubeugen, die alle Formen der Ausbeutung fördert. Die Strategie der EU zur Beseitigung des Menschenhandels ([2]) enthält Pläne für eine Studie zum Thema „Kinder als stark gefährdete Gruppen".

Die Kommission wird 2014 EU-weit Sensibilisierungsmaßnahmen durchführen, die auf spezifische schutzbedürftige Gruppen wie gefährdete Frauen und Kinder, Hausangestellte, Roma-Gemeinschaften sowie Arbeitnehmer ohne Papiere abzielen. 2014 wird sie ferner Leitlinien zu Systemen zum Schutz des Kindes erstellen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2011/36/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 5. April 2011 zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung des Menschenhandels und zum Schutz seiner Opfer.

([2]) Strategie der EU zur Beseitigung des Menschenhandels 2012-2016 (KOM(2012)286 endg.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012259/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Child trafficking for the purpose of welfare fraud by Roma and Sinti

While the puzzle of how little Maria ended up in a Roma camp near the Greek town of Farsala remains unsolved, a similar case on the island of Lesbos has attracted attention. A Roma family attempted to register a two-and-a-half month old boy at the registry office, but were unable to produce the necessary documents. Children being treated as goods that are pushed from pillar to post, traded and lent out is said to be fairly common among the Roma in Greece. According to those in the know, it is quite usual in south-eastern Europe for Roma families to give away, exchange or lend out children, sometimes across national borders, in order to commit welfare fraud, in other words to claim more in child benefit.

Thus, the alleged mother of Maria, who, with two sets of identity documents, presented herself as Eleftheria Dimopoulou and Selini Sali, registered five children under the first name and, in a different municipality, four children under the second name. Her husband registered a further five children in a third municipality. Thus, five children became 14 on paper. According to police insiders, the couple are said to have pocketed EUR 2 800 per month in this way.

Up to now, it has been easy to register other people's children as one's own. A declaration under oath and two witnesses were all that was needed to register a child born at home — even years after the birth — at the registry office. In future, a genetic test is to be required.

1. Is the Commission aware of this problem?

2. Is it just as easy in other Member States to pass other people's children off as one's own and thereby dishonestly obtain social assistance (in other EU Member States, too)?

3. To what extent is there cooperation at EU level to prevent any potential child trafficking in the context of the migration of Roma and Sinti?

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

According to Eurostat, in 2008- 2010, 12% of identified or presumed victims of trafficking in the EU were girls and 3% were boys.

The Commission remains deeply concerned about child victims of trafficking in human beings for any exploitative purpose, including sexual exploitation, child labour, illegal adoptions, forced marriages, child-selling or benefit fraud.

EU legislation and policy are comprehensive, human rights based and child-sensitive.

Directive 2011/36/EU ([1]) contains legal provisions ensuring unconditional protection and assistance to child victims, as well as obligations to prevent trafficking in human beings by reducing demand that fosters all forms of exploitation. The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings ([2]), sets out plans for a study on children as high risk groups.

In 2014, the Commission will launch EU-wide awareness-raising activities targeting specific vulnerable groups, such as women and children at risk, domestic workers, Roma communities, undocumented workers. Additionally, in 2014 the Commission will develop guidelines on child protection systems.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.
([2]) The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2016 COM(2012) 286 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012260/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Spuren von pharmazeutischen Produkten in Wasser

Manche Bestandteile von Arzneimittel passieren Kläranlagen praktisch unverändert, oder sie bleiben im Klärschlamm zurück, der dann als Dünger auf den Feldern aufgebracht wird. Auf diese Art werden Spuren von pharmazeutischen Produkten in Gewässern und im Trinkwasser gemessen. Owohl ihre Konzentration so gering ist, dass für Menschen kein Risiko bestehen soll, ergeben sich nachweislich Auswirkungen auf die Tierwelt. Im Rahmen des EU-Projekts PHARMAS gehen Universitäten und Pharma-Unternehmen seit 2011 der Frage nach, welche langfristigen Auswirkungen Medikamentenspuren im Wasser haben.

1. In welchem Ausmaß wird das EU-Projekt PHARMAS aus Fördertöpfen der Union unterstützt?

2. Werden im Rahmen dieses Projekts auch Auswirkungen auf die Pflanzenwelt untersucht?

3. Für welchen Zeitraum ist das Projekt ausgelegt?

4. Gibt es bereits erste (Zwischen-)Ergebnisse?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(11. Dezember 2013)

1. Der EU-Beitrag zu dem im Zuge des Siebten Rahmenprogramms für Forschung, technologische Entwicklung und Demonstration (RP7, 2007-2013) geförderten Projekt PHARMAS beträgt 2 798 899 EUR. Insgesamt beläuft sich der Projekthaushalt auf 3 672 938 EUR.

2. Ziel des Projekts ist es, die Auswirkungen der Umweltexposition durch Spuren von Krebs- und Antibiotika-Medikamenten im Wasser auf Mensch und Tier zu erforschen. Darüber hinaus werden auch Pflanzen berücksichtigt, da sie über die Nahrungskette einen möglichen Expositionspfad für Arzneimittel darstellen können.

3. Das Projekt läuft vom 1.1.2011 bis zum 31.3.2014 (39 Monate).

4. Die Projektergebnisse werden auf der Projektwebsite unter http://www.pharmas-eu.org/ veröffentlicht.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012260/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Traces of pharmaceutical products in water

Many constituents of medicinal products pass through sewage treatment plants practically unchanged, or they remain in the sewage sludge, which is then applied to fields as fertiliser. This results in traces of pharmaceutical products being detected in water bodies and drinking water. Although their concentrations are so low that there is said to be no risk to human health, there is evidence of effects on wildlife. Within the framework of the EU project PHARMAS, universities and pharmaceutical companies have been investigating the long-term effects of traces of medicines in the water since 2011.

1. To what extent is the EU project PHARMAS supported from EU funds?

2. Are effects on plant life also being investigated within the framework of this project?

3. What is the planned time period for this project?

4. Are any initial (interim) results already available?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(11 December 2013)

1. The EU contribution for the PHARMAS project funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) amounts to EUR 2 798 899. The total project budget amounts to EUR 3 672 938.

2. The project aims at assessing the effects of environmental exposure of humans and animals to the presence of anticancer and antibiotic drugs in water. Moreover, plants are taken into account as a possible route of drug exposure through foodstuffs.

3. The project lifetime is 39 months, from 1.1.2011 to 31.3.2014.

4. The available results are published on the project website: http://www.pharmas-eu.org/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012261/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Strategie für Cloud Computing

Im Rahmen von Cloud-Computing wird eine Reihe von Dienstleistungen aus dem gesamten Spektrum der Informationstechnik angeboten. Es beinhaltet u. a. Infrastruktur (z. B. Rechenleistung, Speicherplatz), Plattformen und Software. Dabei werden Hardware oder Datenspeicher sowie Software nicht mehr selbst betrieben, sondern bei einem oder mehreren Anbietern gemietet. Die Anwendungen und Daten befinden sich dann nicht mehr auf dem lokalen Rechner. Da sich aus diesen geänderten Gegebenheiten eine Reihe von neuen Anforderungen (etwa auch im Zusammenhang mit dem Datenschutz) ergeben, hat die Kommission im September 2012 eine Strategie für Cloud-Computing vorgeschlagen.

1. Wie ist der Stand der Umsetzung der Strategie für Cloud-Computing?

2. Welche Initiativen laufen noch bzw. sind geplant, die in engem Zusammenhang mit dieser Strategie stehen?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(13. Dezember 2013)

Die Dienststellen der Kommission arbeiten seit September 2012 an der Umsetzung der Cloud-Computing-Strategie, in deren Mittelpunkt drei Schlüsselaktionen stehen: i) Lichten des Normendschungels; ii) Gewährleisten sicherer und fairer Vertragsbedingungen und iii) die Europäische Cloud-Partnerschaft (ECP).

Im Zuge der Schlüsselaktion 1 wurde das Europäische Institut für Telekommunikationsnormen (ETSI) beauftragt, in Zusammenarbeit mit allen einschlägigen Interessenträgern eine Bestandsaufnahme der bestehenden Cloud-Computing-Normen vorzunehmen. Das ETSI wird seine Endergebnisse bis Ende 2013 vorlegen.

Im Zuge der Schlüsselaktion 2 wurde eine Sachverständigengruppe für Mustervertragsbedingungen für Verträge mit Verbrauchern und Kleinunternehmen eingesetzt.

Ferner wurde als Betrag zu den Schlüsselaktionen 1 und 2 eine Cloud Select Industry Group (C-SIG) eingerichtet, um die Interessenträger in die Umsetzung der Strategie einzubinden. Die C-SIG-Arbeitsgruppen zu den Themen i) freiwillige Cloud-Zertifizierung, ii) Vereinbarungen über den Dienstumfang und iii) Verhaltenskodex (zum Datenschutz) sind im Jahr 2013 mehrfach zusammengekommen. Diese drei C-SIG-Arbeitsgruppen werden voraussichtlich ab Anfang 2014 greifbare Ergebnisse vorlegen.

Im Zuge der Schlüsselaktion 3 wurde im November 2012 die ECP gegründet. Die dritte Sitzung des ECP-Lenkungsausschusses fand am 14. November 2013 in Berlin statt. Zu diesem Anlass fiel auch der Startschuss für Cloud 4 Europe, ein Projekt der vorkommerziellen Auftragsvergabe. Der ECP-Lenkungsausschuss wird seine abschließenden Empfehlungen für die Entwicklung des Cloud-Computing in Europa bis zum Sommer 2014 vorlegen.

Überdies bekräftigten die europäischen Staats- und Regierungschefs auf ihrer Tagung im Oktober, dass das Cloud-Computing wichtige Grundlagen für Produktivitätssteigerungen und bessere Dienstleistungen schafft.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012261/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Cloud computing strategy

Numerous services from the whole spectrum of information technology are offered in the context of cloud computing. This includes infrastructure (e.g. processing power, storage space), platforms and software. In this case, the hardware or data storage and software are no longer operated by the users themselves, but are rented from one or more service providers. The applications and data are then no longer found on the user's local computer. As these altered circumstances give rise to a number of new requirements (including in connection with data protection), the Commission proposed a cloud computing strategy in September 2012.

1. What stage has the implementation of the cloud computing strategy reached?

2. What initiatives that are closely related to this strategy are still running or are planned?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 December 2013)

The Commission services have been working since September 2012 on the implementation of the Cloud Computing strategy, which is based on three key actions: (i) cutting through the jungle of standards; (ii) ensuring safe and fair contract terms and conditions, and (iii) the European Cloud Partnership (ECP).

Under key action 1, the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) was tasked to map existing cloud computing standards in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. ETSI will deliver the final results before the end of 2013.

Under key action 2, the expert group on model contract terms for consumers and small firms has been established.

In order to contribute towards key actions 1 and 2, a Cloud Select Industry Group (C-SIG) has been established to involve the stakeholders in the implementation of the strategy. C-SIG Working Groups on (i) voluntary cloud certification, (ii) service level agreements and (iii) code of conduct (on data protection) met several times during 2013. These three C-SIG working groups are expected to deliver tangible results in the beginning of 2014.

Under key action 3, the ECP was established in November 2012. The third meeting of the Steering Board was held on 14 November 2013 in Berlin, when the pre-commercial procurement project Cloud 4 Europe was launched. The ECP Steering Board will present final recommendations on the development of cloud computing in Europe before summer 2014.

Moreover, at the recent European Council meeting in October, the Heads of State and Government confirmed that cloud computing is an important enabler for productivity and better services.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-012262/13
an die Kommission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28. Oktober 2013)

Betrifft: Strategie zur Erhöhung der Gesundheitskompetenz

Es ist von grundlegender Bedeutung, dass die Bürger Gesundheitsinformationen richtig verstehen; denn wer mit diesbezüglichen Informationen nichts anfangen kann, geht weniger zu Vorsorgeimpfungen, kommt schneller ins Krankenhaus oder nimmt Medikamente falsch ein. Berechnungen des Gesundheitsökonomen John Vernon zufolge soll die USA mangelnde „health literacy" jährlich 100 bis 200 Milliarden Dollar kosten. Nach dem Europavergleich 2012 wurde die Erhöhung der Gesundheitskompetenz vom Ministerrat beschlossen. Im Wesentlichen soll das Gesundheitssystem verständlicher und patientenfreundlicher und der diesbezügliche Informationsstand des Einzelnen vergrößert werden.

1. Wie ist der Stand der Umsetzung der Strategie zur Erhöhung der Gesundheitskompetenz?

2. Für wann ist der nächste Europavergleich geplant?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(19. Dezember 2013)

Die Kommission erkennt in der EU-Gesundheitsstrategie ([1]) die Bedeutung der Gesundheitskompetenz an.

Mehrere Bestimmungen der EU-Gesundheits-, Verbraucher- und Lebensmittelvorschriften tragen zur Gesundheitskompetenz bei, da sie den Menschen helfen, Informationen im Hinblick auf gesundheitsrelevante Entscheidungen zu erhalten, zu verstehen und anzuwenden.

So zielen die EU-Rechtsvorschriften zur Information der Verbraucher über Lebensmittel ([2]) und gesundheitsbezogene Angaben über Lebensmittel ([3]) auch darauf ab, den Zugang zu klaren, konsistenten und evidenzbasierten Informationen zu verbessern. Die Tabakvorschriften ([4]) umfassen Maßnahmen zur Information potenzieller Konsumenten über die mit diesen Produkten verbundenen Gesundheitsrisiken, und die Vorschriften über Medizinprodukte ([5]) enthalten Bestimmungen hinsichtlich der Zusammenfassung der Produktmerkmale und der Lesbarkeit der Etikettierung und der Packungsbeilage.

Die Kommission erhebt regelmäßig vergleichbare Daten zur öffentlichen Gesundheit ([6]), z. B. die im Lauf der Jahre mit den Mitgliedstaaten entwickelten Gesundheitsindikatoren der Europäischen Gemeinschaft, und sie hat ein Online-Instrument (HEIDI-Datenbank) ([7]) entwickelt, um der Öffentlichkeit Zugang zu evidenzbasierten Informationen zu geben.

Die Kommission unterstützt mit EU-Mitteln außerdem eine Reihe von Projekten, wie die vom Herrn Abgeordneten genannte Europäische Studie zur Gesundheitskompetenz (European Health Literacy Survey) ([8]) und das IROHLA-Projekt zur Gesundheitskompetenz älterer Menschen ([9]), das 2012 angelaufen ist und die Gesundheitskompetenz der alternden Bevölkerung Europas verbessern will, unter anderem durch evidenzbasierte Maßnahmen, die in allen Mitgliedstaaten angewendet werden können.

Da die Ergebnisse der Europäischen Studie zur Gesundheitskompetenz noch immer aktuell und gültig sind, plant die Kommission in naher Zukunft keine neue Erhebung.

([1]) KOM(2007)630 endg.
([2]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1169/2011.
([3]) Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1924/2006.
([4]) Richtlinie 2001/37/EG.
([5]) Weitere Informationen unter: http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/index_en.htm
([6]) Verfügbar unter: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database
([7]) Verfügbar unter: http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/
([8]) Der Abschlussbericht kann abgerufen werden unter: http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/documents/news/Comparative_report_on_health_literacy_in_eight_EU_member_states.pdf
([9]) Weitere Informationen unter: http://www.irohla.eu/home/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-012262/13
to the Commission
Andreas Mölzer (NI)
(28 October 2013)

Subject: Strategy for improving health literacy

It is fundamentally important for citizens to understand health-related information correctly, as those who are unable to get to grips with this information go less often to have preventative vaccinations, end up in hospital more readily or do not take their medication correctly. According to calculations by the health economist John Vernon, poor health literacy costs the US between USD 100 billion and USD 200 billion a year. Following a comparison survey carried out within Europe in 2012, the improvement of health literacy was agreed on by the Council. Essentially, the health system is to be made easier to understand and more patient-friendly, and the level of information provided to individuals in this regard is to be increased.

1. How far has the implementation of the strategy for improving health literacy progressed?

2. When is the next European comparison survey planned for?

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

The Commission recognised the importance of health literacy in the EU Health Strategy ([1]).

Several provisions of the EU health, consumer and food legislation contribute to health literacy as they help people obtain, understand and use information to make decisions about their health and care.

For instance, EU legislation on the provision of food information to consumers ([2]) and on Health Claims made on foods ([3]) also aim at improving access to clear, consistent and evidence based information. Tobacco legislation ([4]) includes measures informing potential consumers of the health risks associated with these products, and rules governing medicinal products ([5]) include provisions on summary of products characteristics, on the packaging information and on the readability of the labelling and package leaflet.

The Commission regularly collects comparable public health data ([6]), including the European Core Health Indicators developed over the years with the Member States and has created an online tool (Heidi data-tool) ([7]) to give public access to evidence-based information.

The Commission also supports, through EU funds, a number of projects, such as the European Health Literacy Survey ([8]) mentioned by the Honourable Member and the Intervention Research on Health Literacy among Ageing population (IROHLA) project ([9]), which started in 2012 and focuses on improving health literacy for the ageing population in Europe, including by selecting evidence-based interventions that can be applied in all European Member States.

As the results of the European Health Literacy Survey are still recent and valid the Commission does not plan to launch another survey in the near future.

([1]) COM(2007) 630 final.
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006.
([4]) Directive 2001/37/EC.
([5]) More information at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/human-use/index_en.htm
([6]) Available at: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/health/public_health/data_public_health/database
([7]) Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/
([8]) Final report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/documents/news/Comparative_report_on_health_literacy_in_eight_EU_member_states.pdf
([9]) More information at: http://www.irohla.eu/home/