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Inhalt

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Hinweis für den Leser

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

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

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

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

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

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

ABKÜRZUNGEN DER FRAKTIONEN

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

IV

(Informationen)

INFORMATIONEN DER ORGANE, EINRICHTUNGEN UND SONSTIGEN STELLEN DER EUROPÄISCHEN UNION

EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT

ANFRAGEN ZUR SCHRIFTLICHEN BEANTWORTUNG MIT ANTWORT

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

(2014/C 346/01)

Inhalt Seite

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003650/14
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Tania the elephant at Târgu Mureș zoo in Romania

Following concerns raised by my constituents about Tania the elephant, can the Commission confirm if any progress has been made regarding the improvements recommended following the inspection visit by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) in 2013, and if the Commission has any further plans to carry out any inspections of Târgu Mureș zoo in 2014/2015, given that it is imperative that this situation is addressed as a matter of urgency in order to ensure that Romania meets the standards set down in the EU's Zoos Directive?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(10 May 2014)

The Commission understands that the visit of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria to Târgu-Mureș has led to specific measures to improve the well-being of Tania the elephant, and a visit from the Zoological Society of London is planned to further assess the situation and to provide assistance. Council Directive 1999/22/EC ([1]) relating to the keeping of wild animals in zoos (the Zoos Directive) does not provide for any inspection powers for the European Commission. Member States are entirely responsible for inspection and licensing of zoos.

([1]) OJ L 94, 9.4.1999.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003651/14
alla Commissione
Giovanni Barbagallo (S&D)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Ritardi nei pagamenti dei debiti della pubblica amministrazione in Sicilia

Secondo dati diffusi pochi giorni fa, la Regione Siciliana risulta ultima tra le Regioni italiane in termini di pagamenti alle imprese. Nel 2013, l'amministrazione regionale avrebbe pagato ai propri fornitori soltanto il 34,6 % delle risorse stanziate a tal fine dallo Stato italiano. Un divario fortissimo esisterebbe con tutte le altre Regioni italiane che, nella peggiore delle ipotesi, si attestano al di sopra del 65 % di pagamenti effettuati.

La direttiva 2011/7/UE, il cui recepimento da parte degli Stati membri era fissato al 16 marzo scorso, impone il rispetto di un termine di 30 giorni, e in casi del tutto eccezionali 60 giorni, per i pagamenti alle imprese da parte della pubblica amministrazione, e il nuovo Governo italiano si è fortemente impegnato, in diverse sedi, a saldare al più presto tutti i debiti della pubblica amministrazione sia locale che centrale.

Con i Decreti legge 35/2013 e 102/2013 il Governo italiano aveva già stanziato, per il pagamento dei debiti arretrati al 31 dicembre 2012, 47 miliardi da spendere entro 12 mesi.

Tuttavia, dai dati del Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, aggiornati al 26 febbraio 2014, si evince che la Regione Siciliana non avrebbe utilizzato nessuna delle risorse messe a disposizione dal Governo nazionale per il pagamento dei debiti sanitari e non della pubblica amministrazione — unica, insieme alla Regione Sardegna, a detenere questo primato negativo.

Inoltre, l'Italia rischia ancora l'apertura di una doppia procedura d'infrazione sia per un possibile non corretto recepimento della direttiva stessa sia per la sua mancata applicazione, ovvero per il mancato rispetto dei termini di pagamento fissati.

In questo quadro, aggravato dalla forte crisi economica che soprattutto nel Sud Italia si è fatta sentire con effetti drammatici, la situazione della Regione Siciliana richiede interventi tempestivi ed efficaci.

Quali iniziative sta intraprendendo la Commissione perché l'Italia ottemperi al più presto e al meglio ai suoi obblighi?

Quale tipo di riscontri ha ricevuto dalle autorità italiane in merito ai rilievi avanzati pochi giorni fa dopo la lettera di risposta del Governo del 10 marzo?

Quale tipo di azioni può sviluppare la Commissione non soltanto per controllare, ma anche per sollecitare e orientare un'efficace capacità di spesa delle Regioni?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(21 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente della situazione in Italia. Questo è il motivo per cui ha contattato le autorità italiane per chiedere chiarimenti in merito al recepimento della direttiva nell'ordinamento italiano e alla sua corretta attuazione.

Per quanto riguarda il recepimento, le autorità italiane hanno risposto positivamente annunciando che avrebbero modificato la legislazione nazionale come richiesto dalla Commissione.

Quanto all'attuazione della direttiva, il 10 marzo 2014 le autorità italiane hanno risposto alla richiesta di chiarimenti della Commissione. Il 5 maggio si è svolta una riunione con le autorità italiane. La Commissione sta attualmente valutando tutte le informazioni raccolte. Se la situazione verrà ritenuta non soddisfacente per quanto riguarda l'applicazione delle norme in materia di ritardi di pagamento da parte delle autorità pubbliche, la Commissione potrà decidere di avviare un procedimento di infrazione a norma dell'articolo 258 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea ([1]).

La Commissione è altresì consapevole degli sforzi compiuti dal governo per pagare tutti gli arretrati commerciali esistenti al 31 dicembre 2012 e sta seguendo gli sviluppi sul terreno.

([1]) Nel caso in cui tale procedura non portasse alla cessazione del mancato recepimento da parte dello Stato membro, può essere presentata alla Corte di Giustizia un'azione per violazione del diritto dell'UE. Se la Corte ritiene che l'Italia non abbia adempiuto all'obbligo, lo Stato membro deve mettere fine alla violazione senza indugio. Se lo Stato membro non si è conformato alla sentenza della Corte di giustizia, essa può su richiesta della Commissione imporre a tale Stato una sanzione pecuniaria fissa o periodica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003651/14
to the Commission
Giovanni Barbagallo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Late payments of government debts in Sicily

According to figures released in the last few days, the Region of Sicily comes out bottom of the league of the Italian regions in terms of payments to businesses. The figures show that, in 2013, Sicily's regional government paid out to its suppliers only 34.6% of the resources budgeted for this purpose by central government. Sicily falls very far behind all the other Italian regions which, in the worst-case scenario, have made more than 65% of the payments they owe.

The date set for Member States to implement Directive 2011/7/EU was 16 March 2014. The directive requires a deadline of 30 days or, in exceptional circumstances, 60 days to be met for government payments to companies. Italy's new national government has reiterated its strong commitment to settle all local and central government debts as quickly as possible.

By Decree-Laws 35/2013 and 102/2013, the Italian Government had budgeted EUR 47 billion to be spent within 12 months, to settle debts predating 31 December 2012.

Nevertheless these figures from the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, updated to 26 February 2014, show that the Region of Sicily has used none of the resources provided by central government to pay off health service rather than regional government debts. Sicily and Sardinia are the only regions with this negative track record.

Italy also still risks infringement proceedings on two counts: possible incorrect implementation of the directive itself; or failure to implement it, i.e. missing the set payment deadlines.

The situation is made worse by the severe recession, which has had a dramatic impact, especially in southern Italy. Now the situation of the Region of Sicily calls for prompt and effective intervention.

What initiatives is the Commission taking to ensure Italy fulfils its obligations as quickly and as well as possible?

What kind of feedback has it received from the Italian authorities on the findings released a few days ago, after the government's written reply of 10 March?

What kind of action can the Commission undertake, not only to control, but also to prompt and direct a capacity for effective spending in the regions?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the situation in Italy. This is why the Commission has contacted the Italian authorities to ask for clarifications as regards the transposition of the directive into Italian law as well as its correct implementation.

As regards the transposition, the Italian authorities reacted positively and announced that they would amend the national law as requested by the Commission.

Concerning the implementation of the directive, the Italian authorities replied on 10 March 2014 to the Commission's request for clarification. A meeting with the Italian authorities took place on 5 May. The Commission is currently assessing all the information gathered. If the situation is deemed not satisfactory as concerns the application of the rules on late payments by public authorities, the Commission may decide to initiate infringement proceedings according to Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ([1]).

The Commission is also aware of the government's efforts to pay all the commercial arrears existing at 31 December 2012 and is following the developments on the ground.

([1]) If this procedure would not result in termination of the failure by the Member State, an action for breach of EC law may be brought before the Court of Justice. If the Court finds that indeed the obligation has not been fulfilled by Italy, the Member State must terminate the breach without any delay. If the Member State has not complied with the Court of Justice's judgment, it may upon the request of the Commission, impose it a fixed or a periodic financial penalty.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003652/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD) e Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Promozione dell'accesso di persone portatrici di disabilità ad impieghi presso le Istituzioni dell'Unione europea

Vista la Carta europea dei diritti fondamentali, con particolare riguardo all'articolo 26,

vista la direttiva europea 2000/78/CE che stabilisce un quadro generale per la parità di trattamento in materia di occupazione e di condizioni di lavoro,

visto il Codice di buona prassi per l'occupazione delle persone con disabilità del Parlamento europeo,

visto il nuovo Statuto dei funzionari dell'Unione europea, in vigore dal 1° gennaio 2014,

considerato che l'Unione europea ha ratificato la Convenzione ONU sui diritti delle persone con disabilità;

considerato che l'emendamento 862 al bilancio 2011, capitolo 12, articolo 1200, è stato approvato ed è ora parte integrante del bilancio dell'Unione europea per la parte dedicata alle spese di funzionamento del Parlamento europeo, ed è stato peraltro riproposto nel progetto di bilancio 2014;

chiediamo alla Commissione quali iniziative siano state ad oggi intraprese per dare attuazione a quanto disposto dal suddetto emendamento; chiediamo inoltre se sia disponibile una relazione annuale sull'utilizzo degli stanziamenti a tal fine, così come prescritto dalla risoluzione sul bilancio; chiediamo infine se, alla luce del ridotto numero di persone con disabilità impiegate nelle Istituzioni europee, la Commissione non ritenga opportuno sollecitare una migliore informazione del pubblico in merito alle possibilità di assunzione presso Istituzioni dell'Unione europea per persone portatrici di disabilità?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2014)

Lo statuto stabilisce un principio generale di non discriminazione in base a vari motivi, tra cui la disabilità. Ciò comprende l'obbligo di prevedere una soluzione appropriata per i disabili, a meno che ciò non comporti un onere sproporzionato per l'istituzione. La Commissione attribuisce grande importanza al rispetto di tale principio. Una delle priorità in questo settore è di sensibilizzare il personale e i dirigenti sulla politica in materia di disabilità della Commissione, in modo che siano meglio preparati ad accogliere candidati o colleghi con disabilità.

Per quanto riguarda le procedure di selezione dell'UE, l'EPSO applica già un gran numero di misure volte a garantire che tutte le procedure di selezione dell'UE siano pienamente accessibili ai candidati con esigenze specifiche. In tale contesto, e al fine di garantire la parità di opportunità, ai candidati possono essere concesse condizioni speciali per lo svolgimento delle prove, ove necessario e debitamente giustificato. Ciascun caso viene trattato individualmente per garantire una migliore corrispondenza tra le esigenze dei candidati e i principi di proporzionalità e parità di trattamento applicabili nell'ambito dei processi di selezione dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003652/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD) and Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Promoting access to jobs in the EU institutions for people with disabilities

In view of:

the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, especially Article 26;

Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation;

the European Parliament's Code of Good Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities;

the new Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Union, in force since 1 January 2014;

and the European Union's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

and considering that amendment 862 to the 2011 budget for the European Parliament, Chapter 12, item 1 200 was passed and, now forms part of the European Union budget allocated to the Parliament's working expenses, and has been proposed again for the draft 2014 budget:

What initiatives have been taken to date to implement the provision made by the amendment mentioned above?

Is there an annual report, as required by the budget resolution, on how the amounts budgeted for this purpose have been spent?

Finally, given that few people with disabilities are employed in the European institutions, does the Commission think it worth seeking to improve public information about recruitment opportunities for people with disabilities in the EU institutions?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2014)

The Staff Regulations set out a general principle of non-discrimination on various grounds, amongst others, disability. This includes the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities unless this would cause a disproportionate burden on the employer. The Commission attaches great importance to the respect of this principle. One of the priorities in this area is to raise awareness among staff and managers about the Commission's disability policy so that they are more confident and better equipped to integrate applicants or colleagues with disabilities.

As regards the EU selection procedures, EPSO already implements a large number of measures to ensure that all EU selection processes are fully accessible to candidates with special needs. In this context, and in order to ensure equality of opportunities, such candidates can be granted special accommodations for testing whenever necessary and duly justified. Each file is processed individually to ensure the best possible match between the needs of the candidate and the principles of both proportionality and equal treatment applicable in EU selection processes.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003653/14
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Działalność ruchów antyszczepionkowych

Jak podaje Council on Foreign Relations, w latach 2008-2014 odnotowano widoczny wzrost zachorowań na choroby zakaźne w Europie i Stanach Zjednoczonych (m.in. odrę, świnkę, różyczkę, polio, krztusiec). Uważa się, że zjawisko to jest spowodowane w dużej mierze działalnością ruchów antyszczepionkowych propagujących pseudonaukowe teorie o szkodliwości szczepionek, a co za tym idzie, spadkiem liczby szczepień.

Czy Komisji znane jest to zjawisko? Czy UE zamierza przeciwdziałać niebezpieczeństwu nawrotu epidemii groźnych chorób, jakie niesie za sobą działalność ruchów antyszczepionkowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(13 maja 2014 r.)

Odmowy przyjęcia szczepień lub niechęć do szczepień stanowią główne przeszkody dla skuteczności krajowych programów szczepień. Istnieje szereg czynników zmieniającego się globalnego środowiska, które przyczyniają się do coraz częstszego publicznego kwestionowania szczepionek. Do czynników tych należą takie kwestie jak: obawy co do bezpieczeństwa szczepionek, zwiększająca się liczba rodzajów i kombinacji szczepionek, różnice w harmonogramach szczepień oraz działalność ruchów antyszczepionkowych.

Jako że szczepienia należą do krajowych kompetencji państw członkowskich, Komisja wspiera działania państw członkowskich zmierzające do poprawy obecnej sytuacji poprzez usprawnienie komunikacji opartej na konkretnych danych dotyczących zarówno efektywności szczepionek, jak i ich bezpieczeństwa. Pomoc Komisji polega na wspieraniu działań mających na celu udoskonalenie szkoleń i kształcenia pracowników służby zdrowia, aby wyposażyć ich w odpowiednie narzędzia służące lepszej komunikacji, dostosowanej do indywidualnego pacjenta. Na koniec ważne byłoby zintensyfikowanie działań w celu systematycznego monitorowania odmów przyjęcia szczepień.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003653/14
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: The activities of anti-vaccination movements

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, in the years 2008-2014 there has been a visible increase in contagious diseases in Europe and the United States (including measles, mumps, scarlet fever, polio and whooping cough). It is believed that this phenomenon is due in large part to the activities of anti-vaccination movements propagating pseudo-scientific theories about the dangers of vaccinations which has resulted in a reduction in the number of vaccinations.

Is the Commission aware of this phenomenon? Does the EU intend to counteract the risk of a return to epidemics of dangerous diseases caused by the activity of anti-vaccination movements?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

Vaccine refusal or resistance to vaccination are major barriers to the effectiveness of national vaccine programmes. There are multiple factors of a changing global environment that are contributing to increased public questioning of vaccines. These comprise concerns about vaccine safety, increasing variations and combinations of vaccines, differences in vaccine schedules and the activities of anti-vaccination movements.

As vaccination is a national competence of the Member States, the Commission is supporting the Member States to improve the current situation through strengthening evidence-based communication, both regarding vaccine efficacy and safety. This work aims to help efforts to improve the training and education of healthcare professionals, providing them with tools for more tailored communication with their patients. Finally, it would be important to increase efforts to monitor vaccine refusals on a systematic basis.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003654/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Niszczenie chrześcijańskiego dziedzictwa w Syrii

Syryjscy rebelianci po zajęciu w grudniu 2013 r. miasta Maaloula, na terenie, którego znajdują się m.in. dwa najstarsze syryjskie klasztory, oraz stanowiącego jedno z ważnych centrów religijnych dla chrześcijan wschodnich, wyprzedają na aukcjach internetowych przedmioty pochodzące z tamtejszych cerkwi. Do sprzedaży trafiły zabytkowe, wielowiekowe księgi liturgiczne, ikony, krzyże, świeczniki. Inne prawosławne świątynie również nie zostały uszanowane – dochodzi do aktów wandalizmu, podpaleń i bezczeszczenia świętych relikwii. W wielu przypadkach, niszczone i grabione miejsca należą do Światowego Dziedzictwa UNESCO.

Jakie jest stanowisko Wysokiej Przedstawiciel wobec ataków muzułmańskich rebeliantów w Syrii na chrześcijańskie dziedzictwo oraz inne miejsca ważne z historycznego punktu widzenia – wielowiekowe budowle, a nawet całe miasta, które ulegają zniszczeniu i grabieżom? Czy UE podejmuje działania na rzecz ich ochrony?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(25 czerwca 2014 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca w pełni podziela zaniepokojenie niszczeniem i grabieżami na szeroką skalę oraz nielegalnym wywozem dóbr kultury i handlem nimi. UE wielokrotnie wyrażała zaniepokojenie niszczeniem syryjskiego dziedzictwa kulturowego w konkluzjach Rady do Spraw Zagranicznych.

W grudniu 2013 r. Rada przyjęła decyzję i rozporządzenie, w których zakazano sprzedaży z i do UE syryjskich dóbr kultury, które zostały nielegalnie wywiezione z Syrii po 9 maja 2011 r. Objęte ochroną mienie obejmuje syryjskie obiekty kulturowe, archeologiczne, rzadkie obiekty naukowe lub obiekty o znaczeniu religijnym. Akty te zawierają wykaz własności chronionej, a w szczególności obiektów, które stanowią integralną część zbiorów syryjskich muzeów, archiwów, bibliotek lub zbiorów instytucji religijnych.

UE wspiera również obecnie UNESCO za pomocą projektu „Pilne środki ochrony syryjskiego dziedzictwa kulturowego" (2,7 mln EUR), który ma na celu ograniczenie ponoszonych strat dziedzictwa kulturowego w Syrii i utorowanie drogi priorytetowym działaniom po zakończeniu konfliktu oraz średnio- i długoterminowym działaniom w następstwie znacznego uszkodzenia i utraty dziedzictwa kulturowego od marca 2011 r.

UE będzie nadal w pełni zaangażowana w ochronę dziedzictwa kulturowego Syrii, a Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca będzie nadal poruszać tę istotną kwestię na wszystkich forach międzynarodowych dotyczących Syrii.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003654/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Destruction of Christian heritage in Syria

In December 2013, after occupying the city of Maaloula, an area that includes two of oldest Syrian monasteries and an important religious centre for eastern Christians, Syrian rebels are selling items originating from eastern orthodox churches in this area on Internet auction sites. Antique, centuries-old liturgical books, icons, crosses and candlesticks have been put on sale. Other eastern orthodox places of worship have also been disrespected. There have been acts of vandalism, arson and desecration of holy relics. In many cases, Unesco World Heritage sites have been damaged and plundered.

What is the High Representative's view of the attacks by Muslim rebels in Syria on Christian heritage and other places of importance from a historical perspective — ancient buildings and even entire towns subject to destruction and looting? Is the EU taking any action to protect them?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2014)

The HR/VP fully shares concerns about the wide-scale destruction and looting of sites as well as about the illicit export and trafficking of cultural property. The EU has repeatedly expressed its concerns about the destruction of the Syrian cultural heritage in Foreign Affairs Council conclusions.

In December 2013, the Council adopted a decision and Regulation that prohibits trade to and from the EU in Syrian cultural property which has been unlawfully removed from Syria since 9 May 2011. The protected property includes Syrian goods of cultural, archaeological, rare scientific or religious importance. It includes a list of protected property, in particular goods that form an integral part of collections of Syrians museums, archives, libraries or collections of religious institutions.

The EU is also currently supporting Unesco with the project on the 'Emergency Safeguard of the Syrian Cultural Heritage' (EUR 2.7 million) which aims to mitigate the ongoing loss of cultural heritage in Syria and pave the way for post-conflict priority actions, and medium and long term actions, following the considerable damage to, and loss of, cultural heritage since March 2011.

The EU will remain fully committed to protect the Syrian cultural heritage and the HR/VP will continue raising this important issue in all international fora on Syria.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003655/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Protesty w Wenezueli

W połowie lutego br. w Wenezueli rozpoczęły się manifestacje zorganizowane przez środowiska studenckie przeciwko ogromnej fali przemocy zalewającej kraj oraz nieskutecznej polityce rządu w zakresie zarówno walki z przestępczością, jak i kryzysem gospodarczym. Do rozpędzenia pokojowych demonstracji władza użyła siły, co spowodowało wzrost napiętej atmosfery wśród obywateli Wenezueli oraz powszechnego niezadowolenia społecznego. Doszło do eskalacji protestów, a walki toczące się miedzy protestantami i siłami porządkowymi oraz bojówkarzami wiernymi prezydentowi Maduro dotychczas przyniosły śmierć ponad dwudziestu osobom po obu stronach toczących się walk. Brakuje informacji o aresztowanych, pojawiają się pogłoski o stosowaniu wobec nich tortur.

W jaki sposób UE może przyczynić się do rozwiązania kryzysu w Wenezueli?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(12 czerwca 2014 r.)

Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji wyraziła w swoich oświadczeniach zaniepokojenie gwałtownymi starciami między siłami bezpieczeństwa, prorządowymi grupami i demonstrantami antyrządowymi, które nadal mają miejsce w Wenezueli. W swoim oświadczeniu dla Parlamentu Europejskiego wydanym w dniu 27 lutego br. (2014/2600 (RSP)), Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji stwierdziła między innymi, że:

„Jesteśmy zaniepokojeni faktem zatrzymania studentów i przywódców politycznych, w tym Leopoldo Lópeza, lidera Partii Socjaldemokratycznej Voluntad Popular. Uznane międzynarodowe organizacje społeczeństwa obywatelskiego wskazały, że nie odnotowano żadnych dowodów na poparcie postawionych zarzutów. Przyłączamy się do działań biura Wysokiego Komisarza NZ ds. Praw Człowieka wzywając właściwe władze do zagwarantowania, że śledztwo w związku z oskarżeniami wniesionymi przeciwko zatrzymanym prowadzone jest sposób bezstronny i zmierza do ustalenia zgodności z prawem tych zatrzymań lub do zwolnienia zatrzymanych."

W odniesieniu do działań podjętych przez delegację ministerialną Unii Narodów Południowoamerykańskich (UNASUR) z udziałem nuncjusza apostolskiego, Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca w swoim oświadczeniu z dnia 28 marca, stwierdziła, że:

„[…] wspiera wysiłki regionalne zmierzające do skłonienia wszystkich partii Wenezueli do podjęcia rokowań w celu natychmiastowego położenia kresu przemocy i niepokojom społecznym;

[…] przyjmuje z zadowoleniem oświadczenie wydane w tym tygodniu przez delegację ministerialną UNASUR wspierające otwarty dialog między rządem, wszystkimi partiami politycznymi i społeczeństwem obywatelskim;

[…] przyłącza się do apelu UNASUR o prowadzenie umiarkowanego dyskursu oraz do poszanowania wszystkich praw człowieka i z zadowoleniem przyjmuje decyzję UNASUR o powołaniu świadka dobrej wiary w celu ułatwienia dialogu [i]

[…] wierzy, że grupa ministrów spraw zagranicznych wyznaczonych przez UNASUR do kontynuowania procesu będzie dążyć do zapewnienia rzeczywiście kompleksowego dialogu, prowadzonego na podstawie wcześniej ustalonego programu i w kształcie zaakceptowanym przez wszystkie strony."

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003655/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Protests in Venezuela

In mid-February 2014, student groups started to organise demonstrations in protest against the huge wave of violence sweeping the country and the government's ineffective policies for combating criminality and dealing with the economic crisis. The authorities used force to disperse the peaceful demonstrations, leading to an increasingly tense atmosphere among the people of Venezuela and to mass social discontent. The protests escalated, and the battles raging between the protestors, law enforcement forces and militants loyal to President Maduro have so far claimed the lives of at least twenty people on each side. No information has been released on those arrested, but rumours are circulating that they are being tortured.

How can the EU help to bring about a resolution to the crisis in Venezuela?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The High Representative/Vice-President, in her statements, has expressed her concern at the continuing violent clashes between security forces, pro-government groups and anti-government protesters that continue to take place in Venezuela. In her statement to the European Parliament on 27 February (2014/2600(RSP)), the HR/VP stated, *inter alia*, that

'[we] are alarmed about the detention of students and political leaders including Leopoldo López, the leader of the social democratic party, Voluntad Popular. Reputable international civil society organisations have indicated that they have not seen any evidence to substantiate these charges. We join the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in calling upon the relevant authorities to ensure that the accusations brought against those detained are impartially investigated, to decide on the lawfulness of their detention, or to order their release.'

On the currents efforts undertaken by a ministerial delegation from Unasur, with the participation of the apostolic nonce, the HR/VP, in a further statement on 28 March, stated that she

'[…] supports regional efforts to bring all Venezuelan parties to the table so as to put an immediate stop to violence and unrest

[…] welcomes the statement following this week's Unasur ministerial mission in support of an inclusive dialogue between the government, all political parties and civil society

[…] joins Unasur's call to moderate the discourse and to respect all human rights and welcomes Unasur's decision to appoint a witness of good faith to facilitate dialogue [and]

[…] trusts the group of foreign ministers appointed by Unasur to pursue the process will work to ensure the dialogue will be truly comprehensive, in a format and with an agenda agreeable to by all parties.'

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003656/14
do Komisji
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Świadome korzystanie z zasobów Internetu

W ciągu ostatnich lat zauważalny jest wzrost zaufania użytkowników Internetu wobec umieszczanych tam treści. Często wiadomości przedstawiane na różnego rodzaju portalach nie znajdują pokrycia w rzeczywistości, niemożliwe jest również zweryfikowanie rzetelności autorów zamieszczanych treści. Mimo to, według Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego w Polsce, co trzeci internauta szuka porad medycznych w Internecie.

Czy Komisji znane jest to zjawisko? Jakie kroki może podjąć KE, by ostrzegać obywateli UE przed nadmiernym zaufaniem wobec treści zamieszczanych w Internecie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wiceprzewodniczącą Neelie Kroes w imieniu Komisji
(21 maja 2014 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma kwestii poruszonej przez Szanownego Pana Posła. W Europejskim programie na rzecz konsumentów z maja 2012 r. oraz w Europejskiej agendzie cyfrowej Komisja Europejska uznała fakt, że internet stworzył innowacyjne sposoby organizacji, udostępniania i oceniania informacji oraz dzielenia się nimi, na przykład w odniesieniu do cen, technicznych właściwości produktów oraz opinii o jakości. Wyszukiwarki internetowe, porównywarki produktów, internetowe znaki zaufania oraz opinie konsumentów są obecnie szeroko stosowanymi narzędziami. Komisja przeprowadziła na przykład badanie dotyczące wartości znaków zaufania dla konsumentów i będzie nadal rozważać wraz z zainteresowanymi stronami, w jaki sposób mogłyby one zostać przeniesione na skalę ogólnoeuropejską, jak to miało miejsce podczas europejskiego szczytu konsumentów w epoce cyfrowej w 2014 r. ([1]).

Dyrektywa 2011/24/UE ([2]) w sprawie stosowania praw pacjentów w transgranicznej opiece zdrowotnej wymaga od państw członkowskich ustanowienia krajowych punktów kontaktowych, które przekazują pewne informacje związane z opieką zdrowotną, takie jak informacje na temat standardów jakości i bezpieczeństwa opieki, prawa do opieki zdrowotnej, zwrotu kosztów, procedur składania skarg i dochodzenia roszczeń itp. Takie zwiększenie przejrzystości przyniesie korzyści wszystkim pacjentom – nie tylko tym, którzy decydują się na podróż za granicę.

Ponadto Komisja pragnie podkreślić, że obowiązujące przepisy UE przewidują już szczególne obowiązki dla przedsiębiorstw w ich stosunkach handlowych z konsumentami. W szczególności dyrektywa dotycząca nieuczciwych praktyk handlowych zakazuje takich praktyk jak wprowadzające w błąd działania, które mogą obejmować fałszywe informacje.

([1]) http://www.european-consumer-summit.eu/2014/presentations.html
([2]) Dz.U. L 88 z 4.4.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003656/14
to the Commission
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Informed use of Internet resources

In recent years, there has been a noticeable increase in Internet users' trust in Internet content. Information presented on various portals is often untrue and it is impossible to verify the credibility of authors posting such information. Despite this fact, according to the Central Statistical Office in Poland, one in three Internet users uses the Internet to search for medical advice.

Is the Commission aware of the above phenomenon? What steps can the European Commission take to warn EU citizens against excessive trust in information placed on the Internet?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issue raised by the Honourable Member. With the Consumer Agenda of May 2012 and the Digital Agenda for Europe strategy, the European Commission acknowledged that Internet has created innovative ways of organising, accessing, sharing and evaluating information, for example on prices, technical product characteristics and quality reviews. Search engines, product comparison websites, online trust marks and consumer reviews are now widely used tools. The Commission has conducted, for example, a study on the value of trust-marks for consumers and is continuing to explore with stakeholders how these solutions could be taken to a European-wide scale, as during European Consumers in the Digital Era Summit 2014. ([1])

The cross-border healthcare Directive 2011/24/EU ([2]) requires Member States to establish national contact points which provide a certain amount of information related to healthcare, such as quality and safety standards of care, entitlements to healthcare, reimbursement, complaints and redress procedures etc. This increase in transparency will benefit all patients, not only those who choose to travel abroad.

Furthermore, the Commission would like to stress that existing EC law already provides for specific obligations for businesses in their commercial relations with consumers. Specifically, the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive prohibits practices such as misleading actions that may contain false information.

([1]) http://www.european-consumer-summit.eu/2014/presentations.html
([2]) OJ L 88, 4.4.2011.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003662/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αναθεώρηση μνημονίων συνεννόησης

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «ζητεί να λάβει η Τρόικα υπόψη την τρέχουσα συζήτηση σχετικά με τους δημοσιονομικούς πολλαπλασιαστές και να εξετάσει την αναθεώρηση των μνημονίων συνεννόησης, με βάση τα τελευταία εμπειρικά αποτελέσματα».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Υπάρχει αξιόπιστη μαρτυρία ότι κατά την εφαρμογή των μνημονίων έγιναν λάθη σχετικά με τους δημοσιονομικούς πολλαπλασιαστές; Αν ναι, πώς και σε ποιο βαθμό επηρέασαν τα λάθη αυτά τις χώρες που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής;

2. Ποιος φέρει την ευθύνη για τα λάθη που έχουν γίνει, και πώς μπορούν να αποκατασταθούν οι αρνητικές συνέπειες των λαθών αυτών;

3. Τίθεται για την Επιτροπή θέμα αναθεώρησης των μνημονίων συνεννόησης; Αν ναι, υπό ποιες προϋποθέσεις και συνθήκες μπορεί ή επιβάλλεται να γίνει κάτι τέτοιο;

Απάντηση
(30 Ιουνίου 2014)

Παρόλο που το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει την έκθεση που συνέταξε το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο εξ ιδίας πρωτοβουλίας για το ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Επιτροπής, της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας (ΕΚΤ) και του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου (ΔΝΤ) όσον αφορά τις χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής, δεν είναι αρμοδιότητα του Συμβουλίου να κρίνει τη συμμόρφωση ενεργειών ή πράξεων άλλων οργάνων προς τις Συνθήκες της ΕΕ.

Το Συμβούλιο δεν είναι υπογράφων μέρος στο Μνημόνιο Συνεννόησης στο οποίο αναφέρεται ο αξιότιμος κύριος Βουλευτής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003662/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Revision of the MoUs

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) Parliament: 'Demands that the Troika take stock of the current debate on fiscal multipliers and consider revision of the MoUs on the basis of the latest empirical results'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does any reliable evidence exist that errors have occurred in respect of the fiscal multipliers during the implementation of the MoUs? If so, how and to what extent have these errors affected the euro area programme countries?

2. Who bears responsibility for these errors, and how can the damage they have caused be repaired?

3. Can it envisage a revision of the MoUs? If so, under what conditions and circumstances can or, indeed, must this occur?

Reply
(30 June 2014)

While the Council has not discussed the European Parliament's own-initiative report on the role and operations of the Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in euro area programme countries, it is not for the Council to assess whether actions or acts of other institutions comply with the EU Treaties.

The Council is not party to the Memoranda of Understanding referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003666/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανεπαρκής δημοκρατική λογοδοσία της Τρόικας

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «επισημαίνει τη γενικά ανεπαρκή δημοκρατική λογοδοσία της Τρόικας σε εθνικό επίπεδο στις χώρες που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ασπάζεται την πιο πάνω άποψη του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Αν όντως υπάρχει θέμα ανεπαρκούς λογοδοσίας της Τρόικας, τι χρειάζεται να γίνει για να διορθωθούν τα πράγματα;

3. Προτίθεται το Συμβούλιο να αναλάβει κάποια πρωτοβουλία προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν συζήτησε την έκθεση πρωτοβουλίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις ενέργειες της Επιτροπής, της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας και του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003666/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Insufficient democratic accountability of the Troika

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) Parliament: 'Points to the generally weak democratic accountability of the Troika in programme countries at national level.'

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it agree with the above view expressed by Parliament?

2. If the Troika is indeed insufficiently accountable, what needs to be done to remedy the situation?

3. Will it take some initiative to this end?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed the European Parliament's own-initiative report on the role and operations of the Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund in euro area programme countries.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003668/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Βιωσιμότητα του χρέους στα κράτη μέλη του Μνημονίου

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου, για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής, (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο, «ζητεί από την Τρόικα να εκπονήσει νέες εκτιμήσεις βιωσιμότητας του χρέους και, επειγόντως, να αντιμετωπίσει την ανάγκη μείωσης του βάρους του ελληνικού δημόσιου χρέους, … υπενθυμίζει ότι υφίστανται διάφορες δυνατότητες για μια αναδιάρθρωση του χρέους … στις οποίες συμπεριλαμβάνονται η ανταλλαγή ομολόγων, η επέκταση της λήξης των ομολόγων και η μείωση των τοκομεριδίων».

Παρόμοια κατάσταση επικρατεί και στην Κύπρο, όπου το δημόσιο χρέος αυξάνεται με ραγδαίους ρυθμούς, ενώ αν αρθούν οι περιορισμοί στη διακίνηση κεφαλαίων, το τραπεζικό σύστημα της χώρας κινδυνεύει με μαζικές εκροές κεφαλαίων και πλήρη κατάρρευση.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Συμμερίζεται την εκτίμηση του Κοινοβουλίου ότι απαιτείται επανεκτίμηση της βιωσιμότητας του χρέους σε χώρες του Μνημονίου;

2. Κρίνει ότι οι προτεινόμενες από το Κοινοβούλιο εναλλακτικές μορφές αναδιάρθρωσης χρέους (ανταλλαγή ομολόγων, επέκταση λήξης ομολόγων και μείωση των τοκομεριδίων) θα μπορούσαν να βοηθήσουν την Κύπρο και την Ελλάδα να αντιμετωπίσουν τα προβλήματά τους;

3. Οι πιο πάνω εναλλακτικές μορφές αναδιάρθρωσης χρέους λήφθηκαν υπόψη στις αποφάσεις για την Κύπρο; Αν ναι, γιατί απορρίφθηκαν και αντ' αυτών χρησιμοποιήθηκε η μέθοδος του κουρέματος καταθέσεων;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

Στις 10 Μαΐου 2010 το Συμβούλιο απηύθυνε την απόφαση 2010/320/ΕΕ ([1]) στην Ελλάδα, αναγνωρίζοντας ότι «είναι εξαιρετικά επείγον για την Ελλάδα να αναλάβει αποφασιστική δράση, σε πρωτοφανή κλίμακα, για το έλλειμμα και τους άλλους παράγοντες που συμβάλλουν στην αύξηση του χρέους, προκειμένου να αντιστραφεί η αύξηση του λόγου του χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ και να μπορέσει η χώρα να επανέλθει το συντομότερο δυνατόν σε χρηματοδότηση μέσω των αγορών».

Στις 27 Νοεμβρίου 2012 η Ευρωομάδα δήλωσε ότι τα κράτη μέλη της Ευρωζώνης θα ήταν πρόθυμα να εξετάσουν πρωτοβουλίες όπως είναι η παράταση της λήξης των διμερών δανείων και των δανείων του ΕΤΧΣ κατά 15 έτη και η αναβολή της καταβολής των τόκων των δανείων του ΕΤΧΣ κατά 10 έτη, με στόχο να επανέλθει το δημόσιο χρέος της Ελλάδας σε βιώσιμη πορεία. Θα εξεταζόντουσαν επίσης περαιτέρω μέτρα και βοήθεια, όπως μεταξύ άλλων μικρότερη συγχρηματοδότηση των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων και/ή περαιτέρω μείωση επιτοκίων του ελληνικού μηχανισμού δανειοδότησης, εάν χρειασθεί, για την επίτευξη μιας περισσότερο αξιόπιστης και βιώσιμης μείωσης του λόγου του ελληνικού χρέους προς ΑΕγχΠ, όταν η Ελλάδα επιτύχει ένα ετήσιο πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα, υπό την προϋπόθεση πλήρους υλοποίησης όλων των όρων που περιέχονται στο πρόγραμμα, προκειμένου να εξασφαλισθεί ότι, μέχρι το πέρας του προγράμματος του ΔΝΤ το 2016, η Ελλάδα θα μπορέσει να φθάσει σε έναν λόγο χρέους προς ΑΕγχΠ, το 2016 σε 175% και το 2020 σε 124% του ΑΕγχΠ, το δε 2022 σε έναν λόγο χρέους προς ΑΕγχΠ σημαντικά χαμηλότερο του 110% ([2]).

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα δήλωσε ότι το πρόγραμμα οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Κύπρο θα αφορά τις εξαιρετικές προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζει η χώρα και θα αποκαταστήσει την βιωσιμότητα του χρηματοοικονομικού τομέα, προκειμένου να επαναφέρει την βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη και τα υγιή δημόσια οικονομικά κατά τα επόμενα έτη. Η Ευρωομάδα εξέφρασε την ικανοποίησή της για τα σχέδια αναδιάρθρωσης του χρηματοοικονομικού τομέα όπως διευκρινίζεται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσής της. Τα εν λόγω μέτρα θα διαμορφώσουν την βάση για την αποκατάσταση της βιωσιμότητας του δημοσιονομικού τομέα. Συγκεκριμένα, διαφύλαξαν όλες τις καταθέσεις κάτω των 100 000 ευρώ σύμφωνα με τις αρχές της ΕΕ. Το αποτέλεσμα, μαζί με τις αποφάσεις που έλαβε η Κύπρος, είναι ένα πλήρως χρηματοδοτούμενο πρόγραμμα το οποίο θα επιτρέψει να παραμείνει το δημόσιο χρέος της Κύπρου σε βιώσιμη πορεία.

Την πρόοδο της εφαρμογής του προγράμματος παρακολουθούν ομάδες της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, της ΕΚΤ και του ΔΝΤ, με τριμηνιαίες επιθεωρήσεις του προγράμματος. Οι δημοσιονομικές επιδόσεις αξιολογούνται μέσω ενημερωμένων προβλέψεων και κριτηρίων ποσοτικής απόδοσης. Η συμμόρφωση προς τα μέτρα όσον αφορά τον χρηματοοικονομικό τομέα και άλλες μακροοικονομικές και διαρθρωτικές πολιτικές αξιολογείται σε σύγκριση με τις προϋποθέσεις και το χρονοδιάγραμμα του Μνημονίου συμφωνίας ([3]).

([1]) Απόφαση του Συμβουλίου της 10ης Μαΐου 2010 απευθυνόμενη προς την Ελλάδα με σκοπό την ενίσχυση και εμβάθυνση της δημοσιονομικής εποπτείας, διά της οποίας ειδοποιείται η Ελλάδα να λάβει τα μέτρα μείωσης του ελλείμματος που κρίνονται αναγκαία για την αντιμετώπιση της κατάστασης υπερβολικού ελλείμματος (ΕΕ L 145 της 11.6.2010).
([2]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf
([3]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf

Στις 10 Μαρτίου 2014, η Ευρωομάδα σημείωσε με ικανοποίηση τα σημάδια βελτίωσης της μακροοικονομικής σταθερότητας με την πρόοδο της εφαρμογής του προγράμματος. Εξέφρασε δε την ικανοποίησή της για τα μέτρα που έχουν ήδη ληφθεί για την είσοδο στο δεύτερο στάδιο της βαθμιαίας χαλάρωσης των περιορισμών για τις ροές πληρωμών που δηλούνται με την χαλάρωση των περιορισμών για τις καταθέσεις προθεσμίας, σύμφωνα με τον βασισμένο σε ορόσημα χάρτη πορείας της κυβέρνησης. Θα χρειασθεί να συνεχισθούν οι προσπάθειες για την αποτελεσματική εφαρμογή των προγραμματισμένων μεταρρυθμίσεων στον χρηματοοικονομικό τομέα, μεταξύ άλλων στη διαχείριση των καθυστερήσεων, καθώς και των διαρθρωτικών μέτρων που συμφωνήθηκαν στο Μνημόνιο Συμφωνίας ([4]).

([4]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/518370/20140310-eg-statement-cy.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003668/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Debt sustainability in the euro area programme countries

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) Parliament: 'Asks the Troika to proceed to new debt sustainability assessments and, as a matter of urgency, to address the need to reduce the Greek public debt burden …; recalls that a number of possibilities exist for a debt restructuring, … including bond swapping, extending bond maturities and reducing coupons'.

A similar situation exists in Cyprus, where the public debt is soaring, and if restrictions on movement of capital are lifted, the country's banking system will be at risk from massive capital outflows and face total collapse.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it agree with Parliament's view that a re-assessment of the debt sustainability is needed in the euro area programme countries?

2. Does it consider that the alternative forms of debt restructuring proposed by Parliament (bond swapping, extending bond maturities and reducing coupons) could help Cyprus and Greece to tackle their problems?

3. Were the abovementioned alternative forms of debt restructuring taken into account in decisions regarding Cyprus? If so, why were they rejected and why was a 'haircut' made on deposits instead?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

On 10 May 2010 the Council addressed Decision 2010/320/EU ([1]) to Greece, acknowledging that there was an extremely urgent need for Greece to take decisive action, on an unprecedented scale, on its deficit and on other factors contributing to the increase in debt, in order to reverse the increase in the debt-to-GDP ratio and allow it to return as soon as possible to market financing.

On 27 November 2012 the Eurogroup stated that euro area Member States would be prepared to consider initiatives including extending the maturities of the bilateral and EFSF loans by 15 years and deferring the interest payments on the EFSF loans by 10 years, with the aim of bringing Greece's public debt back on a sustainable path. Further measures and assistance would also be considered, including *inter alia* lower co-financing in structural funds and/or further interest rate reduction of the Greek Loan Facility, if necessary, for achieving a further credible and sustainable reduction of Greek debt-to-GDP ratio, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme, in order to ensure that by the end of the IMF programme in 2016 Greece can reach a debt-to-GDP ratio in that year of 175% and in 2020 of 124% of GDP, and in 2022 a debt-to-GDP ratio substantially lower than 110% ([2]).

On 25 March 2013, the Eurogroup stated that the economic adjustment programme for Cyprus would address the exceptional challenges that the country was facing and restore the viability of the financial sector, with a view to restoring sustainable growth and sound public finances over the coming years. The Eurogroup welcomed the plans for restructuring the financial sector as specified in the annex to its statement. These measures were to form the basis for restoring the viability of the financial sector. In particular, they safeguarded all deposits below EUR 100 000 in accordance with EU principles. Together with the decisions taken by Cyprus, this results in a fully financed programme which will allow Cyprus' public debt to remain on a sustainable path.

Progress in programme implementation is monitored by the European Commission, ECB and IMF teams through quarterly programme reviews. Fiscal performance is assessed through updated forecasts and quantitative performance criteria. Compliance with measures regarding the financial sector and other macroeconomic and structural policies is assessed against the conditionality and timetable in the memorandum of understanding ([3]).

([1]) Council Decision of 10.5.2010 addressed to Greece with a view to reinforcing and deepening fiscal surveillance and giving notice to Greece to take measures for the deficit reduction judged necessary to remedy the situation of excessive deficit (OJ L 145 of 11.6.2010).
([2]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/367646/eurogroup_statement_greece_27_november_2012.pdf
([3]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf

On 10 March 2014, the Eurogroup noted with satisfaction the signs of improvement in macro-financial stability as programme implementation had progressed. It welcomed the steps already taken to enter the second stage of the gradual relaxation of restrictions on payment flows signified by the relaxation of restrictions on fixed-term deposits, in line with the government's milestone-based roadmap. Efforts will need to continue to effectively implement the planned reforms in the financial sector, including in arrears management and the structural measures agreed in the memorandum of understanding ([4]).

([4]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/518370/20140310-eg-statement-cy.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003670/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Ulteriori chiarimenti sulla classificazione della stearina di palma in relazione alle direttive 2009/28/CE e 2008/98/CE

Con riferimento all'interrogazione E-011487/2013, presentata in data 8/10/2013, e in data 3.12.2013 Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione europea ha risposto che «la stearina di palma soddisfa secondo la Commissione la definizione di biomassa di cui alla direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili (direttiva 2009/28/CE) in quanto è un prodotto agricolo biodegradabile e di origine biologica. La stearina di palma è un solido e è riscaldata per agevolarne il trasporto e l'ulteriore trasformazione nei prodotti derivati. Nella misura in cui non è l'oggetto principale del processo che la produce e soddisfa le condizioni indicate all'articolo 5, paragrafo 1, lettere da a) a d) della direttiva 2009/28/CE, la stearina di palma è un sottoprodotto».

Può la Commissione confermare che la stearina di palma (NC 15119019) deve comunque considerarsi una biomassa solida e non un bioliquido anche nel caso in cui venga utilizzata in forma liquida, in relazione alla direttiva 2009/28/CE e dalle discipline nazionali di attuazione per la produzione di energia elettrica?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(29 aprile 2014)

La direttiva sulle energie rinnovabili definisce i bioliquidi come combustibili liquidi utilizzati per scopi energetici diversi dal trasporto, compresi l'energia elettrica, il riscaldamento e il raffreddamento, prodotti a partire dalla biomassa, senza specificare ulteriori condizioni per la definizione dello stato della materia di un determinato combustibile. La Commissione ritiene che lo stato della materia di un combustibile debba essere considerato in funzione delle condizioni climatiche normali nel luogo del suo utilizzo. Pertanto, il combustibile ottenuto dalla stearina di palma può essere considerato un bioliquido solo se si presenta allo stato liquido nelle condizioni climatiche locali.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003670/14
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Further information on the definition of palm stearin in the context of Directives 2009/28/EC and 2008/98/EC

In the Commission's answer of 3 December 2013 to Written Question E-011487/2013, tabled on 8 October 2013, Günther Oettinger states that 'in the view of the Commission palm stearin fulfils the definition of biomass used in the Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) as it is an agricultural product which is both biodegradable and from biological origin. Palm stearin is a solid and is warmed up to allow for easier transport and further processing into downstream products. In so far as palm stearin is not the primary aim of its production process and it fulfils the conditions set out in Article 5(1)(a) to (d) of Directive 2008/98/EC, it is a by-product'.

Can the Commission confirm that, in the context of Directive 2009/28/EC and national implementing rules on electricity generation, palm stearin (NC 15119019) must be regarded as solid biomass, and not as a bioliquid, even if it is used in liquid form?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(29 April 2014)

The Renewable Energy Directive defines bioliquids as liquid fuels used for energy purposes other than for transport, including electricity and heating and cooling, produced from biomass, without specifying further conditions to define the state of matter of a specific fuel. In the view of the Commission, the state of matter of a fuel should be considered under the normal climatic conditions at the location of its use. Therefore, fuel made from palm stearin should be regarded as a bioliquid only if it is liquid under the local climatic conditions.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003672/14
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Consecuencias medioambientales de los despidos en Vaersa (Comunidad Valenciana)

El expediente de regulación de empleo del que ha sido objeto la empresa Vaersa, dependiente de la Generalitat Valenciana, constituye un verdadero desmantelamiento de los servicios públicos en materia medioambiental.

La legislación de la Unión Europea en este ámbito obliga a los Estados miembros a cumplir una serie de requisitos. Por ello, el despido del 80 % de los técnicos de Vaersa que se encargaban de la gestión de los espacios naturales protegidos pone en grave peligro el desempeño de labores tan importantes como la gestión de parques naturales declarados lugares de importancia comunitaria (LIC) y Zona de Especial Protección para las Aves (ZEPA) e integrados en la Red Natura 2000.

Dos ejemplos emblemáticos de estos recortes son el Parque Natural de las Hoces del Cabriel y el Parque Natural de la Serra Calderona. El primero, que abarca una extensión de 40 000 hectáreas, va a pasar de tener tres técnicos de gestión a uno solo; el Parque Natural de la Serra Calderona, con 18 000 hectáreas y cientos de miles de visitantes al año, dispone de un solo técnico de gestión de Vaersa.

A la vista de estos datos, es de esperar que la falta de personal produzca un auténtico descalabro en la protección de los hábitats y de las especies en vías de desaparición en dichos espacios naturales y tenga como consecuencia la degradación de sus ecosistemas.

¿No considera la Comisión que, en el caso de Vaersa, los recortes de personal amenazan seriamente el cumplimiento de las exigencias y los compromisos europeos en materia de protección de espacios naturales por parte de la Comunidad Valenciana?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de mayo de 2014)

Los Parques Naturales de las Hoces del Cabriel y de la Serra Calderona han sido designados por España para formar parte de la red Natura 2000 en el marco de la Directiva de Hábitats ([1]) y de la Directiva de Aves ([2]). De conformidad con el artículo 6 de la primera de esas dos Directivas, las autoridades españolas deben establecer las medidas de conservación necesarias y evitar el deterioro de los hábitats naturales, así como cualquier alteración que repercuta en las especies que hayan motivado la designación de esas zonas. Es verdad que para garantizar tales objetivos deben ponerse los recursos financieros y humanos adecuados. Pero las medidas concretas de gestión son competencia nacional, y las alternativas que pueden barajarse para esa gestión son diferentes siempre que se cumplan plenamente los requisitos de las dos Directivas citadas.

([1]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 de mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directiva 2009/147/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 30 de noviembre de 2009, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres (DO L 20 de 26.1.2010), que codifica la Directiva 79/409/CEE del Consejo, de 2 de abril de 1979, relativa a la conservación de las aves silvestres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003672/14
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Environmental consequences of the Vaersa dismissals (Valencian Regional Community)

The downsizing of the Valencian state-owned company Vaersa is nothing short of a dismantling of environmental public services.

EU legislation in this field requires Member States to fulfil a number of conditions. The dismissal of 80% of Vaersa's protected natural area supervisors poses a serious risk to essential work such as the management of natural parks in the Natura 2000 network which have been identified as Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPA).

Two of the clearest examples of these cutbacks can be found at the Hoces del Cabriel and Serra Calderona Natural Parks. Hoces del Cabriel, which covers 40 000 hectares, is set to see its quota of Vaersa management supervisors reduced from three to just one, while Serra Calderona, which spans 18 000 hectares and receives hundreds of thousands of visitors per year, has only one.

The resulting staff shortages will most likely have an extremely detrimental effect on efforts to protect habitats and endangered species in these natural areas, leading to the deterioration of their ecosystems.

Does the Commission not think that the Vaersa staff cutbacks are seriously threatening the Valencian Regional Community's ability to comply with EU requirements and commitments to protect natural areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The sites Hoces del Cabriel and Serra Calderona have been designated by Spain for the Natura 2000 network under the provisions of the Habitats ([1]) and Birds Directives ([2]). In accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, the Spanish authorities must establish the necessary conservation measures and avoid the deterioration of natural habitats and the disturbance to the species for which these areas have been designated. To this aim, adequate financial and human resources need to be guaranteed. However, the detailed arrangements for the management of these sites are a matter of national competence and different management alternatives may be considered, provided that they enable full compliance with the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

([1]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).
([2]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 20/7, 26.1.2010) that codifies the Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003673/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Seguimiento de la pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000261/2014 sobre Gmail y Google +

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-000261/2014, la Comisión decía: «De acuerdo con la información disponible, parece existir ya la posibilidad de evitar el tratamiento, en concreto modificando la configuración en Gmail.»

También recordaba que: «Si bien por el momento la Comisión no tiene ningún indicio de que la conducta de Google en este ámbito infrinja las normas de competencia, está efectuando un seguimiento muy estrecho del curso de los acontecimientos en el mercado.»

Teniendo en cuenta las propuestas de la Comisión para arreglar los problemas de abuso de mercado de Google en otros ámbitos:

¿No cree la Comisión que si el servicio Gmail puede conectarse con la red social de Google (Google +), también debería existir la posibilidad de tener algún enlace directo con otras redes sociales para evitar abusos de mercado?

¿No cree que la opción de Gmail para no dar los datos propios a Google debería tener una visibilidad parecida a la que tienen los «enlaces rivales» en su buscador?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de junio de 2014)

El hecho de que existan preocupaciones por la competencia en un mercado o conjunto de mercados no significa, en sí mismo, que existan necesariamente preocupaciones similares en otros mercados. Como se indicaba en la respuesta a la pregunta anterior sobre esta cuestión, un conjunto de datos jurídicos, económicos y fácticos debe evaluarse en cada caso. Para constatar una infracción del Derecho de la competencia de la UE e imponer la correspondiente medida correctora, la Comisión ha de llevar a cabo una investigación sobre las presuntas irregularidades.

En la actualidad, habida cuenta de que, sobre la base de la información disponible, la Comisión no tiene indicios de que la conducta de Google en la zona especificada en la pregunta podría infringir las normas de competencia de la UE, no está estudiando ninguna solución del tipo descrito en la pregunta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003673/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Follow up to Written Question E-000261 on Gmail and Google+

In its reply to Question E-000261/2014, the Commission said that 'on the basis of the available information it seems that a certain form of opt-out is already provided, namely by changing the settings in Gmail'.

It also noted that 'whilst the Commission does not have indications at this stage that Google's conduct in the area specified violates EU competition rules, it closely monitors market developments'.

In view of the Commission's proposals to resolve problems of market abuse by Google in other spheres, could it answer the following:

Does it not consider that if Gmail is able to connect with Google's social network (Google+), the possibility should also exist for it to be able to directly connect with other social networks, to prevent market abuse?

Does it not consider that the option provided by Gmail to withhold personal data from Google should have the same level of visibility that is given by 'rival' links on their browser?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The fact that there are competition concerns in one market or set of markets does not in itself mean that there will necessarily be concerns of a similar type in other markets. As outlined in the reply to the previous question on this issue, a range of legal, economic and factual details has to be assessed in each case. In order to find an infringement of EU competition law and impose any associated remedy, the Commission needs to undertake an investigation on the specific alleged abuse.

At present, given that on the basis of the available information, the Commission does not have indications that Google's conduct in the area specified by the question may violate the EU competition rules, it is currently not considering solutions of the type outlined in the question.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003674/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Armenia y la Unión europea

Como consecuencia al anuncio de la decisión de la Unión de formalizar un acuerdo de asociación con Ucrania, el Primer Ministro de Armenia Tigran Sargsyan ha manifestado que esa decisión abre una «ventana de oportunidad» para Armenia de cara a su relación con la Unión.

¿Está la Alta Representante de acuerdo con lo manifestado por el Sr. Sargsyan?

¿Tendrá la propuesta de acuerdo de asociación con Ucrania alguna influencia en la política de la Unión hacia los países caucásicos?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2014)

El Acuerdo de Asociación, con su zona de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo (ZLCAP), se negoció entre la UE y Armenia como un instrumento jurídico único. La decisión de Armenia de adherirse a la Unión Aduanera significa que ya no se podía ejecutar la zona de libre comercio amplia y profunda; en consecuencia, todo el instrumento jurídico ya no se pudo ni rubricar ni firmar.

Sin embargo, en la Cumbre de la Asociación Oriental celebrada en Vilna el pasado mes de noviembre, la UE y Armenia acordaron desarrollar y consolidar su cooperación en todos los ámbitos de interés mutuo en el marco de la Asociación Oriental, así como reexaminar la base de sus relaciones.

El Acuerdo de Asociación con Ucrania refleja la política de la UE de asociación política e integración económica con los países de la Asociación Oriental, incluidos los países del Cáucaso Meridional.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003674/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Armenia and the EU

Following the announcement of the EU's decision to enter into a formal association agreement with Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Armenia, Tigran Sargsyan, responded by saying that a 'window of opportunity' was opening up for Armenia as regards its relations with the EU.

Does the High Representative agree with Mr Sargsyan's view?

Will the proposed association agreement with Ukraine have any bearing on EU policy towards the countries of the South Caucasus?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Association Agreement with its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) was negotiated between the EU and Armenia as a single legal instrument. Armenia's decision to join the Customs Union meant that the DCFTA element could no longer be implemented; this meant that the entire legal instrument could no longer be initialled or signed.

However, at the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius last November, the EU and Armenia agreed to further develop and strengthen their cooperation in all areas of mutual interest within the Eastern Partnership and to revisit the basis for their relations.

The Association Agreement with Ukraine reflects the EU's policy of political association and economic integration with the countries of the Eastern Partnership, including the countries of the South Caucasus.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003675/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Unión Europea e Irak

La Unión Europea ha desarrollado en los últimos años respecto a su cooperación con Irak el denominado *Joint Strategy Paper* 2011-2013. Entre los objetivos de la estrategia que en él se recoge se encuentran: el desarrollo de un Irak democrático, estable y seguro basado en el respeto de los derechos humanos y las libertades fundamentales; el establecimiento de una economía de mercado abierta, estable, sostenible y diversificada que siente las bases para un desarrollo económico y social justo, y la integración económica y política de Irak en la región y el mundo.

¿Ha evaluado la Comisión los resultados de la estrategia?

¿Considera la Comisión que se han cumplido los objetivos de la misma? ¿Hasta qué punto?

¿Considera la Comisión que la situación económica, política y social ha mejorado respecto a 2010?

¿Qué estrategia desarrollará la Comisión en relación con el futuro de la cooperación con Irak?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de mayo de 2014)

La UE no puede evaluar todavía la estrategia 2011-2013, ya que su ejecución está aún en curso. Tan pronto como se hayan ejecutado todos los programas, estos serán objeto de seguimiento y evaluación.

La situación de Irak ha evolucionado en los últimos años. Aunque la economía está creciendo gracias a las enormes reservas energéticas del país y a la importante reducción de la carga de su deuda, la prestación de servicios sigue estando a la zaga. La situación de la seguridad se deteriora y el enfrentamiento sectario es un elemento predominante, habiéndose registrado más de 8 000 víctimas mortales de atentados en 2013. Los retos sociales, especialmente en lo que respecta a la integración con independencia de la identidad étnica y religiosa siguen sin abordarse plenamente y la UE ha pedido al Gobierno de Irak en unas recientes conclusiones del Consejo que se comprometa en este sentido, contribuyendo así a la estabilidad del país.

Por consiguiente, la UE está convencida de la necesidad de seguir apoyando los esfuerzos iraquíes en su proceso de transición democrática.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003675/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: The EU and Iraq

Over the last few years the EU has developed the Joint Strategy Paper 2011-2013 regarding its cooperation with Iraq. The strategy objectives outlined in the paper include the development of a democratic, stable and secure Iraq based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the establishment of an open, stable, sustainable and diversified market economy as a foundation for equitable economic and social development and Iraq's economic and political integration, regionally and internationally.

Has the Commission assessed the results of this strategy?

Does the Commission consider that these goals have been achieved? To what extent?

Does the Commission consider that the economic, political and social situation in Iraq has improved since 2010?

What strategy will the Commission unroll in the future in terms of cooperation with Iraq?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The EU cannot assess yet the 2011-2013 strategy, because its implementation is still on-going. As soon as all the programmes will have been implemented they will be monitored and evaluated.

The situation in Iraq has been evolving in the last years. While the economy is expanding due to the huge energy reserves that Iraq holds, and the significant reduction of its debt load, the provision of services is still lagging behind. The security situation is deteriorating and sectarian divide is a predominant element, with attacks claiming more than 8,000 lives in 2013. Social challenges, especially in terms of inclusiveness regardless of ethnic and religious identity remain to be fully addressed and the EU has called on the Government of Iraq in the recent Council Conclusions to engage in doing so, thus contributing to the stability of Iraq.

The EU is therefore convinced of the need to continue to support Iraq's efforts in its democratic transition.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003676/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Nueva Ley sobre la familia en Irak

El Gobierno de Irak ha enviado recientemente al Parlamento un proyecto de Ley sobre la familia en el cual se propone, entre otras cosas, rebajar la edad mínima del matrimonio para las mujeres a los nueve años ([1]). Este y otros preceptos del proyecto de ley, como la obligación para las mujeres de mantener relaciones sexuales siempre que sus esposos lo deseen, suponen un ataque directo a la dignidad y los derechos fundamentales de las mujeres; incluso, el rebaje de la edad legal para contraer matrimonio se puede considerar como una puerta abierta a la pedofilia.

El proyecto de ley viola tanto la Convención sobre la Eliminación de Todas las Formas de Discriminación contra la Mujer como la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño, ambas ratificadas por Irak.

La Unión Europea ha estado desarrollando diferentes programas de ayuda y desarrollo en dicho país desde 2004, como los plasmados en el documento estratégico conjunto para Irak (2011-2013). En este último documento se mencionaba literalmente entre los objetivos el siguiente: «the development of a secure, stable and democratic Iraq where human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected».

¿Cómo valora la Comisión el proyecto de Ley sobre la familia enviado por el Gobierno de Irak al Parlamento para su discusión y aprobación?

¿Piensa la Comisión actuar frente al Gobierno de Irak y demandarle el cumplimiento de las convenciones arriba señaladas y la reformulación del proyecto de Ley sobre la familia para adecuarlo a esas convenciones?

¿Cómo afectaría a las relaciones entre la Unión e Irak la posible aprobación del proyecto de Ley sobre la familia manteniendo la formulación actual ? ¿Y a los programas de ayuda?

Respuesta conjunta de la Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de mayo de 2014)

La UE es muy consciente del debate en torno a la propuesta de proyecto de ley sobre el estatuto personal (*Jaafari*) y sigue de cerca el asunto. Sin embargo, de acuerdo con la última información disponible, parece muy poco probable que el proyecto de ley sea aprobado por el Consejo de Representantes, dado que la iniciativa parece proceder de un pequeño grupo y no contará con la mayoría necesaria de votos en el Parlamento.

La UE expresa a las autoridades iraquíes sistemáticamente su preocupación por los derechos humanos, tanto públicamente como a través de los canales diplomáticos. Los derechos humanos, incluidos los de las mujeres y las cuestiones de igualdad entre sexos, se abordan también en el contexto del Subcomité sobre Derechos Humanos y Democracia del Acuerdo de Asociación y Cooperación UE-Irak, en cuya primera reunión, celebrada en noviembre de 2013, se plantearon dudas específicas sobre el susodicho proyecto de ley.

La UE mantiene su compromiso en pro del fomento y el respeto de los derechos de la mujer en Irak a través de sus programas de cooperación al desarrollo.

([1]) http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140319/abci-irak-matrimonio-ninnas-201403181723.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003870/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(28 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Proposta di legge a danno delle donne in Iraq

Una proposta di legge del parlamento iracheno, che andrà al voto il prossimo 30 aprile, prevede la legalizzazione del matrimonio per le ragazzine dai 9 anni in su: la sua approvazione causerebbe una forte riduzione dei diritti delle donne in tema di genitorialità, divorzio ed eredità. Conosciuta come «Jaafari Personal Status Law», essa prevede la legalizzazione del matrimonio forzato e, in generale, darebbe al marito un ruolo preponderante sulle scelte e sui diritti della moglie, come ad esempio la custodia paterna automatica dei figli di età superiore ai due anni in caso di divorzio.

Diverse ONG, ma anche alcuni politici iracheni, hanno criticato la proposta, definendola un balzo nel passato per l'intero paese, ma alcuni analisti ritengono che in realtà questa sia innanzitutto una mossa della parte sciita per affermare la propria identità politica in vista delle prossime elezioni.

In merito a tale proposta di legge, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dei fatti descritti;

2. intende entrare in contatto con le autorità irachene per ottenere maggiori dettagli al riguardo e invitarle a tenere conto del rispetto dei diritti umani e della parità di genere.

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004274/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(7 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Iraq e «Jaafari personal status law»: nuova bozza di legge in violazione dei diritti delle donne e dei minori

Una nuova bozza di legge rischia di peggiorare ulteriormente la situazione dei diritti delle donne e dei minori in Iraq: la proposta legislativa potrebbe legalizzare lo stupro familiare e permettere agli uomini di sposare bambine di 9 anni:

La «Jaafari personal status law», dal nome del sesto Imam ai cui precetti si ispirerebbe, è attualmente in discussione in parlamento e riguarderebbe la popolazione sciita del paese (circa il 55 per cento).

Il decreto, che si richiama alla sharia (legge coranica), afferma che le ragazze raggiungono la pubertà a 9 anni (come se fosse definibile un'età uguale per tutte!) e le considera perciò pronte al matrimonio. Una sua approvazione porterebbe alla legalizzazione dello stupro familiare, all'abbassamento dell'età matrimoniale a 9 anni per le femmine e 15 per i maschi e a numerose restrizioni che ridurrebbero le donne in un vero e proprio stato di segregazione. Queste ultime, infatti, non potrebbero più uscire di casa senza il permesso del marito, non otterrebbero la custodia dei figli in caso di divorzio e sarebbero obbligate ad avere rapporti sessuali con i propri coniugi.

Finora la legislazione irachena, per quanto riguarda il codice di famiglia, è considerata una delle più progressiste del mondo arabo, ma dall'arrivo al potere dei partiti religiosi sciiti dopo la caduta di Saddam nel 2003 la situazione sta peggiorando soprattutto dal punto di vista dei diritti delle donne.

Considerato che:

— la legge violerebbe due leggi internazionali, quali la Convenzione sull'eliminazione di tutte le forme di discriminazione contro le donne (CEDAW) del 1986 e la Convenzione sui diritti dei bambini del 1994, entrambe ratificate dallo stato iracheno;

— le Nazioni Unite hanno dichiarato di continuare a sostenere ogni sforzo del governo e della società civile per rafforzare il ruolo della donna nel paese;

— il Parlamento europeo ha approvato di recente una risoluzione sulla situazione in Iraq (P7_TA(2014)0171);

— le elezioni politiche in Iraq sono previste per il 30 aprile 2014;

— i principali obiettivi della cooperazione dell'UE con l'Iraq devono ritenersi respinti di fronte alla violazione dei diritti umani;

Si chiede alla Commissione:

Quali azioni intende intraprendere affinché tale iniziativa legislativa non venga approvata definitivamente dal Parlamento iracheno?

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

L'UE è al corrente dei dibattiti sul disegno di legge Jaafari relativo allo status personale e segue attentamente la questione. Stando alle informazioni più recenti, tuttavia, è improbabile che il disegno di legge sia approvato dal Consiglio dei rappresentanti, poiché l'iniziativa sembra provenire da un piccolo gruppo e non otterrà la maggioranza necessaria in parlamento.

L'UE ha sollevato più volte le questioni relative ai diritti umani con le autorità irachene, sia pubblicamente che attraverso i canali diplomatici. Sui diritti umani, compresi i diritti delle donne e le questioni di genere, si discute anche nel sottocomitato Democrazia e diritti umani dell'accordo di partenariato e di cooperazione (APC) UE-Iraq, che alla prima riunione tenutasi a novembre 2013 ha espresso preoccupazioni specifiche riguardo al disegno di legge Jaafari.

L'UE continuerà a impegnarsi per la promozione e il rispetto dei diritti delle donne in Iraq attraverso i suoi programmi di cooperazione allo sviluppo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003676/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: New family law in Iraq

The Iraqi Government has recently sent the country's Parliament a family bill including a proposal to lower the minimum age for marriage — for women — to 9 ([1]). This and other provisions of the bill, for example the obligation for women to have sex whenever their husbands want, are an outrage against women's dignity and fundamental rights; indeed, the lowering of the age at which a person can legally marry could be viewed as opening the door to paedophilia.

The bill violates the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, both of which have been ratified by Iraq.

The EU has, since 2004, been pursuing various assistance and development programmes in Iraq, for instance those set out in the Joint Strategy Paper 2011-2013, which spelled out the goals to be attained, including this: 'the development of a secure, stable and democratic Iraq where human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected'.

What does the Commission think about the family bill which the Iraqi Government has sent to the national Parliament to be debated and adopted?

Will the Commission approach the Iraqi Government and call on it to comply with the abovementioned conventions and redraft the family bill to bring it into line with them?

How would EU-Iraq relations be affected if the family bill were to be adopted as it now stands? What would happen to the assistance programmes?

Question for written answer E-003870/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(28 March 2014)

Subject: Bill discriminating against women in Iraq

A bill going through the Iraqi Parliament, which will be put to the vote on 30 April, provides for the legalisation of marriage for girls aged nine and over and would, if it were passed, significantly restrict women's rights in matters of parenting, divorce and inheritance. Known as the Jaafari Personal Status Law, the bill provides for the legalisation of forced marriage and would, in general, give husbands predominance over their wife's choices and rights, including automatic paternal custody of children over the age of two in the event of divorce.

Various NGOs, as well as a handful of Iraqi politicians, have criticised the bill, saying it is a backward step for the whole country. However, some analysts think this is primarily a move by Shias to assert their political identity with an eye to the forthcoming elections.

Can the Commission clarify the following in connection with this bill:

1. Is it aware of the facts outlined above?

2. Is it planning to make contact with the Iraqi authorities to obtain more details and to ask them to consider the need to respect human rights and gender equality?

([1]) http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140319/abci-irak-matrimonio-ninnas-201403181723.html

Question for written answer E-004274/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(7 April 2014)

Subject: Iraq and the 'Jaafari personal status law' — a new bill that infringes the rights of women and children

A new bill is likely to further worsen the situation of the rights of women and children in Iraq. The legislative proposal could legalise family rape and allow men to marry girls as young as 9.

The 'Jaafari personal status law', named after the sixth Imam upon whose precepts it is based, is currently being discussed in parliament and would concern the Shiite population of the country (some 55% of the total).

The decree, which refers to sharia (Islamic law), states that since girls reach puberty at the age of nine (as if it were the same age for everyone!), they are to be considered ready for marriage at that age. Adoption of this law would lead to the legalisation of family rape, the lowering of the legal age for marriage — to nine for girls and 15 for boys — and numerous restrictions that would reduce women to a state of segregation. In fact, they would be unable to leave the house without their husband's permission, they would not obtain custody of their children in case of divorce and would be forced to have sexual relations with their spouses.

Up to now, Iraqi legislation, as regards family law, has been considered one of the most progressive in the Arab world, but since the Shiite religious parties came to power after the fall of Saddam in 2003, the situation has been getting worse, especially as far as women's rights are concerned.

Given that:

— the law would infringe two international laws such as the 1986 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the 1994 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which have both been ratified by the Iraqi Government;

— the United Nations have declared that they will continue to support all efforts of the government and civil society to strengthen the role of women in the country;

— the European Parliament has recently adopted a resolution on the situation in Iraq(P7_TA (2014) 0171);

— the general election in Iraq is due to be held on 30 April 2014;

— the main aims of EU cooperation with Iraq must be deemed to have been rejected given this infringement of human rights;

can the Commission say what steps it will take to ensure that this bill is not definitively adopted by the Iraqi Parliament?

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

The EU is well aware of the reported debates around the proposed Jaafari draft law on Personal Status and follows the issue closely. However, according to the latest information, it looks highly unlikely that the bill will be approved by the Council of Representatives, since the initiative seems to be coming from a small group and will not get the necessary majority of votes in the parliament.

The EU consistently voices its concerns at human rights to the Iraqi authorities, both publicly and through diplomatic channels. Human rights, including women's rights and gender issues are also discussed in the context of the sub-committee on Democracy and Human Rights of the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), the first meeting of which, in November 2013, raised specific concerns on the Jaafari draft law.

The EU remains committed in the promotion and respect of women's rights in Iraq through its development cooperation programmes.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003679/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Situación en Ucrania y fractura hidráulica

Los últimos acontecimientos acaecidos en Ucrania y la importante dependencia de Europa respecto del gas ruso han llevado a medios de comunicación tanto en Europa como en los EE.UU. a especular con la posibilidad de que la Unión importe gas natural procedente de los yacimientos de fractura hidráulica.

¿Tiene la Comisión alguna opinión sobre esa propuesta?

¿Se ha planteado considerar dentro de la Asociación Transatlántica de Comercio e Inversión la importación de gas de esquisto?

¿Tiene la Comisión diseñada alguna estrategia para reducir la dependencia de la Unión del gas ruso?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión considera que los recursos energéticos deben comercializarse sin ninguna restricción a la exportación y que un incremento del suministro mundial de gas natural licuado (GNL), también del procedente de los Estados Unidos, beneficiaría a Europa y a otros socios estratégicos. Su posición en las negociaciones sobre la Asociación Transatlántica de Comercio e Inversión (ATCI) es que en el futuro deben garantizarse las exportaciones libres e incondicionales de gas natural a la UE mediante disposiciones jurídicamente vinculantes de la ATCI.

A petición del Consejo Europeo, en la reunión celebrada en marzo de 2014, la Comisión Europea ha llevado a cabo recientemente y publicado un estudio a fondo de la seguridad energética de la UE, así como un plan para la reducción de la dependencia energética de la Unión Europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003679/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Situation in Ukraine and fracking

Recent events in Ukraine and Europe's significant dependence on Russian gas have led to media speculation in Europe and the United States about the possibility of the EU importing natural gas produced by fracking.

Does the Commission have an opinion on this proposal?

Has any proposal been made to consider the importation of shale gas within the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership?

Has the Commission drawn up any strategy to reduce EU dependence on Russian gas?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission believes that energy resources should be traded without any export restrictions and that additional global supplies of liquefied natural gas (LNG), including from the United States, would benefit Europe and other strategic partners. Its position in the negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is that free and unconditional exports of natural gas to the EU should be guaranteed in the future by legally binding provisions in the TTIP.

At the request of the European Council meeting in March 2014, the European Commission has recently conducted and published an in-depth study of the EU's energy security, as well as a plan for the reduction of the EU's energy dependence.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003680/14
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(26. marts 2014)

Om: Håndtering af digital arv

Jeg stillede den 20. december 2013 Kommissionen et spørgsmål om håndtering af digital arv, men da jeg ikke har fået et tilfredsstillende svar, spørger jeg igen.

Vi gennemgår en enorm kulturel udvikling. Borgerne går fra at have fysiske dokumenter og varer til, at de nu findes i elektronisk form. Det udfordrer vaner, juridiske begreber og folks levevis. Der er brug for et særligt fokus på konsekvenserne af digitaliseringen, når folk dør.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er derfor:

Planlægger Kommissionen i særlig grad at informere borgerne om deres rettigheder og pligter, som konsekvens af den kommende lovgivning?

Ønsker Kommissionen at tilføje juridiske undtagelser om beskyttelse i forbindelse med arvesager etc., eller vil dette være op til den enkelte selv at tage hånd om?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Viviane Reding
(19. juni 2014)

Kommissionens holdning til digital arv, som fremgår af svaret på den parlamentariske forespørgsel e-007232/2012, er stadig gældende: De ændringer, der foreslås i EU's databeskyttelsesreform, vil give folk bedre kontrol med deres personlige data og er udformet med henblik på at sikre beskyttelse af personoplysninger.

Hvad angår Deres andet spørgsmål vedrørende løbende ikke-lovgivningsmæssige aktiviteter og oplysning, kan jeg oplyse, at Kommissionen kører adskillige oplysningsprogrammer vedrørende brug af digitale platforme, bl.a. ved hjælp af programmet om grundlæggende rettigheder og unionsborgerskab ([1]). Den finansierer adskillige forskningsprogrammer inden for digital bevaring ([2]). Teknisk set er spørgsmål vedrørende digital bevaring ofte knyttet til spørgsmål om digital arv.

Kommissionen støtter ligeledes en informationsportal vedrørende arvesager i Europa, der har til formål at klarlægge arverelaterede spørgsmål ([3]), men den beskæftiger sig dog ikke specifikt med spørgsmål vedrørende digital arv.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_frc_ag_en.htm
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/creativity/digital-preservation_en.html
([3]) http://www.notaries-of-europe.eu/index.php?pageID=3140

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003680/14
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Management of digital inheritance

On 23 December 2013 I asked the Commission a question on the management of digital inheritance, but as I did not receive a satisfactory answer, I am asking again.

We are going through a period of immense cultural change. People are going over from having physical documents and goods to having these things in electronic form. This is a challenge to our habits, legal concepts and way of life. There is a need to focus in particular on the consequences of digitalisation when people die.

I should therefore like to ask the following questions:

Does the Commission have plans to inform people in particular about their rights and duties as a result of the forthcoming legislation?

Does the Commission wish to add legal exemptions concerning protection in connection with inheritance cases etc., or will it be up to the individuals involved to deal with this themselves?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

The position of the Commission on digital inheritance laid down in its reply to parliamentary Question E-007232/2012 remains valid: the changes proposed in the EU data protection reform will give people more control over their personal data and are designed to make sure that people's personal data is protected.

As regards your additional question on on-going non-legislative activities and awareness raising, the Commission is running various awareness raising programmes on the use of digital platforms, *inter alia* through the fundamental rights and citizenship programme ([1]). It funds many research programmes in the field of digital preservation ([2]). Digital preservation issues are technically speaking often linked to digital inheritance issues.

The Commission also supports an information portal on successions in Europe, aiming at clarifying succession issues ([3]), however this information portal does not specifically deal with digital inheritance issues.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_frc_ag_en.htm
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ict/creativity/digital-preservation_en.html
([3]) http://www.notaries-of-europe.eu/index.php?pageID=3140

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003681/14
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(26. marts 2014)

Om: EU's hårfarvestrategi

Jeg har tidligere stillet spørgsmål om allergifremkaldende hårfarver, men da jeg ikke har fået et tilfredsstillende svar, forsøger jeg igen.

Under EU's hårfarvestrategi er en række hårfarver blevet undersøgt af EU's Videnskabelige Komité (SCCS). Nogle farver, for eksempel p-phenylenediamine (PPD) og toluene-2,5-diamine, som indgår i de såkaldte oxidative hårfarver, er blevet reguleret, men ikke forbudt, selvom de er sensibiliserende.

Derimod kan SCCS's konklusioner tolkes, som om der lægges op til et forbud mod hårfarvestofferne Indigofera Tinctoria, Acid Black 1 og Acid Orange 7. Disse tre stoffer indgår i de to alternative hårfarvemetoder: plantefarver og de såkaldte New Generation hårfarver. Disse to farvemetoder er baseret på andre kemiske fremgangsmåder end de oxidative farver og indeholder derfor ikke de samme problematiske stoffer.

Med de to alternative hårfarvemetoder kan mange allergiramte frisører fortsætte i branchen, og mange allergiramte kunder kan fortsætte med at farve hår. Der er ikke registreret kliniske tilfælde af allergi overfor New Generation hårfarver på raske mennesker.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er derfor:

Vil Kommissionen overveje at medtage det faktum, at de skader, som SCCS har beskrevet for de tre farver (Indigofera Tinctoria, Acid Black 1 og Acid Orange 7) tilsyneladende ikke genfindes i den praktiske hverdag uden for laboratorierne?

Hvad er Kommissionens svar på, at EU's hårfarvestrategi risikerer at være uden alternative farver til allergikere? Det er stik imod det egentlige formål med strategien.

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Neven Mimica
(5. juni 2014)

Hovedformålet med sikkerhedsvurderinger fra Den Videnskabelige Komité for Forbrugersikkerhed (VKF) er at fastlægge den koncentration af den enkelte kosmetiske bestanddel, som anses for sikker for forbrugerne. Sikkerhedsevaluering er baseret på betingelserne for anvendelse af det enkelte kosmetiske produkt som angivet af fabrikanten og tager dermed højde for virkelighedens verden. Vurderingsprocessen er beskrevet i retningslinjerne ([1]).

For så vidt angår Acid Black 1, konkluderes det i den reviderede udtalelse fra VKF af 12. december 2013 ([2]), som inddrog de oplysninger, der kom frem under de offentlige høringer, at anvendelse heraf i ikke-oxidative hårfarveformler med en koncentration på hovedet på højst 0,5 % ikke udgør nogen risiko for forbrugersundheden. Denne udtalelse vil komme til at indgå i et lovforslag om at tillade Acid Black 1 efter samtykke fra medlemsstaternes repræsentanter. Sikkerhedsevalueringen for Acid Orange 7 pågår stadig; for så vidt angår Indigofera Tinctoria vil Kommissionen kontakte ansøgeren med henblik på supplerende sikkerhedsoplysninger.

Kommissionens hårfarvestrategi fokuserer på forbrugersikkerhed og fremmer samtidig europæisk vækst og sikrer kvalitetslevestandarder for forbrugerne. Den kontinuerlige proces har ført til identifikation af 97 forskellige hårfarver, der er fundet sikre af VKF, og som tillades anvendt i hårfarvningsmidler. Denne strategi vil give et stigende antal forbrugere mulighed for at vælge den bedst egnede hårfarve på markedet, der ikke forårsager nogen specifik allergisk reaktion.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_s_006.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_124.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003681/14
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EU strategy on hair dye

A while ago I asked a question about allergenic hair dyes, but as I have not received a satisfactory answer, I am trying again.

As part of the EU's hair dye strategy a number of dyes were investigated by the EU's Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS). Some dyes, such as p-phenylenediamine (PPD) and toluene-2.5 diamine, which are used in so-called oxidative hair dyes, have been regulated but not banned, even when they have sensitising properties.

On the other hand the findings of the SCCS could be interpreted as envisaging a ban on the hair dyes Indigofera Tinctoria, Acid Black 1 and Acid Orange 7. These three substances are to be found in the two 'alternative' hair dyeing methods, namely plant dyes and 'New Generation' dyes. These two dyeing methods are based on different chemical processes from oxidative dyes and therefore do not contain the same substances giving cause for concern.

These two alternative hair dyeing methods enable many hairdressers with allergies to continue working, and many customers with allergies to continue having their hair dyed. There are no registered clinical cases of allergic reactions to New Generation hair dyes in healthy people.

I should therefore like to ask:

Will the Commission consider taking account of the fact that the harmful effects described by the SCCS in connection with these three dyes (Indigofera Tinctoria, Acid Black 1 and Acid Orange 7) probably do not occur in practical everyday use outside laboratories?

What is the Commission's answer to the argument that the EU's hair dye strategy risks not providing alternative dyes for people with allergies? That would be contrary to the real aims of the strategy.

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The main goal of the safety assessments by the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) is to define the concentration of each cosmetic ingredient that is considered safe for consumers. The safety evaluation is based on the conditions of use of each cosmetic product as declared by the manufacturer and therefore takes into account real life conditions. The process of the assessment is described in the Note of Guidance ([1]).

For the Acid Black 1, the revised opinion of the SCCS of 12 December 2013 ([2]), which took into account the data provided during the public consultations, has concluded that its use in non-oxidative hair dye formulations with a concentration on head of maximum 0.5% does not pose a risk to the health of the consumer. This opinion will be translated into a legislative proposal to authorise Acid Black 1 upon favourable vote by the Member States representatives. The safety evaluation for Acid Orange 7 is still undergoing whilst for Indigofera Tinctoria, the Commission will contact the applicant for additional safety data.

The Commission strategy for hair dyes is focused on consumer safety while promoting European growth and ensuring high quality life standards for consumers. This continuous process has resulted in the identification of 97 different hair dyes found safe by the SCCS and that have been authorised for use in hair dye products. This strategy will allow an increasing number of consumers the possibility of choosing the most suitable hair dye on the market that does not cause any specific allergic reaction.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_s_006.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/scientific_committees/consumer_safety/docs/sccs_o_124.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003682/14
til Kommissionen
Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(26. marts 2014)

Om: Bedre udnyttelse af civilsamfundsorganisationer i ESF- og Regionalfondsprojekter

Frem til budgetperioden 2007-2013 var det et krav, at der i ESF-støttede projekter var fokus på det transnationale element. Men i den netop overståede budgetperiode forsvandt dette fokus, og der skulle nu søges ESF-midler hos to forskellige myndigheder i to forskellige lande for at få midler til et grænseoverskridende projekt. Da der ingen garanti var for, at begge landes ESF-myndigheder ville bevilge penge, skabte det en hindring for en række projekter, hvorfor udviklingen af arbejdsmarkedet i grænseregioner blev mindsket. På denne baggrund bedes Kommissionen besvare følgende spørgsmål vedr. hhv. ESF og Regionalfonden:

1. Hvordan vil Kommissionen sikre, at det transnationale element styrkes i ESF i den nye budgetperiode 2014-2020, således at det store potentiale, der ligger i et integreret arbejdsmarked i nabolandes grænseregioner, kan udnyttes?

2. Hvordan vil Kommissionen sikre, at civilsamfundsorganisationer kan spille en langt større rolle i forbindelse med projekter støttet af Regionalfonden i budgetperioden 2014-2012, og vil Kommissionen i forlængelse heraf åbne op for, at projektholdere kan stille med medfinansiering, som ikke blot er offentlig?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af László Andor
(22. maj 2014)

1. For programmeringsperioden 2014-20 er det fastlagt i artikel 10 i ESF-forordningen ([1]), at medlemsstaterne skal støtte tværnationalt samarbejde enten inden for en »fælles ramme« med støtte fra en europæisk platform på grundlag af fælles temaer, som foreslås af Kommissionen og godkendes af ESF-udvalget, eller på en fleksibel måde om emner efter eget valg, eller ved en kombination af disse to muligheder. Det forventes, at tværnationalt samarbejde vil bidrage til at identificere god praksis, effektive politiske strategier og gennemførelsesordninger i medlemsstaterne i tilgift til udbredelse og overførsel af fungerende eksempler på en omkostnings- og tidsbesparende måde. Alle berørte parter vil blive inddraget på et tidligt tidspunkt.

2. I henhold til artikel 5 i forordningen om fælles bestemmelser for ESI-fondene ([2]) skal medlemsstaterne inddrage relevante partnere, herunder organer, der repræsenterer civilsamfundet, i forbindelse med udarbejdelsen og gennemførelsen af partnerskabsaftaler og programmer. De nærmere regler for inddragelse af partnere i indkaldelser af forslag er fastsat i den delegerede forordning om den europæiske adfærdskodeks for partnerskab ([3]), som indeholder en ramme bestående af de vigtigste principper og god praksis, ved hjælp af hvilke medlemsstaterne skal organisere partnerskabet under hensyntagen til nærheds- og proportionalitetsprincippet.

Kommissionen går ind for, at den private sektor deltager i finansieringen af projekter navnlig via en øget anvendelse af finansielle instrumenter. Desuden giver bestemmelserne i forordningen om struktur- og investeringsfondene medlemsstaterne mulighed for at gøre brug af bidrag i naturalier, hvilket kan lette medfinansieringen fra andre ressourcer end offentlige midler.

([1]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1304/2013 af 17. december 2013 om Den Europæiske Socialfond og om ophævelse af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1081/2006 (EUT L 347 af 20.12.2013, s. 470).

([2]) Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EU) nr. 1303/2013 af 17. december 2013 om fælles bestemmelser for Den Europæiske Fond for Regionaludvikling, Den Europæiske Socialfond, Samhørighedsfonden, Den Europæiske Landbrugsfond for Udvikling af Landdistrikterne og Den Europæiske Hav- og Fiskerifond og om generelle bestemmelser for Den Europæiske Fond for Regionaludvikling, Den Europæiske Socialfond, Samhørighedsfonden og Den Europæiske Hav- og Fiskerifond og om ophævelse af Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1083/2006 (EUT L 347 af 20.12.2013, s. 320).

([3]) Kommissionens delegerede forordning (EU) nr. 240/2014 af 7. januar 2014 om den europæiske adfærdskodeks for partnerskab inden for rammerne af de europæiske struktur- og investeringsfonde (EUT L 74 af 14.3.2014, s. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003682/14
to the Commission
Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Making better use of civil society organisations in European Social Fund (ESF) and Regional Fund projects

Until the 2007-2013 budget period, ESF-supported projects had to focus on the transnational element. During the period, however, that focus ended, and ESF applications had to go to two different authorities in two different countries in order to obtain funding for a cross-border project. The fact that there was no guarantee that both countries' ESF authorities would authorise the funding hampered a number of projects, slowing down labour market development in border regions. Accordingly:

1. How will the Commission make sure that the transnational element is strengthened in the ESF in the new budget period, from 2014 to 2020, so that the considerable potential of an integrated labour market in border regions can be exploited?

2. How will the Commission make sure that civil society organisations can play a much greater role in connection with projects supported by the Regional Fund in the 2014-2020 budget period, and, by extension, will the Commission make it possible for project holders to make use of co-financing from sources other than simply the public sector?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

1. In the 2014-20 programming period, Article 10 of ESF Regulation ([1]) provides that the Member States are to support transnational cooperation either within a 'common framework', supported by an EU-level platform, on the basis of common themes suggested by the Commission and endorsed by the ESF Committee, or in a flexible way on themes of their choosing, or through a combination of the two options. It is expected that transnational cooperation will contribute to identifying good practice, effective policy strategies and delivery systems in the Member States, in addition to the dissemination and transfer of working examples in a cost and time-effective manner. All stakeholders will be involved at an early stage.

2. Article 5 of the Common Provisions Regulation for the ESI Funds ([2]) requires Member States to involve relevant partners, including bodies representing civil society in the preparation and implementation of Partnership Agreements and programmes. Detailed rules as regards involvement of partners in calls for proposals are set out in the Delegated Regulation on the European code of conduct on partnership ([3]), which provides a framework consisting of main principles and good practices within which Member States, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, should organise the partnership .

The Commission favours involvement of the private sector in the financing of projects in particular via an increased use of financial instruments. In addition, the Structural and Investment Funds y regulations provide for Member States the possibility to make use of in-kind contributions which can facilitate co-financing coming from resources other than public resources.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 470.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 320.

([3]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds, OJ L 74, 14.3.2014, p. 1.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003683/14
an die Kommission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Roadmap gegen Homophobie

Am 4. Februar 2014 verabschiedete das EU-Parlament den Bericht mit der Geschäftszahl A7-0009/2014. Darin wird die EU-Kommission aufgefordert eine Roadmap gegen Homophobie auszuarbeiten. Aus dem höchst umstrittenen Bericht ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Mit welchen Mitteln und in welcher Höhe wurde die dem Bericht zugrunde liegende Studie über Homophobie aus EU-Haushalten finanziert (Anmerkung: es geht um die von der Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte „FRA" durchgeführte und am 17. Mai 2013 veröffentlichte EU-weite LGBT-Umfrage)?

2. Wie viele personelle und finanzielle Mittel wird die Kommission zur Erstellung der Roadmap gegen Homophobie aufbringen und in welcher Form wird die Kommission die Ergebnisse präsentieren?

3. Welche Methoden wird die Kommission nutzen, um die geplante Roadmap gegen Homophobie rechtlich und politisch durchzusetzen?

Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(26. Mai 2014)

In Artikel 16 der Verordnung des Rates Nr. 168/2007 zur Errichtung einer Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte (FRA) heißt es, dass die Agentur ihre Aufgaben in völliger Unabhängigkeit wahrnimmt. Zu diesen Aufgaben gehört auch die Durchführung von Studien ([1]) wie die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten genannte Erhebung. Die Artikel 20 und 21 der Verordnung des Rates Nr. 168/2007 regeln die Aufstellung und die Ausführung des Haushaltsplans der FRA. Die EU-weite LGBT-Umfrage gehörte zum Jahreshaushalt 2013.

Die Kommission möchte daran erinnern, dass sie seit mehr als einem Jahrzehnt ([2]) aktiv die Bekämpfung von Diskriminierung aufgrund der sexuellen Ausrichtung und der geschlechtlichen Identität betreibt, und bekräftigt ihr Engagement zur Bekämpfung von Homophobie und Transphobie im Rahmen der ihr durch die Verträge übertragenen Befugnisse.

([1]) Siehe Artikel 4 Buchstaben c und f der Verordnung des Rates Nr. 168/2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/orientation/index_de.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003683/14
to the Commission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Roadmap against homophobia

On 4 February 2014, Parliament adopted report A7-0009/2014 calling on the Commission to draw up a roadmap against homophobia. That highly controversial report prompts the following questions:

1. What EU budget funding was used, and what was the amount, to produce the study on which the report is based, i.e. the EU-wide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, which was published on 17 May 2013?

2. What level of human and financial resources will the Commission commit in order to produce the roadmap, and in what form will it present the results?

3. How will the Commission enforce the planned roadmap in law and secure political support for it?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

Article 16 of the Council Regulation No 168/2007 establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) stipulates that the Agency shall fulfil its tasks in complete independence. These tasks include the production of studies ([1]) such as the survey referred to by the Honourable Member. Articles 20 and 21 of Council Regulation No 168/2007 regulate the drawing up and implementation of the budget of the FRA. The 'EU LGBT survey' was included in the 2013 annual budget.

The Commission recalls that it has been actively fighting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity for more than a decade ([2]) and reiterates its commitment to combat homophobia and transphobia to the full extent possible based on the powers conferred to it by the Treaties.

([1]) See Article 4 (c) and (f) of Council Regulation No 168/2007.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/orientation/index_en.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003684/14
an die Kommission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Mitgliedschaft der AKP in der EVP

Die türkische Regierungspartei APK unter Recep Tayyip Erdoğan ist Mitglied als Beobachter in der EVP.

1. Auf welcher Rechtsgrundlage dürfen europäische Parteien nichteuropäischen Parteien bzw. solchen aus Nicht-EU-Ländern die Mitgliedschaft anbieten?

2. Erhält die AKP finanzielle oder personelle Unterstützung aus den Mitteln der Europäischen Union? Welcher Prozentsatz der europäischen Parteienförderung fließt der AKP oder anderen politischen Gruppierungen in der Türkei zu?

Antwort von Herrn Barroso im Namen der Kommission
(19. Mai 2014)

Zuständig für die Umsetzung der Verordnung (EG) Nr. 2004/2003 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates über die Regelungen für die politischen Parteien auf europäischer Ebene und ihre Finanzierung, zuletzt geändert durch Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1524/2007, ist das Europäische Parlament. Daher bittet die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten, seine Fragen an die zuständigen Stellen des Europäischen Parlaments zu richten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003684/14
to the Commission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Membership status of AKP within the EPP

The Turkish governing AKP party led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan has observer status within the EPP.

1. On what legal basis are European parties authorised to offer membership to parties from non-European or non-EU countries?

2. Is the AKP receiving EU assistance in terms of funding or staff? What percentage of European party funding is received by the AKP or other political groups in Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The European Parliament is responsible for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 2004/2003 governing political parties at European level and the rules regarding their funding, last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1524/2007. Therefore the Commission invites the Honourable Member to address his questions to the competent bodies within the European Parliament.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003685/14
an die Kommission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Maßnahmen zur Trinkwasserprivatisierung

Die EU-Kommission hat bei ihrer Reaktion auf die europäische Bürgerinitiative „Right2Water" im Ergebnis darauf hingewiesen, dass sie wegen Unzuständigkeit keine entsprechenden Rechtsakte vorschlagen könne. Dazu heißt es unter anderem: Die Kommission achtet weiterhin darauf, dass die AEUV-Regeln, nach denen die EU zu Neutralität gegenüber den einzelstaatlichen Entscheidungen über die Eigentumsordnung für Wasserversorgungsunternehmen verpflichtet ist (vgl. Mitteilung der Kommission KOM(2014)0177).

In Griechenland aber beharrt die Troika, in der auch die Kommission maßgeblich zur Willensbildung beiträgt, auf der Privatisierung der Wasserwerke in Athen und Thessaloniki.

1. Wie sind die Troika-Maßnahmen mit der angeblichen Neutralität der Kommission hinsichtlich der Eigentumsordnung (Artikel 345 AEUV: Die Verträge lassen die Eigentumsordnung in den verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten unberührt) vereinbar?

2. Welche Anstrengungen wird es seitens der Kommission im Bereich der Entwicklungspolitik geben, um international den Ausverkauf des Wassers zu verhindern?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(30. Mai 2014)

In Übereinstimmung mit dem Grundsatz der Neutralität gegenüber der Eigentumsordnung (Artikel 345 AEUV) setzt sich die EU nicht grundsätzlich für Privatisierungen ein. Die Entscheidung darüber, welche öffentlichen Vermögenswerte oder Unternehmen in welchem Umfang und in welcher zeitliche Abfolge privatisiert werden, bleibt allein den Mitgliedstaaten überlassen, die dabei zu berücksichtigen haben, vor welchen Sachzwängen sie stehen und welche Ziele sie sich gesetzt haben.

In den Mitgliedstaaten, die Finanzhilfen in Anspruch nehmen, entscheiden allein die nationalen Behörden darüber, welche Vermögenswerte ins Privatisierungsprogramm aufgenommen werden.

Bei den Diskussionen im Rahmen des Programms geht es in erster Linie um den Gesamtfinanzierungsbedarf sowie die entsprechenden Privatisierungserlöse. Über das Privatisierungskonzept und die zu privatisierenden Vermögenswerte jedoch entscheidet allein der betreffende Mitgliedstaat.

EU-weit wurden die verschiedensten Modelle für die öffentliche oder privatwirtschaftliche Wasserversorgung erprobt.

Die Einrichtung einer Regulierungsbehörde und die Schaffung geeigneter Rahmenbedingungen für funktionierende Märkte sind aus Sicht der Kommission entscheidende Voraussetzungen für den Erfolg jedes dieser Modelle, damit die Interessen der Verbraucher geschützt und ökologische Werte gewahrt werden können.

Was die internationalen Handelsverhandlungen betrifft, so wird die Kommission weiterhin aktiv mit ihren Handelspartnern zusammenarbeiten, damit die auf nationaler, regionaler und kommunaler Ebene in Bezug auf die Organisation von Wasserdienstleistungen getroffenen Entscheidungen respektiert und angemessen geschützt werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003685/14
to the Commission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Privatisation of drinking water

In its response to the European Citizens' Initiative 'Right2Water' the Commission stated that it is not competent to propose legislative acts dealing with this matter. It added that it would continue to ensure full compliance with Treaty rules requiring the EU to remain neutral in relation to national decisions governing the ownership regime for water undertakings (see Commission communication COM(2014)0177).

In Greece, however, the Troika, whose policies the Commission helps to set, is continuing to insist on the privatisation of the waterworks in Athens and Thessaloniki.

1. How can the measures advocated by the Troika be reconciled with the Commission's supposed neutrality on the issue of the ownership regime for water undertakings (Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: 'The Treaties shall in no way prejudice the rules in Member States governing the system of property ownership.')?

2. What development policy measures will the Commission take in order to prevent any sell-off of water-supply services on an international scale?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

In line with the Treaty principle of neutrality with regard to the system of property ownership (TFEU Art. 345), the EU does not have a general policy favouring privatisation. The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised remains entirely with the Member States, holding into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves.

The assets included in the privatisation programme of the Member States benefitting from financial assistance are the exclusive result of the national authorities' decision.

Discussions under the programme are focusing on the overall financing needs, including privatisation receipts, but the design of the privatisation programme and the choice of assets remain entirely with the Member State concerned.

EU-wide experience offers a variety of different public or private property models for water utilities.

The Commission considers that the creation of a regulatory authority and an appropriate market functioning environment are crucial prerequisites for guaranteeing the success of any of these models to protect consumers' interests and maintain environmental values.

As regards international trade negotiations, the Commission will continue to actively engage with trade partners to ensure that national, regional and local choices on how to run water services are respected and properly safeguarded.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003686/14
an die Kommission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: European Network on Religion and Belief

Das European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) beteiligt sich laut eigenen Angaben an formellen und informellen Konsultationen zu Rechtsakten der EU.

Mitglieder des ENORB sind teilweise Organisationen mit einem islamistischen Hintergrund: Cordoba Foundation (Anas Al-Tikriti fungiert dort als Geschäftsführer und ist der Sohn eines irakischen Muslimbruders), Föderation islamischer Organisationen in Europa als Ableger der Muslimbruderschaft und Islamic Forum of Europe.

1. Bei welchen Konsultationen der Generaldirektion Justiz oder anderer Generaldirektionen wurden eine oder mehrere oder alle genannten Organisationen zu Rate gezogen und in welcher Intensität?

2. Welche Impulse und/oder welche konkreten Auswirkungen hat dies für die Arbeit der Kommission gehabt?

3. Welche Mittel sind einer, mehreren oder allen genannten Organisation direkt oder indirekt zugutegekommen?

4. Konnten eine, mehrere oder alle genannten Organisationen Räumlichkeiten der EU-Institutionen nutzen?

5. Nach welchen Kriterien prüft die Kommission die Organisationen, bevor sie ihnen Konsultationsstatus gewährt?

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004047/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1. April 2014)

Betrifft: Einfluss eines islamistischen Vereins (ENORB) auf die Europäischen Institutionen

Seit Mai 2012 ist ein Verein namens ENORB (European Network on Religion and Belief) in Brüssel aktiv. Bei mehreren Veranstaltungen im EU-Parlament übernahmen teils hochrangige Vertreter des EU-Parlaments wie Vizepräsident Dr. László Surján (EVP) die Patronanz oder wurden als Ehrengäste eingebunden. ENORB gibt auf seiner Homepage an ([1]), in Konsultationen der Kommission eingebunden zu sein. („ENORB is being consulted by the European Commission [DG Justice] on the current 10 year review of implementation of the Equalities Directives, which cover Religion and Belief …").

Zwei von sieben institutionellen Mitgliedern von ENORB sind in Großbritannien als islamisch-extremistische Gruppierungen bekannt, die Teile der internationalen Muslimbruderschaft sind und z. B. die Einführung der Scharia in Europa fordern. Diese beiden Institutionen sind die Cordoba Foundation und das Islamic Forum of Europe. Beide werden — wie zahlreichen britischen Medienberichten zu entnehmen ist — über Parteigrenzen hinweg als problematisch eingestuft. Leiter der Cordoba Foundation ist Anas al Tikriti, eine bekannte Führungsfigur der Muslimbruderschaft in Großbritannien, der schon mehrfach für undurchsichtige Lobbying-Aktivitäten kritisiert wurde ([2]).

War oder ist der Kommission der islamisch-extremistische Hintergrund von Mitgliedern von ENORB bekannt?

1. Wurden jemals Mittel der Kommission aufgewendet, um ENORB finanziell zu unterstützen, und wenn ja, wie viel wurde aufgewendet?

2. Auf welche Art und Weise wurde ENORB in Arbeitsprozesse der Kommission eingebunden?

3. Konnte ENORB jemals Infrastruktur (z. B. Räumlichkeiten) der Kommission nutzen und wenn ja, zu welchen Konditionen?

4. Kam es jemals zu Treffen zwischen Kommissionsvertretern und Repräsentanten von ENORB, insbesondere Mitgliedern des Islamic Forum Europe oder der Cordoba Foundation, wenn ja, zu welchen Themen und wer war bei den Treffen anwesend?

([1]) www.enorb.eu
([2]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10470307/Terror-link-group-met-in-parliament.html

Gemeinsame Antwort von Frau Reding im Namen der Kommission
(19. Juni 2014)

Das European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) gehört zu den zahlreichen nichtstaatlichen Organisationen, die mit der Kommission in Kontakt stehen, wenn es um Fragen aus ihrem Interessengebiet geht ([3]), und ihr, wenn sie möchten, Positionspapiere zusenden können. Die Kommission hat keinen Kontakt zu den ENORB-Mitgliedsorganisationen und verfügt über keine spezifischen Informationen über sie. Nach Kenntnis der Kommission ist ENORB ein Dachnetzwerk aus unterschiedlichen religiösen und nichtkonfessionellen Organisationen und vertritt keine bestimmte Religion oder Weltanschauung.

Die Kommission hat ENORB weder finanziert noch ist ihr bekannt, dass ihre Infrastruktur von ENORB genutzt worden wäre. Nach Kenntnis der Kommission hat ENORB Veranstaltungen im Europäischen Parlament organisiert, zu denen Dienststellen der Kommission eingeladen wurden.

([3]) So konsultierte beispielsweise die GD Justiz der Europäischen Kommission im Jahr 2012 ENORB als eine von vielen interessierten Organisationen im Rahmen der Vorbereitung des Durchführungsberichts über die Anwendung der Richtlinien 2000/43/EG zur Gleichbehandlung ohne Unterschied der Rasse und 2000/78/EG zur Gleichbehandlung in Beschäftigung und Beruf, KOM(2014)2 endg. vom 17.1.2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004509/14
aan de Commissie
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(10 april 2014)

Betreft: European Network on Religion and Belief

Onderhoudt het European Network on Religion and Belief (Europees Netwerk voor godsdienst en geloof — ENORB) formele of informele betrekkingen met DG Justitie?

Speelt ENORB meer bepaald een raadgevende rol bij DG Justitie in verband met de tienjaarlijkse beoordeling van de uitvoering van de richtlijnen inzake gelijkheid?

Zo ja, hoe zijn die betrekkingen tot stand gekomen?

Wie heeft ENORB bij DG Justitie geïntroduceerd?

Krijgen ENORB of leden daarvan dankzij deze betrekkingen toegang tot EU-instellingen?

Zo ja, welke soort toegang? Wanneer is die verleend? Aan wie is toegang verleend?

Welke controles heeft de EU alvorens die betrekkingen aan te gaan, verricht om ENORB en/of zijn leden door te lichten teneinde zich ervan te vergewissen dat zij geen risico vormen voor het welzijn en de veiligheid van het personeel en de gebouwen van de EU? Zo ja, wat was het resultaat van die controles?

Welke controles heeft de EU alvorens die betrekkingen aan te gaan, verricht om ENORB en/of zijn leden door te lichten teneinde zich ervan te vergewissen dat zij geschikt zijn om deel te nemen aan een degelijke raadpleging of enige andere activiteit in verband met de EU? Zo ja, wat was het resultaat van die controles?

Is er uit EU-bronnen financiering verstrekt aan een organisatie met de naam European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB)?

Zo ja, kan de Commissie laten weten op welke datums deze financiering is verstrekt, om welke bedragen het gaat en voor welk doel deze financiering bestemd was?

Als er financiering is verstrekt, wie heeft daar dan toestemming voor gegeven?

Antwoord van mevrouw Reding namens de Commissie
(19 juni 2014)

Het European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) is één van vele ngo's die met de Commissie in contact staan over kwesties die tot hun interessegebied behoren ([1]) en haar, indien gewenst, standpuntnota's kunnen toesturen. De Commissie heeft geen contact opgenomen met organisaties die lid zijn van het ENORB en heeft geen nadere gegevens over die organisaties. Voor zover de Commissie weet, is het ENORB een overkoepelend netwerk van verschillende religieuze en niet-confessionele organisaties, en vertegenwoordigt het niet één specifieke godsdienst of overtuiging.

De Commissie heeft geen financiering verstrekt aan het ENORB en heeft er geen weet van dat deze organisatie de infrastructuur van de Commissie zou hebben gebruikt. Voor zover de Commissie weet, heeft het ENORB evenementen georganiseerd in het Europees Parlement en werden diensten van de Commissie voor deze evenementen uitgenodigd.

([1]) In 2012 heeft het directoraat-generaal Justitie van de Europese Commissie bijvoorbeeld verschillende geïnteresseerde organisaties geconsulteerd, waaronder het ENORB. Het onderwerp van deze consultaties was de voorbereiding van het uitvoeringsverslag over de toepassing van Richtlijn 2000/43/EG houdende toepassing van het beginsel van gelijke behandeling van personen ongeacht ras of etnische afstamming en Richtlijn 2000/78/EG tot instelling van een algemeen kader voor gelijke behandeling in arbeid en beroep, COM(2014) 2 final van 17 januari 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003686/14
to the Commission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: European Network on Religion and Belief

According to information provided by itself, the European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) participates in formal and informal consultations on EU legislation.

Some members of ENORB are organisations with an Islamic background: the Cordoba Foundation (run by Anas Al-Tikriti, the son of an Iraqi member of the Muslim Brotherhood), the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe — an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood — and the Islamic Forum of Europe.

1. In what consultations organised by DG Justice or other directorates-general have one or more, or all, of these organisations been consulted, and with what intensity?

2. What input has this provided and/or what specific impact has it had on the Commission's work?

3. What resources have directly or indirectly been channelled to one, more than one, or all of the above organisations?

4. Have one, more than one, or all of the above organisations been permitted to use premises of the EU institutions?

5. In the light of what criteria does the Commission assess the organisations before granting them consultative status?

Question for written answer E-004047/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(1 April 2014)

Subject: Influence of an Islamist organisation (ENORB) on the European institutions

An organisation called ENORB (European Network on Religion and Belief) has been operating in Brussels since May 2012. A number of events at Parliament have seen in some cases high-ranking representatives of this institution, such as Vice-President Dr László Surján (PPE), give the organisation their patronage or appear as guests of honour. On its homepage [1], ENORB claims to be working in consultation with the Commission. ('ENORB is being consulted by the European Commission [DG Justice] on the current 10 year review of implementation of the Equalities Directives, which cover Religion and Belief…')

Two of the seven institutional members of ENORB have been identified in the United Kingdom as Islamic extremist groups belonging to the international Muslim Brotherhood which promote, for example, the introduction of Sharia law in Europe. These are the Cordoba Foundation and the Islamic Forum of Europe. They are both described across party boundaries as problematic, as is clear from a number of UK media reports. The head of the Cordoba Foundation is Anas al Tikriti, a well-known leader of the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK who has been accused of non-transparent lobbying activities on a number of occasions [2].

Is the Commission aware of the Islamic extremist background of members of ENORB?

1. Has Commission funding ever been used to finance ENORB? If so, what was the sum involved?

2. How has ENORB been involved in the Commission's working procedures?

3. Has ENORB ever been allowed to use infrastructure belonging to the Commission (e.g. premises)? If so, under what conditions?

4. Have there been any meetings between representatives of the Commission and of ENORB, particularly members of the Islamic Forum of Europe or the Cordoba Foundation? If so, what was talked about, and who was present?

[1] www.enorb.eu
[2] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/10470307/Terror-link-group-met-in-parliament.html

Question for written answer E-004509/14
to the Commission
Daniël van der Stoep (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: European Network on Religion and Belief

Does the European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) have any relationship, whether formal or informal, with DG Justice?

In particular, does ENORB enjoy consultation status with DG Justice in connection with the 10-year review of the implementation of the equality directives?

If so, how did that relationship arise?

Who introduced ENORB to DG Justice?

As a result of this relationship, does ENORB or any of its members enjoy access to any EU institution?

If so, what is the nature of such access? When was it granted? To whom was it granted?

Before entering into the relationship, what checks were made by the EU to vet ENORB and/or its members to ensure that they presented no risk to the welfare and security of EU employees and buildings? If so, what was the outcome of such checks?

Before entering into the relationship, what checks were made by the EU to vet ENORB and/or its members to ensure that they were fit and proper people to participate in such a consultation or any other activity in association with the EU? If so, what was the outcome of such checks?

Have any funds from any EU source been given to an organisation called the European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB)?

If so, will the Commission set out the dates on which such funds were given and the amounts thereof, and the purposes for which they were to be used?

If such funds have been given, who authorised the grants?

Joint answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 2014)

The European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) is among one of the many non-governmental organisations, which are in contact with the Commission on issues of their area of interest ([3]) and are able to send position papers to the Commission, if they so wish. The Commission has not been in touch with the member organisations of ENORB and has no specific information on them. To the Commission's knowledge, ENORB is an umbrella network of different religious and non-confessional organisations and does not represent any specific religion or belief.

The Commission has not financed ENORB and the Commission is not aware that its infrastructure would have been used by ENORB. To the Commission's knowledge, ENORB has hosted events in the European Parliament and Commission services have received invitations to these events.

([3]) For instance, DG Justice of the European Commission consulted the ENORB among many other interested organisations in 2012 in view of the preparation of the implementation report on the application of Directives 2000/43/EC on Racial Equality and 2000/78/EC on Employment Equality, COM(2014) 2 final of 17.1.2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003687/14
an die Kommission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Kosten der Trilog-Verhandlung zur Tabakproduktrichtlinie

Die Tabakproduktrichtlinie wurde im Jahr 2013 im EU-Parlament in sieben Ausschüssen diskutiert und geändert. Schließlich hat das EU-Parlament im Oktober 2013 seinen Standpunkt festgelegt und mit den Trilog-Verhandlungen begonnen.

1. Welche Personal- und Sachleistungen sind insgesamt in der Zeit der Trilog-Verhandlungen entstanden?

2. Welche Kosten entfielen auf die Übersetzung?

3. Welche Kosten entfielen auf den Betrieb der Räume?

4. Welche Kosten entfielen auf die anwesenden Mitarbeiter sowie auf die Dienstleistungen durch Techniker und Dritte, beispielsweise Getränke bei den Verhandlungen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(12. Mai 2014)

Im Jahr 2013 gab es fünf Triloge zur Änderung der Richtlinie über Tabakerzeugnisse. Der Rat hat seinen Standpunkt im Juni 2013 angenommen und das Europäische Parlament im Oktober 2013.

Vier dieser Triloge fanden im Europäischen Parlament und einer im Rat statt. Die Kommission kann keine Angaben darüber machen, welche Kosten auf die einzelnen Organe entfallen sind.

Außer beim letzten Trilog wurde die Kommission von einer relativ kleinen Gruppe aus etwa drei bis sieben Beamten vertreten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003687/14
to the Commission
Ewald Stadler (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Cost of the trilogue negotiations on the tobacco products directive

The tobacco products directive was debated and amended in seven committees in the European Parliament in the course of 2013. The European Parliament finally adopted its position in October 2013 and embarked on the trilogue negotiations.

1. What was the total amount of human and material resources required during the trilogue negotiations?

2. What were the costs for translation?

3. What were the costs for meeting rooms?

4. What were the costs for the staff present and services provided by technicians and third parties, such as drinks during the negotiations?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

Five trilogues were held on the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive in 2013, following the adoption of the Council's position in June 2013 and the European Parliament's position in October 2013.

Four of these trilogues were hosted by the European Parliament and one by the Council. The Commission is not in a position to provide a break-down of costs incurred by these Institutions.

The Commission was represented by relatively small teams (approximately three to seven officials) with the exception of the last trilogue.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003688/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Aplicación de la legislación belga relativa a la matriculación de vehículos vulnerando el Derecho de la UE, y en particular los artículos 18, 20, 49, 56 y 63 del TFUE

La legislación belga sobre la matriculación de vehículos exige que los residentes en Bélgica registren sus vehículos privados una vez se utilicen en Bélgica, con independencia de si van a usarse de forma regular o no. En casos concretos, este supuesto se ha aplicado también a los conductores que utilizaban un vehículo puesto a su disposición por una tercera persona. De conformidad con el artículo 2, apartado 1, del Real Decreto sobre la matriculación de vehículos, todo automóvil que se pone en circulación en las carreteras belgas debe estar provisto de una placa de matriculación belga ([1]). De conformidad con el artículo 3 ([2]), los residentes en Bélgica que se proponen utilizar su vehículo de motor en Bélgica deben inscribirlo en el registro nacional, incluso si el automóvil está ya registrado en otro Estado miembro.

Esto significa que, al aplicar la legislación, no se tiene en cuenta el hecho de que el vehículo esté matriculado correctamente en otro Estado miembro y el posible carácter temporal del uso del mismo en Bélgica. Por otra parte, las autoridades belgas consideran que todo vehículo de motor utilizado por un residente en Bélgica tiene que estar registrado en el registro belga. Esta aplicación de la legislación belga se ve confirmada por las órdenes de pago remitidas por las autoridades fiscales belgas a conductores individuales afectados por la aplicación de dicha legislación.

Como consecuencia de ello, la legislación mencionada y, más específicamente, la forma en que la aplican las autoridades belgas es contraria al Derecho de la UE en lo que se refiere a los artículos 18, 20, 49, 56 y 63 del TFUE y según confirma la jurisprudencia reciente del Tribunal de Justicia en los asuntos acumulados C-578/10 a C-580/10 (Van Putten) y C-5/13 (Kovács).

Los últimos casos de que hemos tenido conocimiento muestran que la policía belga ha establecido controles en las carreteras dirigidos exclusivamente a controlar automóviles con matrícula extranjera, en clara vulneración de los principios más básicos de la UE.

1. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión que la legislación belga vulnera claramente el Derecho de la UE, y, en particular, los artículos 8, 20, 49, 56 y 63 del TFUE?

2. ¿Han respondido las autoridades belgas de forma satisfactoria a las notificaciones previas de la Comisión? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuándo se modificará y corregirá la legislación belga?

3. ¿Puede la Comisión hacer un balance de la situación más reciente con respecto a las autoridades belgas y al calendario remitido a la Comisión en noviembre de 2013? ¿Cuándo impondrá la Comisión sanciones a Bélgica por la vulneración del Derecho de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión remite a su señoría a las respuestas que ya dio a las preguntas P-003064/2014 y P-003828/2014.

Como ya se dijo anteriormente, tratándose de un procedimiento en curso, la Comisión no está en condiciones, por ahora, de comunicar los detalles de las modificaciones a las que se han comprometido las autoridades belgas ni el calendario comunicado

([1]) http://www.code-de-la-route.be/textes-legaux/sections/ar/ar-200701/491-hs1afd2
([2]) http://www.code-de-la-route.be/textes-legaux/sections/ar/ar-200701/494-hs1afd3

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003688/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Application of Belgian law on car registration in violation of EC law, specifically Articles 18, 20, 49, 56 and 63 TFEU

Belgian law on car registration requires residents in Belgium to register their private motor vehicles once they are being used in Belgium, irrespective of whether the vehicles are intended to be used on a regular basis or not. In individual cases, this was also applied to drivers who were using a vehicle put at their disposal by a third person. Pursuant to Article 2(1) of the Royal Decree on the registration of vehicles, a car that is put into circulation on Belgian roads needs to have a Belgian number plate ([1]). Pursuant to Article 3 ([2]), persons resident in Belgium who wish to use their motor vehicle in Belgium must register it in the national register, even if the car is already registered in another Member State.

This means that, when applying the legislation, the fact that the vehicle is correctly registered in another Member State and the possible temporary nature of the use of the vehicle in Belgium are not taken into consideration. Moreover, the Belgian authorities assume that any motor vehicle used by a resident in Belgium has to be registered in the Belgian register. This application of the Belgian law is confirmed by payment orders sent out by the Belgian tax authorities to individual drivers concerned by the application of this legislation.

As a consequence, this legislation and, more specifically, the way it is applied by the Belgian authorities is contrary to EC law, as regards Articles 18, 20, 49, 56 and 63 TFEU and as confirmed by recent jurisprudence of the Court of Justice (Joined Cases C-578/10 to C-580/10 (Van Putten) and C-5/13 (Kovács).

The latest individual cases of which we have been informed also show that the Belgian police have been setting up road blocks exclusively targeting cars with foreign number plates, in clear violation of the most basic EU principles.

1. Can the Commission confirm that Belgian law is clearly violating EC law, in particular Articles 8, 20, 49, 56 and 63 TFEU?

2. Have the Belgian authorities replied in a satisfactory manner to the Commission's previous notifications? If so, when will the Belgian law be amended and corrected?

3. Could the Commission provide us with the latest situation as regards the Belgian authorities and the timetable forwarded to the Commission in November 2013? When will the Commission undertake sanctions against Belgium for violations of EC law?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(20 mai 2014)

La Commission prie l'Honorable Parlementaire de se référer aux réponses déjà apportées aux questions P-003064/2014 et P-003828/2014.

Ainsi que déjà précisé, la Commission n'est pas en mesure à ce stade de communiquer le détail des modifications auxquelles les autorités belges se sont engagées ou le calendrier communiqué, s'agissant d'une procédure en cours.

([1]) http://www.code-de-la-route.be/textes-legaux/sections/ar/ar-200701/491-hs1afd2.
([2]) http://www.code-de-la-route.be/textes-legaux/sections/ar/ar-200701/494-hs1afd3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003689/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Spanish property and title deeds

I am aware that many property buyers in Spain are still endeavouring to assert their legal rights to the title of their property and that, in many cases, it is proving impossible to achieve this.

Properties deemed to be illegal are being demolished, and it is unacceptable that thousands of people, many of whom are pensioners, who have invested their savings, are being prevented from legally using or selling their properties. In some cases, many years of legal action by purchasers results in little or no compensation being paid, despite previous planning permission being granted by local councils.

In 2009, Commissioner Reding stated that the Commission had contacted the Spanish authorities to enquire as to the steps being taken at national level to address the problems of the many property buyers who have failed to obtain their title deeds.

Can the Commission inform me of the outcome of the contact with the Spanish authorities and of the steps being taken to ensure that everyone caught up in this unacceptable situation has the right to their title deeds to allow them to use or sell their properties?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

Matters linked to real estate ownership and to the building sector are primarily within the remit of the Member States and are regulated by their national contract laws.

EU consumer legislation will come into play in particular if property developers have engaged in unfair commercial practices towards consumers ([1]) or if sales and loan contracts concluded between a consumer and a trader contain unfair terms ([2]).

As regards the latest action taken by the Commission vis-à-vis the Spanish authorities, I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-013549/2013 ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p.22-39.
([2]) Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 95, 21.4.1993, p. 29-34.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-013549&language=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003690/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Geoengineering and NATO exercises

I am concerned about some white aircraft trails that have been spotted over Bedfordshire recently. These white trails are different from trails left by normal aircraft. It has been suggested that these white trails are in fact 'chemtrails' left by military aircraft during NATO operations. Additionally, these trails could have been left on purpose as part of a geoengineering plan to change the Earth's environment in order to control global warming through a technique that releases 'stratospheric aerosols' into the upper atmosphere.

1. Does the Commission or the European Environment Agency have a position on the use of atmospheric aerosols as part of geoengineering?

2. Is the Commission aware of any NATO or military involvement in a geoengineering project related to atmospheric aerosols?

3. What threat is there to human health from these chemtrails?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to written questions E-000922/2014 and E-002906/2012 ([1]).

The Commission has no information on releases of chemicals from aircrafts, including NATO flight operations, into the atmosphere.

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003691/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) y Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Procedimiento contra Google en materia de competencia — Tercer conjunto de medidas correctivas para el acuerdo propuesto en el marco de la investigación

La Comisión se propone alcanzar un acuerdo con Google sobre la base de unas propuestas de compromiso concebidas para poner remedio a las prácticas anticompetitivas de Google, que incluyen la aplicación de un sesgo en los resultados de las búsquedas a favor de sus propios servicios de búsqueda vertical o especializada.

Los compromisos incluyen la propuesta de un mecanismo de subasta con arreglo al cual Google seleccionaría a tres rivales suyos y presentaría sus servicios en una página de resultados de búsqueda, sobre la base de las pujas y de las cifras de clics previstas para los enlaces.

Todo indica que este mecanismo de subasta está ideado con miras a generar ingresos adicionales para Google, que seleccionará a sus tres rivales sobre la base de las pujas más elevadas y no atendiendo a consideraciones relativas a la pertinencia de los resultados o a su utilidad para los consumidores. Además, los nuevos participantes que entren en el mercado serán excluidos de la subasta por la aplicación de un umbral mínimo de mercado que impedirá a las empresas nuevas e innovadoras competir en el mercado de la búsqueda de información y obligará al ganador de la subasta a pagar para poder beneficiarse de las medidas correctivas.

Otro aspecto muy importante de la exigencia de una subasta es que esta elevará los precios de la publicidad muy por encima del nivel al que se situarían si los enlaces de los rivales fuesen gratuitos. Por consiguiente, no parece que esta última propuesta ayude a los consumidores ni repare el perjuicio que sufren los intereses de estos, problema que motivó la actuación de la Comisión.

En vista de lo expuesto,

1. ¿Qué disposiciones contiene la propuesta con miras a garantizar que las PYME europeas innovadoras puedan entrar y competir en el mercado en línea a través del mecanismo de subasta?

2. ¿Puede justificar la Comisión la propuesta de una medida correctiva de abusos de posición dominante que signifique mayores ingresos para el infractor?

3. ¿Cuál ha sido el coste, en términos económicos, de las dos pruebas de mercado previas? ¿Cuánto tiempo se tarda en efectuar una prueba de mercado?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de junio de 2014)

El mecanismo de subasta se aplicará únicamente cuando Google cuantifique económicamente el espacio utilizado por sus servicios de búsqueda vertical, por ejemplo, Google Shopping, donde los comerciantes pagan por aparecer. En virtud de los compromisos propuestos, una parte del espacio utilizado por Google para sus propios servicios se reservará para tres competidores; la subasta determinará quien aparecerá en el espacio según las pujas y la pertinencia (medida por la previsión de veces en que los usuarios pulsarán en dicho enlace).

Cuando Google no cuantifique económicamente este espacio (por ejemplo, Google Local), no habría ningún mecanismo de subasta, y la elección de tres enlaces rivales se basaría en su pertinencia, y sería gratuito.

Como el mecanismo de subasta supone que Google dará a sus competidores un espacio por el que sus propios clientes tendrían que pagar, la solución no generaría más ingresos para Google.

En el marco del mecanismo de subasta, los licitadores seleccionados pagarían el siguiente precio más alto (se trata de una subasta de segundo precio), y únicamente cuando los usuarios pulsen en su enlace. Como el mecanismo de subasta se basa en palabras clave individuales, ello permitiría a las PYME pujar de forma efectiva y competir en beneficio de los consumidores.

El tiempo y los recursos necesarios para llevar a cabo una prueba de mercado varían en función de su tamaño y complejidad, por lo que no es posible estimar el promedio del coste y la duración de una prueba determinada.

La Comisión ya ha llevado a cabo dos pruebas de mercado detalladas sobre versiones anteriores de los compromisos y ha recopilado suficiente información y aportaciones de las partes interesadas a fin de evaluar la eficacia de los compromisos propuestos.

La Comisión está redactando cartas de denegación previas, y se reunirá con los denunciantes en mayo. Los denunciantes tendrán la oportunidad de responder a estas cartas.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003691/14
an die Kommission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) und Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Kartellverfahren Google — dritter Vorschlag für Abhilfemaßnahmen für eine Einigung in Bezug auf die wettbewerbsrechtliche Untersuchung

Die Kommission möchte mit Google auf der Grundlage von Vorschlägen für Zusagen, mit denen die wettbewerbsschädlichen Praktiken von Google, bei denen es unter anderem zu Verzerrungen der Ergebnislisten der Suchmaschine zugunsten der Google-eigenen vertikalen oder spezifischen Suchdienste kommt, eine Einigung erzielen.

Diese Zusagen umfassen einen Vorschlag für einen Auktionsmechanismus, mit dem Google drei Wettbewerber auswählen würde, die ihre Dienstleistungen auf einer Ergebnisseite anzeigen lassen könnten. Dieser Mechanismus basiert auf Geboten und der zu erwartenden Klickrate der Links.

Mit einem derartigen Auktionsmechanismus, bei dem drei Wettbewerber auf der Grundlage des höchsten Gebots und nicht auf der Grundlage dessen, welche Ergebnisse für die Verbraucher am relevantesten oder nützlichsten sind, ausgewählt werden, möchte Google wohl zusätzliche Einnahmen erzielen. Darüber hinaus werden neue Marktteilnehmer auf der Grundlage der Marktanteilsschwelle von Auktionen ausgeschlossen. wodurch neue, innovative Unternehmen daran gehindert werden, am Suchmarkt teilzuhaben, und erfolgreiche Bieter zahlungspflichtig sind, um von den Abhilfemaßnahmen profitieren zu können.

Ein weiterer sehr wichtiger Punkt in Bezug auf den Auktionsmechanismus ist die Tatsache, dass die Kosten für Anzeigen höher sein werden als bei einem Szenario, bei dem die Links von Wettbewerbern kostenlos angezeigt würden. Daher bringt der neue Vorschlag wohl keinen Nutzen für die Verbraucher, und der von der Kommission ursprünglich als Problem festgestellte Schaden für die Verbraucher wird nicht ausgeräumt.

Hieraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Mit welchen Bestimmungen des Vorschlags wird dafür gesorgt, dass sich innovative europäische KMU auf dem Online-Marktplatz betätigen und dort im Rahmen des Auktionsmechanismus in Wettbewerb treten können?

2. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission einen Vorschlag für Abhilfemaßnahmen, mit dem die Partei, der ein Verstoß gegen das Wettbewerbsrecht zur Last gelegt wird, höhere Einnahmen erzielen würde?

3. Wie hoch waren die wirtschaftlichen Kosten der beiden vorausgegangenen Markttests? Wie lange dauert ein Markttest?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(4. Juni 2014)

Der Auktionsmechanismus wird nur dann angewendet, wenn Google die Fläche, die von den Google-eigenen sogenannten vertikalen Suchdiensten (z. B. Google Shopping) verwendet wird und auf denen Händler für ihre Anzeige bezahlen müssen, bereits monetisiert hat. Nach der vorgeschlagenen Regelung wäre ein Teil der Fläche, die Google für eigene Dienstleistungen verwendet, den drei Wettbewerbern vorbehalten. Bei der Auktion würde dann auf der Grundlage von Gebotshöhe und Relevanz (gemessen an der voraussichtlichen Klickrate) festgelegt, wer auf dieser Fläche eine Anzeige schalten darf.

Wenn Google diese Fläche nicht monetisiert (z. B. Google Local), käme kein Auktionsmechanismus zur Anwendung; die Wahl der drei Links der Wettbewerber würde auf der Grundlage von Relevanz erfolgen und wäre kostenlos.

Da ein solcher Auktionsmechanismus bedeuten würde, dass Google seinen Wettbewerbern Fläche bereitstellt, für die seine eigenen Kunden bezahlen müssten, würde Google nicht mehr Umsatz erwirtschaften.

Bei dem Auktionsmechanismus würden die Bieter, die den Zuschlag erhalten, den zweithöchsten Preis bezahlen (sogenannte Zweitpreisauktion) und das nur, wenn Nutzer auf ihren Link klicken. Da der Auktionsmechanismus auf individuellen Schlagwörtern basiert, könnten KMU ihre Gebote effektiv steuern und zum Nutzen der Verbraucher am Wettbewerb teilnehmen.

Die für Markttests benötigten Ressourcen und Zeit hängen von deren Umfang und Komplexität ab, weshalb es nicht möglich ist, die Durchschnittskosten und -dauer eines bestimmten Tests abzuschätzen.

Die Kommission hat bereits zwei detaillierte Markttests zu früheren Regelungen durchgeführt und somit ausreichend Informationen und Beiträge von Interessenträgern gesammelt, um die Effektivität der vorgeschlagenen Regelungen beurteilen zu können.

Die Kommission entwirft derzeit vorläufige Ablehnungsschreiben und wird im Mai die Kläger treffen. Diese werden dann die Möglichkeit erhalten, zu diesen Briefen Stellung zu nehmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003691/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) and Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Google antitrust case — third set of remedies for proposed settlement in the competition investigation

The Commission aims to adopt a settlement with Google on the basis of proposed commitments designed to remedy Google's anti-competitive practices, which include search bias in favour of its own vertical or specialised search services.

These commitments include a proposed auction mechanism by which Google would select three rivals to display their services on a search results page, on the basis of bids and of the anticipated click-through rates for the links.

Such an auction mechanism appears to be designed to generate additional revenue for Google, which will select three rivals on the basis of the highest bids and not on considerations regarding the most relevant or useful results for consumers. Moreover, new market entrants will be excluded from the auction on account of the minimum market threshold, thus preventing new, innovative companies from competing in the search marketplace, and requiring the successful bidder to pay in order to benefit from the remedy.

Another very important issue regarding the auction requirement is that it will force the advertised prices higher than they would be if the rival links were free. Therefore, the latest proposal does not appear to help consumers and does not solve the consumer injury identified by the Commission as the initial problem.

In light of the above:

1. What provisions does the proposal contain with a view to ensuring that innovative European SMEs will be able to enter and compete in the online marketplace under the auction mechanism?

2. Can the Commission justify a proposed remedy to antitrust abuse that would generate more revenue for the infringer?

3. How much did the two previous market tests cost in economic terms? How much time is needed to carry out a market test?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The auction mechanism will only apply when Google already monetises the space used by its so-called vertical search services, e.g. Google Shopping, on which merchants pay to appear. Under the proposed commitments, part of the space used by Google for its own services will be reserved for three competitors; the auction will determine who appears in the space based on bid price and relevance (measured by the predicted click-through-rate).

When Google does not monetise this space (e.g. Google Local), there would be no auction mechanism, and the choice of three rival links would be based on relevance — and would be free.

As the auction mechanism means that Google would give its competitors a space for which its own customers would pay, the remedy would not generate more revenues for Google.

Under the auction mechanism, the winning bidders would pay the next highest price (this is a second price auction), and only when users click on their link. As the auction mechanism is based on individual keywords, it would enable SMEs to target their bids effectively and compete to the benefit of consumers.

The time and resources needed to carry out a market test vary according to size and complexity, so it is not possible to estimate the average cost and duration of a particular test.

The Commission has already carried out two detailed market tests on earlier versions of the commitments and has gathered enough information and input from stakeholders, to assess the effectiveness of the proposed commitments.

The Commission is currently drafting pre-rejection letters and will meet complainants in May. Complainants will then have the opportunity to respond to those letters.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003692/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) y Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Procedimiento contra Google en materia de competencia y tercer conjunto de medidas correctivas — Soluciones e intereses de los consumidores

El comisario Almunia ha afirmado reiteradamente que las decisiones de la Comisión en materia de competencia tienen por objetivo proteger a los consumidores, no a los competidores.

Sin embargo, en una declaración efectuada el 5 de febrero de 2014, la directora general de la Oficina Europea de Uniones de Consumidores (BEUC), Monique Goyens, comentó que con el respaldo expresado inicialmente al tercer paquete de propuestas de compromiso para Google la Comisión había estado «muy lejos de alcanzar el objetivo de garantizar a los consumidores la posibilidad de elegir con fundamento».

Además, en una carta enviada al comisario por la BEUC, la señora Goyens afirmó que el acuerdo basado en aquellos compromisos «es inaceptable y redundará de forma permanente en perjuicio de los consumidores europeos».

El mecanismo de subasta introducido para remediar el sesgo en los resultados de las búsquedas beneficia a las empresas que tienen dinero que gastar, no a las que ofrecen los resultados más relevantes o más útiles para los consumidores.

Otro aspecto muy importante de la exigencia de una subasta es que esta elevará los precios de la publicidad muy por encima del nivel al que se situarían si los enlaces de los rivales fuesen gratuitos. Por consiguiente, no parece que esta última propuesta ayude a los consumidores ni repare el perjuicio que sufren los intereses de estos, problema que motivó la actuación de la Comisión.

En vista de lo expuesto,

1. ¿Podría explicar la Comisión de manera precisa cómo protege y garantiza los intereses de los consumidores el tercer conjunto de medidas correctivas?

2. ¿En qué se diferencia este tercer conjunto del segundo que propuso Google y que fue considerado «no aceptable»?

3. Por lo que se refiere al administrador encargado de la supervisión, ¿quién asegura la adecuada aplicación del acuerdo? ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión que no hay disposiciones que den a terceros la oportunidad de informar directamente al administrador acerca de dicha aplicación? ¿Puede la BEUC o cualquier otra tercera parte distinta de un demandante oficial dirigirse al administrador encargado de la supervisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de junio de 2014)

En lo que se respecta a la preocupación de la Comisión sobre las prácticas empresariales de Google en el ámbito de la búsqueda especializada, los compromisos de Google prevén ahora el despliegue claro de enlaces a tres servicios rivales de búsqueda especializada en un formato que sea comparable visualmente a los enlaces con sus propios servicios. Este principio no solo se aplicaría a los actuales servicios de búsqueda especializada, sino también a los cambios en la presentación de dichos servicios y a servicios futuros.

Esto constituye una importante mejora respecto a las propuestas anteriores de Google, sobre todo porque el formato en el que se presentarán los servicios competidores será comparable al de Google. Por ejemplo, si Google muestra una imagen, los servicios rivales tendrán una imagen del mismo tamaño y formato. Los consumidores, que antes podían no estar al corriente de que Google promocionaba sus propios servicios de búsqueda especializada o que podrían no haber visto alternativas pertinentes en la lista de resultados de Google, tendrán la posibilidad real de elegir entre servicios competidores presentados de forma comparable. Corresponde luego a ellos elegir la mejor alternativa.

Los compromisos propuestos prevén un administrador encargado de la supervisión. Este administrador ayudará a la Comisión a velar por que Google cumpla fielmente sus compromisos. Los administradores encargados de la supervisión no pueden adoptar legalmente decisiones en nombre de la Comisión, pero pueden prestar a esta asesoramiento técnico sobre cualquier aspecto relacionado con la ejecución de los compromisos. Por ejemplo, cualquier tercero tendrá la oportunidad de plantear posibles problemas de cumplimiento ante dicho administrador.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003692/14
an die Kommission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) und Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Kartellverfahren Google — dritter Vorschlag für Abhilfemaßnahmen — Lösungen und Interesse der Verbraucher

Kommissionsmitglied Almunia hat wiederholt erläutert, dass die wettbewerbsrechtlichen Entscheidungen der Kommission dem Schutz der Verbraucher und nicht jenem der Wettbewerber dienen sollen.

Allerdings wies die Generaldirektorin des Büros der Europäischen Verbraucherverbände, Monique Goyens, in ihrer Stellungnahme vom 5. Februar 2014 darauf hin, dass die Kommission mit der möglichen Annahme des dritten Pakets an von Google vorgeschlagenen Zusagen das Ziel eines fairen Angebots für die Verbraucher weit verfehlt habe.

Darüber stellte Monique Goyens in einem Schreiben des Büros der Europäischen Verbraucherverbände an das Mitglied der Kommission fest, dass eine Einigung auf der Grundlage dieser Zusagen nicht hingenommen werden dürfe und sich für die Verbraucher in Europa dauerhaft nachteilig auswirken werde.

Von dem Auktionsmechanismus, mit dem Verzerrungen der Ergebnislisten der Suchmaschine abgeholfen werden soll, würden Unternehmen mit den notwendigen finanziellen Mitteln profitieren und nicht jene, deren Anzeige in der Ergebnisliste für die Verbraucher am relevantesten oder nützlichsten ist.

Ein weiterer wichtiger Punkt in Bezug auf den Auktionsmechanismus ist die Tatsache, dass die Kosten für Anzeigen höher sein werden als bei einem Szenario, bei dem die Links von Wettbewerbern kostenlos angezeigt würden. Daher bringt der neue Vorschlag wohl keinen Nutzen für die Verbraucher, und der von der Kommission ursprünglich als Problem festgestellte Schaden für die Verbraucher wird nicht ausgeräumt.

Hieraus ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Kann die Kommission erläutern, wie die Interessen der Verbraucher mit diesem dritten Paket an Abhilfemaßnahmen konkret geschützt und gewahrt werden?
2. Wie unterscheidet sich dieses dritte Paket an Abhilfemaßnahmen von dem zweiten von Google vorgelegten, jedoch als nicht annehmbar eingeordneten Vorschlag?
3. Wer wird als Überwachungstreuhänder fungieren, um die ordnungsgemäße Einhaltung der Einigung zu gewährleisten? Es gibt keine Bestimmung, in deren Rahmen Dritte dem Überwachungstreuhänder direkte Rückmeldungen über die Umsetzung übermitteln können. Kann die Kommission dies bestätigen? Kann sich das Büro der Europäischen Verbraucherverbände oder ein anderer Interessenträger, bei dem es sich nicht um einen offiziellen Beschwerdeführer handelt, an den Überwachungstreuhänder wenden?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juni 2014)

Um den Bedenken der Kommission bezüglich der Geschäftspraktiken von Google im Bereich der spezialisierten Suchdienste zu begegnen, hat Google in seine Verpflichtungen nun die Zusage aufgenommen, relevante Links zu drei konkurrierenden spezialisierten Suchdiensten in einem Format anzuzeigen, das visuell mit dem Format der angezeigten Links zu seinen eigenen Suchdiensten vergleichbar ist. Dieser Grundsatz würde nicht nur für bestehende spezialisierte Suchdienste gelten, sondern auch für Änderungen an der Darstellung dieser Dienste und für künftige Dienste.

Dies wäre eine wesentliche Verbesserung gegenüber den früheren Vorschlägen von Google, insbesondere da das Format, in dem die Links der konkurrierenden Dienste angezeigt würden, mit dem von Google vergleichbar wäre. Das heißt, wenn Google beispielsweise ein Bild anzeigt, würde zu den konkurrierenden Diensten ebenfalls ein Bild in derselben Größe und im selben Format angezeigt. Verbraucher, die sich vorher unter Umständen nicht darüber im Klaren waren, dass Google seine eigenen spezialisierten Suchdienste auf diese Weise begünstigte, oder die vielleicht keine relevanten Alternativen in den Suchergebnissen von Google finden konnten, hätten nun eine echte Wahl zwischen konkurrierenden Diensten, die auf vergleichbare Weise angezeigt würden. Dann wäre es an ihnen, die beste Alternative auszuwählen.

In den Verpflichtungszusagen ist die Ernennung eines Überwachungstreuhänders vorgesehen. Der Überwachungstreuhänder würde der Kommission helfen sicherzustellen, dass Google sämtliche Verpflichtungszusagen uneingeschränkt erfüllt. Überwachungstreuhänder können rechtlich keine Beschlüsse im Namen der Kommission fassen, sie können der Kommission aber mit fachspezifischem Rat bei allen Fragen bezüglich der Umsetzung der Verpflichtungszusagen zur Seite stehen. Auch Dritte könnten sich bei Zweifeln bezüglich der Einhaltung der Verpflichtungszusagen an den Überwachungstreuhänder wenden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003692/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE) and Andreas Schwab (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Google antitrust case and the third set of remedies — solutions and consumers' interests

Commissioner Almunia has stated repeatedly that the Commission's competition decisions are aimed at protecting consumers, not competitors.

However, in a statement of 5 February 2014 Monique Goyens, Director-General of the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), commented that with the tentative endorsement of the third package of Google's proposed commitments, the Commission had 'fallen far short of the aim of ensuring fair consumer choice'.

Moreover, in a letter sent by the BEUC to the Commissioner, Ms Goyens said that 'the settlement based on those commitments is unacceptable and will result in the continuing detriment of European consumers'.

The auction mechanism introduced as a remedy for search bias benefits those companies with money to spend, not those with the most relevant or useful results for consumers.

Another important issue regarding the auction requirement is that it will force the advertised prices higher than they would be if the rival links were free. Therefore, the latest proposal does not appear to help consumers and does not solve the consumer injury identified by the Commission as the initial problem.

In light of the above:

1. Could the Commission specifically explain how consumer interests are protected and guaranteed by this third set of remedies?

2. How is this third set of remedies different from the second set proposed by Google, which was considered 'not acceptable'?

3. With regard to the monitoring trustee, who will ensure proper compliance with the settlement? There is no provision to allow third parties the opportunity to provide direct feedback to the monitoring trustee on implementation; can the Commission confirm that this is the case? Can the BEUC or any other interested party which is not an official complainant address the monitoring trustee?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

As regards the Commission's concern relating to Google's business practices in the field of specialised search, Google's commitments now provide that it would display prominent links to three rival specialised search services in a format which would be visually comparable to that of links to its own services. This principle would apply not only for existing specialised search services, but also to changes in the presentation of those services and for future services.

This would constitute a significant improvement in relation to Google's previous proposals, in particular because the format in which competing services would be presented would be comparable to Google's — for example, if Google displays an image, the rival services would have an image of the same size and format. Consumers, who previously may not have been aware that Google was promoting its own specialised search services or who may not have seen relevant alternatives in Google's results would have a real choice between competing services presented in a comparable way; it would then be up to them to choose the best alternative.

The proposed commitments foresee a monitoring trustee. The monitoring trustee would assist the Commission in ensuring Google faithfully implements any commitments. Monitoring trustees cannot legally take decisions on behalf of the Commission, but they can provide the Commission with technical advice on any aspect related to the implementation of commitments. For instance, any third party would have the opportunity to raise potential compliance issues with the monitoring trustee.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003693/14
alla Commissione
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Interdipendenza economica e produttiva tra Sud e Centro-Nord in Italia

Come si evince dallo studio realizzato da SRM (Intesa San Paolo) in collaborazione con Prometeia sull'interdipendenza economico-produttiva tra Sud e Centro-Nord in Italia, per ogni 100 euro di investimenti effettuati al Sud si verifica un «effetto dispersione» a beneficio del Centro-Nord pari a 40,9 euro.

Un effetto di peso diverso, invece, si registra nel caso opposto dove per ogni 100 euro investiti al Centro-Nord si verifica un «effetto dispersione» a beneficio del Mezzogiorno pari a 4,7 euro.

Tale «effetto dispersione» è un indice negativo per il Mezzogiorno, in quanto evidenzia come il Sud Italia non sia in grado di internalizzare gli effetti degli investimenti.

Spostando l'attenzione sul «sistema paese», invece, un investimento effettuato al Sud ha una ricaduta positiva sul resto della Nazione, alimentandone la domanda.

La filiera aereonautica del Sud, ad esempio, genera il 31,5 % del valore aggiunto nazionale, l'agroalimentare meridionale apporta un valore aggiunto pari al 30 % del dato nazionale, mentre come la filiera del mare del Sud ha un peso sull'economia interna dell'Italia pari al 4,3 %.

Dare più sostegno al manifatturiero nel Mezzogiorno, usare bene la leva dei Fondi europei e valorizzare la centralità nel Mediterraneo, può favorire il rilancio del Sud e, attraverso di esso, la ripresa economica in Italia.

L'Unione europea considera fondamentale e necessaria la collaborazione tra diverse regioni e/o aree di ogni Stato membro, proprio perché vengono apportati benefici non solo alla zona interessata, ma anche a tutto il paese e, di conseguenza, a tutto il sistema UE.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del fatto che maggiori investimenti nel Sud Italia possono apportare benefici non solo al Sud stesso, ma all'intero paese, che è uno degli Stati fondatori dell'Unione europea e anche all'UE stessa;

2. quali iniziative può intraprendere a riguardo e quali strumenti di sostegno potrebbe fornire per riavviare forme di investimento nel Sud Italia o renderlo più attrattivo per nuovi investitori?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è pienamente consapevole del fatto che gli investimenti industriali producono effetti positivi in funzione delle catene del valore di ogni settore anche al di là dei diretti beneficiari. È importante che regioni quali quelle dell'Italia meridionale, come del resto tutte le regioni e tutti gli Stati membri, si impegnino per trarre vantaggio dagli investimenti finalizzati all'innovazione e alla modernizzazione, che costituiscono strumenti indispensabili per creare ricchezza e nuovi posti di lavoro ([1]).

2. I fondi strutturali UE svolgono un ruolo importante nel sostenere gli investimenti nelle regioni, incluse quelle dell'Italia meridionale, e nel favorire l'ammodernamento della base industriale e delle infrastrutture vitali per le loro imprese. Durante il periodo di programmazione 2007-2013 i fondi strutturali europei avevano reso disponibili 21,3 miliardi di EUR per Campania, Sicilia, Puglia, Calabria e Basilicata. Per il periodo 2014-2020 per queste regioni saranno complessivamente disponibili 22,3 miliardi di EUR di finanziamenti a titolo della politica di coesione.

([1]) Comunicazione della Commissione «Per una rinascita industriale europea», COM(2014) 014.

Per il periodo di programmazione 2014-2020 la Commissione ha esortato gli Stati membri ad agevolare l'integrazione delle imprese dell'UE, e delle PMI in particolare, nelle catene del valore globali, con l'obiettivo di aumentarne la competitività e di favorire un loro accesso ai mercati mondiali in condizioni più favorevoli sotto questo aspetto. La Commissione opera in stretta collaborazione con gli Stati membri e le regioni per garantire che gli obiettivi prioritari vengano correttamente identificati cosicché risulti massimizzato il potenziale degli investimenti. È compito degli Stati membri redigere strategie dedicate all'innovazione per individuare vantaggi e caratteristiche specifici di ogni paese e di ogni regione. Tali strategie regionali di specializzazione intelligente costituiscono il principio generale per guidare le politiche regionali di innovazione e industriali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003693/14
to the Commission
Barbara Matera (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Economic and productive interdependence of southern and central and northern Italy

A collaborative study conducted by the economic research centre SRM (Intesa San Paolo) and financial consultancy firm Prometeia on the economic and productive interdependence of southern and central and northern Italy has shown that every EUR 100 invested in the south has a 'scattering effect', generating the equivalent of EUR 40.9 for central and northern Italy.

However, the scattering effect is not as strong in the opposite direction, with every EUR 100 invested in central and northern Italy generating the equivalent of EUR 4.7 in southern Italy.

The scattering effect is a negative indicator for southern Italy, with the evidence suggesting that southern Italy is unable to internalise the effects of investment.

If we look instead at the 'country-wide system', investment made in the south has a positive effect on the rest of the country by feeding demand.

The aviation industry in the south, for example, generates 31.5% of national value added; its agrifood industry contributes a value added equivalent to 30% of the national total, and the fishing industry accounts for 4.3% of Italy's domestic economy.

Giving more support to manufacturing in southern Italy, making good use of the leverage of European funds, and taking advantage of southern Italy's central position in the Mediterranean could all help to revitalise southern Italy and thereby boost Italy's economic recovery.

The European Union sees collaboration among the various regions and/or areas of every Member State as fundamental and essential, precisely because it produces benefits not just for the area in question but for the whole country and, therefore, for the entire EU system.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the fact that major investment in southern Italy can produce benefits not only for the south but for the whole of Italy (which is one of the original Member States of the European Union) and also for the EU?

2. What steps can the Commission take in this respect, and what support measures might it provide to reinvigorate investment in southern Italy or make it more attractive to new investors?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. The Commission is fully aware that industrial investments have beneficial effects beyond their immediate environment, based on the value chains of industry. For regions like southern Italy, indeed for all regions and Member States it is important to focus on capturing value from investments in innovation and modernisation, as these investments are indispensable ways to create value and new jobs ([1]).

2. The structural funds of the EU play an important role in supporting investment in regions, including southern Italy, in modernising their industrial base and the infrastructure on which their industries rely. During the programming period 2007-2013, EUR 21.3 billion of European Structural Funds were available for Campania, Sicilia, Puglia, Calabria and Basilicata. For the 2014-2020 period, EUR 22.3 billion will be available in total cohesion policy funding for these regions.

For the 2014-2020 programming period, the Commission has called on Member States to facilitate the integration of EU firms, in particular SMEs, in global value chains to increase their competitiveness and ensure access to global markets in more favourable competitive conditions. The Commission is closely working with Member States and regions to ensure that priorities are correctly identified in order to maximise the investment potential. Member States are required to draw up innovation strategies to identify the unique characteristics and assets of each country and region. These regional smart specialisation strategies serve as a general guiding principle for regional innovation and industrial policies.

([1]) Commission Communication 'For a European Industrial Renaissance', COM(2014) 014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003694/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Ulteriori informazioni circa la disparità di trattamento tra inquilini di enti pubblici e inquilini di Enti previdenziali privatizzati

Gli enti privatizzati, così come è disposto dal decreto legislativo n. 509 del 1994 «… continuano a sussistere come enti senza scopo di lucro e assumono la personalità giuridica di diritto privato, (…) rimanendo titolari di tutti i rapporti attivi e passivi dei corrispondenti enti previdenziali e dei rispettivi patrimoni …». Per quanto concerne la gestione, è statuito che: «… le associazioni o le fondazioni hanno autonomia gestionale, organizzativa e contabile nel rispetto dei principi stabiliti dal presente articolo nei limiti fissati dalle disposizioni del presente decreto in relazione alla natura pubblica dell'attività svolta ...».

Il decreto legislativo n. 509/94 ha, quindi, permesso agli enti pubblici di privatizzarsi prevedendo la precisa condizione di non usufruire di finanziamenti pubblici «diretti o indiretti». Ebbene, gli enti previdenziali privatizzati non solo hanno violato la condizione di non usufruire di finanziamenti pubblici poiché hanno continuato a usufruire della contribuzione obbligatoria considerata appunto una forma indiretta di finanziamento pubblico, ma hanno violato il decreto legislativo n. 104/96 e la legge che imponeva la dismissioni del patrimonio immobiliare a differenza degli enti pubblici previdenziali (INPS, INAIL, INPDAP) che invece l'hanno dismesso secondo la suindicata legge.

Oggi gli enti previdenziali privatizzati, nonostante siano stati inseriti nell'elenco della pubblica amministrazione quali enti pubblici previdenziali, stanno vendendo il patrimonio immobiliare con modalità privatistiche diverse da quelle previste dagli enti pubblici.

Nella risposta all'interrogazione E-014189/2013 la Commissione ha sottolineato che in ogni caso le norme nazionali che regolano tali operazioni sono tenute al rispetto del diritto unionale in particolare per quel che riguarda trasparenza e non discriminazione.

Pertanto, è necessario contestare la disparità di trattamento tra inquilini di enti pubblici e inquilini di enti privatizzati e, soprattutto, la disparità di trattamento tra iscritti agli enti pubblici e iscritti agli enti previdenziali privatizzati che hanno beneficiato di un trattamento privilegiato.

Tale principio è stato anche ribadito dal Consiglio di Stato italiano in una recente ordinanza che ha evidenziato che la scelta di utilizzare una modalità di vendita non può essere di per sé suscettibile di mutare la natura dell'operazione di dismissione in una vendita tra privati, con inevitabili ripercussioni sul regime giuridico da applicare in materia di dismissione del patrimonio pubblico.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. come intende procedere nel caso in cui riceva prove certe di un'eventuale violazione della normativa UE in materia di trasparenza e non discriminazione o disparità di trattamento tra iscritti di enti pubblici e iscritti di enti privatizzati;

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

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

Come precisato nella risposta all'interrogazione E-014189/2013, la vendita e la locazione immobiliare non rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione della normativa unionale sugli appalti pubblici.

Nella normativa unionale sugli appalti pubblici i principi di trasparenza e di parità di trattamento attengono alle situazioni in cui l'amministrazione aggiudicatrice intende appaltare beni, servizi o lavori. Tali principi mirano ad assicurare un grado di pubblicità sufficiente a permettere a tutti i potenziali candidati di presentare un'offerta e a garantire a tutti gli offerenti la parità di trattamento nel corso dell'intera procedura di aggiudicazione. Non si applicano quindi alle situazioni descritte dall'onorevole deputata, che attengono a una presunta disparità di trattamento fra inquilini e iscritti di enti pubblici e inquilini e iscritti di enti privatizzati, riconducibile alla scelta di modalità diverse di vendita.

Le norme nazionali che disciplinano la locazione e la compravendita di immobili possono imporre obblighi inerenti all'applicazione di procedure trasparenti e non discriminatorie alle relative operazioni, ma l'osservanza di tali regole è materia di competenza nazionale: la Commissione non ravvisa quindi ragioni per monitorare la situazione e fornirne un quadro generale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003694/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Further information on the unequal treatment of tenants of public bodies and those of privatised social security bodies

As laid down in Legislative Decree No 509/94, privatised bodies continue to operate on a non-profit basis but become persons in private law; they remain the owners of all assets and liabilities, including property, held by the corresponding social security bodies before privatisation. As regards management, associations or foundations are, under the decree, independent for the purposes of management, organisation, and accounting, provided that they observe the principles set out in the relevant article of the decree without contravening the limits imposed by the decree in view of the public nature of the activities performed.

Legislative Decree No 509/94 has thus allowed public bodies to privatise themselves subject to the specific condition that they do not receive direct or indirect public funding. However, the privatised social security bodies have not only failed to comply with the public funding ban, as they have continued to make use of the mandatory contribution, which is regarded as an indirect form of public funding, but they have also infringed Legislative Decree No 104/96 and the law requiring them to dispose of their property; public social security bodies (INPS, INAIL, INPDAP), by contrast, have disposed of their property in accordance with that law.

Even though they have been listed by the authorities as public social security bodies, the privatised social security bodies are now in the process of selling property under private-law arrangements different from those applied by public bodies.

In its answer to Question E-014189/2013 the Commission made the point that national rules governing the sale of property must, in any event, conform to EC law, especially as regards transparency and non-discrimination.

There are therefore grounds to complain of unequal treatment between tenants of public bodies and tenants of privatised bodies and, above all, of unequal treatment between members of public bodies and members of privatised social security bodies, which have been unduly favoured.

This principle has been supported by the Italian Council of State in a recent order in which it noted that the choice of a given selling arrangement must not suffice in itself to alter the nature of the disposal transaction by turning it into a sale between private individuals, as there would otherwise inevitably be implications for the rules to be applied to the disposal of public property.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. How will the Commission proceed if it obtains clear-cut evidence that there may have been a breach of EU legislation regarding transparency and non-discrimination or unequal treatment of members of public bodies and those of privatised bodies?

2. Can it give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

As stated in reply to Question E-014189/2013, the sale or lease of property assets does not fall within the scope of application of EU public procurement law.

In the context of EU public procurement law, the principles of transparency and equal treatment refer to situations when contracting authorities intend to procure goods, services or works. These principles are aimed to ensure a degree of advertising sufficient to enable any potential tenderer to make an offer, and that all tenderers are treated equally throughout the procurement procedure. Therefore, they do not apply to situations such as those described by the Honourable Member, which concern an alleged unequal treatment between tenants and members of public bodies and tenants and members of privatised bodies, deriving from the choice of different selling arrangements.

National rules governing these transactions can establish obligations to use transparent and non-discriminatory procedures for the sale or lease of property. However, the compliance with those rules is a matter of national competence; therefore the Commission does not see reasons for monitoring this situation and providing an overview thereof.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003695/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Rappresaglie contro civili armeni in Siria e possibile coinvolgimento turco

La testata Asbarez, pluridecennale fonte giornalistica armeno-americana, ha recentemente riferito di almeno due incursioni ad opera di estremisti nei territori siriani, provenienti dal confine turco. Pare che queste mirassero a compiere barbare rappresaglie che, secondo il giornale in parola, sono costate la vita a 80 abitanti della cittadina di Kessab, a netta prevalenza armena e cristiana. Tale aggressione sarebbe stata, secondo la ricostruzione dei media siriani, coperta o comunque tollerata dalle autorità turche.

Si ricordi, a proposito della Turchia, l'ingente mole di risorse economiche e diplomatiche impiegate dall'Unione europea nel tentativo di avvicinamento di tale Stato agli standard europei, in vista di un suo ipotetico futuro ingresso nell'Unione.

Alla luce dei preoccupanti eventi riportati, non ritiene la Commissione urgente attivare i propri canali diplomatici e informativi per riscontrare l'eventuale veridicità di tali fatti, ossia la paventata collaborazione, anche omissiva o indiretta, del governo turco? In caso la predetta verifica conseguisse risultato positivo, non reputa indispensabile la Commissione reagire, anche in considerazione del fatto che si tratterebbe di pesanti violazioni delle raccomandazioni contenute nella «Relazione 2013 sui progressi compiuti dalla Turchia», quantomeno con il congelamento del processo di avvicinamento della Turchia all'Unione europea?

Risposta di Stefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle notizie di stampa menzionate nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole parlamentare. Secondo quanto riportato dalla stampa, gli attacchi sono stati perpetrati da gruppi affiliati a al-Qaeda. La Turchia ha ribadito in varie occasioni che non sostiene i ribelli affiliati a al-Qaeda in Siria e che mantiene aperte le proprie frontiere a tutti i rifugiati provenienti dalla Siria, armeni compresi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003695/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Reprisals taken against Armenian civilians in Syria, with possible Turkish involvement

According to recent reports published by the long-running Armenian-American newspaper *Asbarez*, Turkish-based extremists have been responsible for at least two atrocities committed across the border in Syrian territory, which appear to have been waged as brutal reprisals. In one horrific instance, 80 people were killed in the village of Kessab, which has a large Armenian and Christian population. And if the Syrian media are to be believed, these barbaric acts are being covered up, or in any case tolerated, by the Turkish authorities.

When it comes to Turkey, nobody needs reminding of the sheer scale of the financial and diplomatic resources expended by the European Union in a bid to bring this country up to European standards, so that it may one day be welcomed into the Union.

Given the alarming events that have been reported, does the Commission not believe that it urgently needs to launch its own diplomatic enquiries in order to find out whether there is any truth to the deeply disturbing rumours that the Turkish Government may have been involved in these atrocities in some way, even indirectly or through its failure to take any actions against them? And if it emerges that these rumours are true, then surely the Commission would be impelled, at the very least, to suspend the process for bringing Turkey closer to the European Union, not least because such involvement would constitute a flagrant breach of the recommendations set forth in the 2013 Progress Report on Turkey?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of news reports mentioned in the question. The reports mention that the attacks were carried by al-Qaeda affiliated groups. Turkey has reiterated on many occasions that it does not support al-Qaeda affiliated rebels in Syria and that it keeps its borders open to all refugees from Syria, including Armenians.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003698/14
aan de Commissie
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(26 maart 2014)

Betreft: Megastallen en industriële landbouw — veehouderij — intensiteit

Jaar na jaar kent de Vlaamse landbouw en veehouderij een groeiende intensivering en schaalvergroting. Steeds meer dieren worden door steeds minder landbouwers gehouden, in alsmaar grotere (mega) stallen. De industrialisering van de landbouw, met een onnatuurlijk hoge bevolkingsdichtheid van dieren, brengt veel problemen met zich mee: dierenleed, uitstoot van broeikasgassen, verarming van het cultuurlandschap en het platteland, een overbelasting van het grond- en oppervlaktewater, mestverwerkingsproblemen (inclusief luchtverontreiniging, verzuring en geurhinder), niet nakoming van de Europese nitraatrichtlijnen, een antibioticaresistentie bij de dieren door de systematische toediening van antibiotica via veevoeder, enz.

Strengere regelgeving in Nederland — waar sinds 2013 provincies en gemeentes maxima kunnen opleggen voor de veehouderij-intensiteit en de grootte van een veehouderijlocatie in een gebied — zorgt voor een versnelling van de industrialisering van veehouderij in Vlaanderen. Gezien de grensoverschrijdende problematiek zou de Europese Commissie initiatief moeten nemen voor Europese normen rond veehouderij-intensiteit en de grootte van veehouderijen. Dit met respect voor mens, milieu, klimaat, dieren, en cultuurlandschap.

1. Is de Commissie bereid om initiatieven te nemen om de ernstige problemen die met industriële landbouw en veehouderij gepaard gaan in Europa aan te pakken?

2. Indien ja, is de Commissie bereid om Europese normen te ontwikkelen rond veehouderij-intensiteit en de grootte van een veehouderij (zoals maximum aantal dieren en/of maximum aantal dieren per hectare grond een landbouwer bezit).

3. De Europese Commissie heeft de verantwoordelijkheid toezicht te houden op landbouwsubsidies. Kan de commissie aangeven hoeveel Nederlandse bedrijven investeerden in Vlaanderen tussen 2000 en 2014. Welke bedrijven waren dat en maakten deze bedrijven ook aanspraak op landbouwsubsidies?

Antwoord van de heer Cioloș namens de Commissie
(22 mei 2014)

In de recent goedgekeurde hervorming van het gemeenschappelijke landbouwbeleid neemt de druk op natuurlijke hulpbronnen een centrale plaats in. In het hervormde beleidsprogramma moet de landbouw zijn milieuprestaties verbeteren door middel van duurzamere productiemethoden en door het nemen van maatregelen voor matiging van en aanpassing aan de klimaatverandering. De landbouw moet antwoorden op de vraag naar collectieve goederen zoals bijvoorbeeld landschappen, biodiversiteit van landbouwgronden en klimaatstabiliteit. Dit antwoord zal worden geformuleerd door middel van de complementaire effecten van verschillende beleidsinstrumenten: 1) randvoorwaarden, 2) de „groene rechtstreekse betaling", die landbouwers ertoe verplicht drie milieu- en klimaatvriendelijke praktijken te respecteren, 3) gerichte en vrijwillige landbouw-, milieu- en klimaatmaatregelen, evenals andere maatregelen voor plattelandsontwikkeling die op maat van regionale behoeften en voorwaarden werden opgesteld, zoals bijvoorbeeld biologische landbouw, 4) opleidingsmaatregelen en andere ondersteuning door het bedrijfadviseringssysteem, inzichten van het innovatiepartnerschap.

De Commissie is van mening dat de lidstaten beter geplaatst zijn om maxima op te leggen inzake de veedichtheid op en de grootte van veeteeltbedrijven. De Commissie zal er echter over waken dat de drie doelstellingen van het gemeenschappelijk landbouwbeleid worden uitgevoerd, meer bepaald: rendabele voedselproductie, duurzaam beheer van natuurlijke hulpbronnen en klimaatactie, en een evenwichtige territoriale ontwikkeling. Daarnaast zal zij er op toezien dat de gepaste beleidsinstrumenten, zoals hierboven beschreven, worden ingezet waar nodig.

Ten slotte heeft de Commissie geen gegevens over hoeveel en welke Nederlandse bedrijven tussen 2000 en 2014 in Vlaanderen investeerden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003698/14
to the Commission
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Mega farms and factory farming — livestock farming — intensity

Year after year, Flemish arable and livestock farming has been marked by growing intensification and increases of scale. More and more animals are being kept by fewer and fewer farmers, in ever more massive complexes. The industrialisation of agriculture, with unnaturally high livestock population densities, causes many problems: suffering to animals, emission of greenhouse gases, impoverishment of the cultural landscape and the countryside, pollution of groundwater and surface waters, problems with the processing of manure (including air pollution, acidification and odour nuisance), failure to comply with the European Nitrates Directive, resistance to antibiotics in animals due to the systematic administration of antibiotics in feed, etc.

Stricter regulation in the Netherlands — where since 2013 provincial and municipal authorities have been empowered to limit the intensity of livestock farming and the size of livestock farms in an area — is accelerating the industrialisation of livestock farming in Flanders. In view of the cross-border problems, the Commission ought to take steps to introduce European standards relating to the intensity of livestock farming and the size of livestock farms. The rules introduced should display respect for human beings, the environment, climate, animals and the cultural landscape.

1. Will the Commission take steps to tackle the serious problems associated with factory farming and highly intensive livestock rearing in Europe?

2. If so, will the Commission draw up European standards relating to the intensity of livestock farming and the size of livestock farms (e.g. setting a maximum number of animals and/or a maximum number of animals per hectare of land owned by a farmer)?

3. The Commission is responsible for monitoring farm subsidies. Can it indicate how many businesses based in the Netherlands invested in Flanders between 2000 and 2014? Which businesses were they, and did they also claim farm subsidies?

Answer given by Mr Cioloș on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

With the recently adopted reform of the common agricultural policy, the pressure on natural resources was put at forefront. In the policy design, agriculture has to improve its environmental performance via more sustainable production methods and to pursue climate change mitigation and adaption actions. Agriculture has to respond to demands for the provision of public goods such as landscapes, farmland biodiversity, climate stability, etc. This will be achieved by the complementary effects of various instruments: 1/ cross-compliance, 2/ the 'green direct payment' which requires farmers to respect three obligatory practices beneficial for the environment and climate change, 3/ targeted and voluntary agri-environmental-climate measures as well as other Rural Development measures such as organic farming, etc., designed according to regional needs and conditions, 4/ training measures and other support from the Farm Advisory System, insights from the Innovation Partnership.

The Commission considers the Member States better placed to set limits on livestock density or the size of livestock farms in Member States. However, the Commission will strive to ensure that the three objectives of the common agricultural policy (viable food production, sustainable management of natural resources and climate action and balanced territorial development) are being fulfilled and where applicable, that the adequate policy instruments, as outlined above, are being used.

Finally, the Commission does not possess data indicating which and how many companies based in the Netherlands invested in Flanders between 2000 and 2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003699/14
aan de Commissie
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(26 maart 2014)

Betreft: Opvangcentra straathonden in Roemenië geplunderd

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat de Roemeense overheid particuliere organisaties inhuurt om straathonden vaak op hardhandige manier te vangen met het doel deze honden om het leven te brengen? Weet de Commissie dat deze bedrijven per gevangen hond betaald worden?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met het feit dat in het weekend van 22 maart 2014 een opvangcentrum voor straathonden in Roemenië is geplunderd, waarbij tientallen straathonden zijn gestolen met het doel hier financiële beloningen voor te ontvangen ([1])?

De internationale dierenwelzijnsorganisatie FOUR PAWS/VIER VOETERS heeft in het betroffen opvangcentrum een kliniek gehuurd waar honden gecastreerd, gechipt en geënt worden en daarna aangeboden voor adoptie.

Na de diefstal zijn ze overgebracht naar een asiel waar zij worden vergiftigd of op een andere manier worden gedood.

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat premiejagen op straathonden door bedrijven, nu dit op grote schaal gebeurt, als economische activiteit beschouwd kan worden?

4. Staat de Commissie nog steeds achter de mededeling, dat zij een vereenvoudigd EU-wetgevingskader in gaat voeren met dierenwelzijnsbeginselen voor alle dieren die in het kader van een economische activiteit worden gehouden (strategie van de Europese Unie voor de bescherming en het welzijn van dieren 2012-2015)?

5. In hoeverre ziet de Commissie mogelijkheden om straathonden op Europees niveau te beschermen, nu duidelijk wordt dat in de hoedanigheid van premiejagen, economische activiteiten verbonden zijn aan deze straathonden? Kan de Commissie dierenwelzijnsrichtlijnenopstellen waaraan bedrijven en individuen moeten voldoen als ze de straathonden vangen en vervoeren?

6. Hoe kijkt de Commissie aan tegen het feit dat het werk van Internationale ngo's, zoals Viervoeters, direct en indirect onmogelijk wordt gemaakt door dit Roemeense overheidsbeleid?

7. Acht de Commissie het wenselijk dat Europese NGO's onbelemmerd hun werkzaamheden kunnen uitvoeren in EU- lidstaten en in hoeverre kan de Commissie een coördinerende rol spelen om zeker te stellen dat NGO's in staat zijn op te komen voor belangen van mens, dier en milieu?

Antwoord van de heer Borg namens de Commissie
(26 mei 2014)

Het geachte Parlementslid wordt verzocht de antwoorden op de schriftelijke vragen E-004111/2011, E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 en E-005276/2013 ([2]) te raadplegen waarin de straathondenkwestie en het beheer van de hondenpopulatie worden behandeld.

In het kader van de strategie van de Europese Unie voor de bescherming en het welzijn van dieren 2012-2015 ([3]) heeft de Commissie beslist een studie uit te voeren over het welzijn van honden en katten die betrokken zijn bij handelspraktijken. In het licht van deze studie, die naar verwachting eind 2014 zal worden afgesloten, zal de Commissie nagaan of het nodig is verdere actie te ondernemen met inachtneming van de bevoegdheden die haar in het Verdrag betreffende de Europese Unie worden toegekend.

([1]) Zie bijvoorbeeld artikel http://www.carodog.eu/?p=5&s=1&a=&item=5238.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/nl/parliamentary-questions.html .
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm .

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003699/14
to the Commission
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Looting of refuges for stray dogs in Romania

1. Is the Commission aware that the Romanian authorities hire the services of private organisations to catch stray dogs, often using harsh methods, with the aim of killing them? Does the Commission know that these businesses are paid per animal that they catch? ([1])

2. Is the Commission aware that in the weekend of 22 March 2014 a refuge for stray dogs in Romania was looted, and dozens of stray dogs were stolen with the aim of obtaining financial rewards for them?

The international animal welfare organisation FOUR PAWS has hired a clinic at the refuge where dogs are castrated, have microchips inserted and are vaccinated before being offered for adoption.

After the theft, they were taken to a dogs' home where they are being poisoned or killed in other ways.

3. Does the Commission consider that, if businesses are bounty hunting for stray dogs on such a large scale, this can be regarded as an economic activity?

4. Does the Commission still stand by the statement that it intends to introduce a simplified EU legislative framework for animal welfare principles for all animals kept in connection with an economic activity? (Strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015)

5. What scope does the Commission see for protecting stray dogs at European level, bearing in mind that it has now become clear that economic activities are associated with these stray dogs in the form of bounty hunting? Can the Commission draw up animal welfare guidelines with which businesses and individuals must comply when catching and transporting stray dogs?

6. What view does the Commission take of the fact that the work of international NGOs such as FOUR PAWS is being directly and indirectly thwarted by this Romanian government policy?

7. Does the Commission consider it desirable that European NGOs should be able to operate freely in EU Member States, and to what extent can the Commission play a coordinating role in order to ensure that NGOs can defend the interests of people, animals and the environment?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-004111/2011, E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([2]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

In the context of the EU strategy for the protection and welfare of animals 2012-2015 ([3]), the Commission decided to perform a study on the welfare of dogs and cats involved in commercial practices. In the light of this study, which is expected to be finalised by the end of 2014, the Commission will consider if it is necessary and possible to take specific initiatives in this field with due regard to the competences conferred by the Treaty to the European Union.

([1]) See for example article http://www.carodog.eu/?p=5&s=1&a=&item=5238.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003701/14
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wizy dla amerykańskich dyplomatów

Unia Europejska grozi, że wprowadzi wizy dla amerykańskich dyplomatów. Stanom Zjednoczonym zostało pozostawione ultimatum. Jeśli w ciągu sześciu miesięcy USA nie zniesie ograniczeń dla Polaków w podróżowaniu do USA, zostaną wprowadzone wizy dla dyplomatów ze Stanów Zjednoczonych. Unia Europejska wspiera pięć krajów, których obywatele wciąż potrzebują pozwoleń na wjazd do USA. Są to: Polska, Bułgaria, Rumunia, Cypr i Chorwacja. Nałożenie restrykcji na USA ma polegać na wprowadzeniu wiz dla niektórych przyjezdnych z Ameryki, jak dyplomaci, albo uzależnienia wejścia w życie porozumień handlowych od zniesienia wiz.

W jaki sposób Komisja zamierza osiągnąć balans pomiędzy walką o interesy państw członkowskich, gdy chodzi o zniesienie wiz, a nie wkraczaniem zbytnio w sprawy wewnętrzne Stanów Zjednoczonych i nie pogorszeniem stosunków z USA?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(6 czerwca 2014 r.)

Jednym z celów i priorytetów UE w stosunkach z USA jest osiągnięcie pełnej wzajemności w zakresie znoszenia wiz poprzez zagwarantowanie, że pozostałe państwa członkowskie dołączą do amerykańskiego programu znoszenia wiz tak szybko, jak to możliwe.

W świetle przepisów w sprawie zmienionego mechanizmu wzajemności zgodnie z rozporządzeniem 1289/2013 ([1]) oraz bez uszczerbku dla jej wniosku o unieważnienie części tego rozporządzenia, Komisja powinna przyjąć, w terminie 6 miesięcy od daty publikacji zgłoszeń przez państwa członkowskie przypadków braku wzajemności, akt wykonawczy w sprawie tymczasowego zawieszenia zwolnienia z obowiązku wizowego w stosunku do niektórych kategorii obywateli danego państwa trzeciego, bądź przedstawić sprawozdanie oceniające sytuację i wyjaśniające, dlaczego nie zaproponowała takiego środka. Komisja opublikowała zgłoszenia w dniu 12 kwietnia 2014 r. ([2])

Do chwili obecnej Komisja nie może przesądzać o wynikach swojej analizy, tj. o przyjęciu takiego aktu wykonawczego czy przedstawieniu sprawozdania. Analiza taka powinna uwzględniać wszystkie istotne czynniki, w tym konsekwencje zawieszenia zwolnienia z obowiązku wizowego dla stosunków zewnętrznych Unii i jej państw członkowskich z danym państwem trzecim. Parlament Europejski będzie w pełni informowany.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1289/2013 z dnia 11 grudnia 2013 r. w sprawie zmiany rozporządzenia Rady (WE) nr 539/2001 z dnia 15 marca 2001 r. wymieniającego państwa trzecie, których obywatele muszą posiadać wizy podczas przekraczania granic zewnętrznych, oraz te, których obywatele są zwolnieni z tego wymogu (Dz.U. L 347 z 20.12.2013).

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2014:111:TOC

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003701/14
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Visas for US diplomats

The European Union is threatening to introduce visas for US diplomats. The USA was issued with an ultimatum: if it fails to remove restrictions on Poles travelling to the USA within six months, visas will be introduced for US diplomats. The European Union is supporting five Member States whose citizens still need authorisation to enter the USA: Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus and Croatia. The imposition of restrictions on the USA is supposed to involve the introduction of visas for certain visitors from the USA, such as diplomats, or making the entry into force of trade agreements dependent on the removal of the visa requirement.

How does the Commission intend to strike a balance between fighting for the interests of the Member States as regards removing visa requirements, on the one hand, and refraining from interfering excessively in the internal affairs of the USA and preventing EU-US relations from deteriorating, on the other?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

One of EU's goals and priorities in its relations with the US is to achieve full visa waiver reciprocity by ensuring that the remaining Member States join the US Visa Waiver Program as soon as possible.

In accordance with the provisions on the revised reciprocity mechanism under Regulation 1289/2013 ([1]), and without prejudice to its application for annulment of part of this regulation, the Commission should adopt, within 6 months of the publication of Member States' notifications of non-reciprocity situations, an implementing act temporarily suspending the visa waiver for certain categories of citizens of the third country concerned, or a report assessing the situation and explaining the reasons why it did not propose such a measure. The Commission published the notifications on 12 April 2014 ([2]).

To date the Commission cannot prejudge the outcome of its analysis on whether it would adopt such an implementing act or a report. Such analysis should take into account all relevant factors, including the consequences of the suspension of the visa waiver for the external relations of the Union and its Member States with the third country in question. The European Parliament will be kept fully informed.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1289/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.12.2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 of 15.3.2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013).

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2014:111:TOC

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003702/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zamach na chrześcijan w Libii

W Libii znowu giną chrześcijanie. We wschodniej Libii, na plaży znaleziono ciała siedmiu egipskich chrześcijan, wcześniej zostali oni uprowadzeni w Bengazi. W tym roku jest to już drugie tego typu zdarzenie. Miesiąc temu niedaleko Trypolisu zostali zastrzeleni Brytyjczyk i Nowozelandka. Żadna z islamskich organizacji ekstremistycznych nie przyznała się do ataku.

1. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel monitoruje rozwój organizacji ekstremistycznych i terrorystycznych w Libii?

2. Co robi Wysoka Przedstawiciel w celu ochrony chrześcijan w Libii?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(16 maja 2014 r.)

UE jest bardzo zaniepokojona kwestią narastających oznak ekstremizmu w Libii, zwłaszcza we wschodniej części tego kraju. Brak egzekwowania rządów prawa sprzyja szerzeniu się incydentów związanych z bezpieczeństwem. UE zapewnia libijskiemu sektorowi bezpieczeństwa różne formy wsparcia, na przykład za pośrednictwem misji cywilnych w ramach WPBiO realizowanych w zakresie zintegrowanego zarządzania granicami. Jednak brak porozumienia politycznego w Libii podważa wysiłki UE, jak również pozostałej części wspólnoty międzynarodowej, zmierzające do udzielenia wsparcia służącego stabilizacji kraju.

W następstwie minionych ataków na mniejszości religijne w Libii oraz nieuzasadnionych przypadków zatrzymywania ich przedstawicieli, UE publicznie podkreśliła, że wolność religii lub przekonań jest uniwersalnym prawem człowieka, które należy chronić wszędzie i wobec każdego. UE wezwała rząd Libii do przyjęcia środków niezbędnych do zapewnienia ochrony mniejszości religijnych przed jakimikolwiek formami ataku lub dyskryminacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003702/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Attack on Christians in Libya

Christians are once again being killed in Libya. The bodies of seven Egyptian Christians, who had been kidnapped in Benghazi, were found on a beach in eastern Libya. This is already the second such incident this year. Last month, a British man and a woman from New Zealand were shot dead near Tripoli. None of the Islamic extremist organisations have yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

1. Is the High Representative monitoring the evolution of extremist and terroristorganisations in Libya?

2. What is the High Representative doing to protect Christians in Libya?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The EU is very concerned about the growing signs of extremism in Libya, notably in the East of the country. Rampant security incidents are being favoured by a lack of enforcement of rule of law. The EU is providing diverse forms of support to the Libyan security sector, for instance through a civilian CSDP mission on Integrated Border Management. However, the lack of a political settlement in Libya is undermining the efforts of the EU, and the rest of the international community, to assist in the stabilisation of the country.

Following previous attacks or unjustified detention against religious minorities in Libya the EU has underlined publically that freedom of religion or belief is a universal human right which needs to be protected everywhere and for everyone. The EU has urged the Libyan government to adopt the necessary measures to protect religious minorities against all forms of attacks or discrimination.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003703/14
do Komisji
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zakaz zbyt ryzykownych działań dla banków

Komisja Europejska przedstawia propozycje nowych przepisów, które zakazują największym bankom europejskim zbyt ryzykownych działań. Zakaz będzie dotyczył między innymi handlu instrumentami finansowymi i towarowymi na własny rachunek. Według Komisji tego typu działalność wiąże się z wieloma zagrożeniami, natomiast nie przynosi wymiernych korzyści gospodarce i klientom. Nowe przepisy będą pozwalać organom nadzoru na nakazanie bankom wydzielanie określonych – potencjalnie ryzykownych działań – od przyjmowania depozytów.

1. Czy przedstawiona przez Komisję lista trzydziestu banków, których dotyczyć będą nowe zasady, jest zamknięta czy będzie podlegać jeszcze zmianom?

2. Na ile pewna jest data przewidywanego wejścia nowych przepisów w życie, czyli połowy 2015 r.?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Michela Barniera w imieniu Komisji
(26 czerwca 2014 r.)

1. Wykaz banków, o którym wspomina Szanowny Pan Poseł, jest określony w ocenie skutków uzupełniającej wniosek dotyczący rozporządzenia w sprawie środków strukturalnych zwiększających odporność instytucji kredytowych UE (zob. w szczególności załącznik A8 do oceny skutków). Wykaz ten należy traktować jako wstępny. Wspomniany wniosek dotyczy banków, które zostały określone jako globalne instytucje o znaczeniu systemowym i które przekraczają określone progi dotyczące wielkości (posiadają łączne aktywa przekraczające 30 mld EUR i prowadzą działalność handlową, której wartość przekracza 70 mld EUR lub stanowi równowartość 10 procent łącznych aktywów banku).Wysokość progów określonych we wniosku została ustalona w taki sposób, aby zapewnić stabilność w dłuższym okresie, chociaż przyszłe zmiany wielkości i profilu działalności odpowiednich banków, np. w wyniku połączeń i przejęć, zbycia, zmiany strategii biznesowej itp., mogą mieć wpływ na wykaz banków, których dotyczy rozporządzenie.

2. Komisja uważa, że ramy czasowe dotyczące wejścia w życie tego rozporządzenia określone w uzasadnieniu do wniosku są ambitne, ale realistyczne. Ponadto, aby umożliwić bankom dostosowanie ich struktur w przewidzianych terminach w sposób sprawny i niepowodujący zakłóceń działalności, we wniosku przewidziano wprowadzenie odpowiedniego okresu przejściowego przed wejściem w życie najważniejszych przepisów. Zakaz handlu na własny rachunek będzie obowiązywać od dnia 1 stycznia 2017 r., a nakaz faktycznego wyodrębnienia innych rodzajów działalności handlowej, jeżeli wymaga tego właściwy organ, będzie obowiązywać od dnia 1 lipca 2018 r. Decyzja o ramach czasowych zostanie jednak ostatecznie podjęta przez współprawodawców.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003703/14
to the Commission
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Ban on excessively risky activities by banks

The Commission has published proposals for new rules that would prohibit Europe's largest banks from engaging in excessively risky activities. The ban would affect proprietary trading in financial instruments and commodities, among other things. According to the Commission, this type of activity entails many risks but no benefits for banks' customers or the wider economy. The new rules would empower supervisory bodies to order banks to separate certain potentially risky activities from their deposit-taking business.

1. Is the list presented by the Commission with the names of thirty banks which will beaffected by the new rules closed or will it still be subject to modifications?

2. How definite is the anticipated mid-2015 timeframe for the entry into force of the newrules?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

1. The list of banks referred to by the Honourable Member is set-out in the impact assessment accompanying the proposal for a regulation on structural measures improving the resilience of EU credit institutions (see in particular Annex A8 of the impact assessment). This list should be regarded as indicative. The banks that will be affected by the proposal are those designated as global systemically important institutions and those exceeding certain size thresholds (EUR 30 billion in total assets, and trading activities either exceeding EUR 70 billion or 10% of the bank's total assets).The thresholds set-out in the proposal have been calibrated to ensure stability over time, although future changes in the size and activities of the relevant banks, e.g. resulting from mergers and acquisitions, divestments, modifications in business strategies, etc., could impact the list of banks affected by the regulation.

2. The Commission considers that the timeframe for the entry into force of the regulation set-out in the explanatory memorandum of the proposal is ambitious but feasible. Moreover, in order to allow banks to adapt their structures in a smooth, non-disruptive and timely fashion, the proposal foresees an appropriate transition period before some of the most significant provisions would take effect. The proprietary trading ban would apply as of 1 January 2017 and the effective separation of other trading activities, if required by the competent authority, would apply as of 1 July 2018. However, the timetable will ultimately be decided by the co-legislators.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003704/14
do Komisji (Wiceprzewodniczącej/Wysokiej Przedstawiciel)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wiceprzewodnicząca/Wysoka Przedstawiciel – Zamachy na turystów

Ugrupowanie dżihadystów Ansar Bajt al-Makdis wezwało turystów przebywających w Egipcie do opuszczenia kraju. W przeciwnym razie będą ofiarami zamachów. W zamachu bombowym w Synaju, w egipskim kurorcie Taba nad Morzem Czerwonym, śmierć poniosło trzech turystów z Korei Południowej i egipski kierowca. Autobus był na trasie z klasztoru św. Katarzyny na południu Synaju.

1. Niepokoi mnie wzrost siły ugrupowań dżihadystycznych w Egipcie. Egipt jest krajem często odwiedzanym przez obywateli Unii Europejskiej. Wkrótce także oni mogą stać się celem zamachów tych ugrupowań. Czy Wysoka Przedstawiciel monitoruje sytuację rozwoju ugrupowań dżihadystycznych w Egipcie?

2. Jakie działania zamierza podjąć Wysoka Przedstawiciel, aby zwiększyć bezpieczeństwo obywateli Unii w Egipcie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez Wysoką Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodniczącą Komisji Catherine Ashton w imieniu Komisji
(11 czerwca 2014 r.)

UE wielokrotnie wyrażała zaniepokojenie wybuchami przemocy w Egipcie i potępiała tamtejsze ataki terrorystyczne – ostatnio w konkluzjach Rady Europejskiej z dnia 10 lutego 2014 r. Ministrowie spraw zagranicznych państw UE potępili w nich „z całą mocą ataki terrorystyczne na Synaju i w innych częściach Egiptu", podkreślając, że „zamachów terrorystycznych nie da się niczym usprawiedliwić" i potwierdzając zaangażowanie UE we wspieranie stabilności i bezpieczeństwa w Egipcie. Ponadto Wysoka Przedstawiciel/Wiceprzewodnicząca potępia ataki terrorystyczne, ponieważ przemocy nie można akceptować, czemu ostatnio dała wyraz w swoim oświadczeniu z dnia 11 stycznia 2014 r.

Obecnie jednak Unia Europejska nie realizuje z Egiptem projektów w sprawie zwalczania terroryzmu lub reformy sektora bezpieczeństwa. Bez gruntownej reformy sektora bezpieczeństwa oraz środków uzupełniających w zakresie zwalczania przemytu i przestępczości zorganizowanej jest mało prawdopodobne, że dojdzie do poprawy sytuacji.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003704/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Jacek Włosowicz (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Attacks on tourists

The jihadi group Ansar Bait al-Maqdis has called on tourists in Egypt to leave the country or be victims of attacks. A bomb attack in the Egyptian Red Sea resort town of Taba, which is located on the Sinai Peninsula, claimed the lives of three South Korean tourists and their Egyptian driver. The bus was travelling from Saint Catherine's Monastery to the southern part of the peninsula.

1. I am disturbed by the growing strength of jihadi groups in Egypt — a country which is often visited by EU citizens. Soon, they too could be the targets of attacks carried out by these groups. Is the High Commissioner monitoring the evolution of jihadi groups in Egypt?

2. What steps does the High Representative intend to take to improve security for EU citizens in Egypt?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The EU has on numerous occasions expressed concern at the violent events in Egypt, condemning terrorist attacks: most recently, in the Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014, the Foreign Ministers of the EU condemned 'in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks in the Sinai and other parts of Egypt', reiterating that 'no cause can justify terrorist violence', and reaffirming the EU commitment to support stability and security in Egypt. Also, the HR/VP condemns terrorist attacks as violence cannot be accepted, lastly in her statement of 11 January 2014.

Currently, however, the European Union has no on-going projects with Egypt on counter-terrorism or Security Sector Reform. Without a thorough reform of the security sector as well as complementary measures to fight trafficking and organised crime, it is unlikely that the situation will improve.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003707/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Statistici referitoare la situația gospodăriilor la nivelul UE

Conform Eurostat, cel mai comun tip de gospodărie la nivelul UE-27 în 2011 a fost cel în care trăiește o singură persoană. Ultimele date statistice disponibile relevă faptul că în Uniunea Europeană, în medie, trei gospodării din zece sunt compuse dintr-un singur membru. Majoritatea acestor gospodării sunt compuse din femei care trăiesc singure sau din persoane în vârstă. Proporția acestor gospodării este în creștere, iar date fiind categoriile de persoane care intră în componența lor, acestea sunt mai vulnerabile și mai supuse riscului de sărăcie, în special în contextul economic actual.

Dispune Comisia de date statistice recente referitoare la situația socială și economică a acestor gospodării? Dacă nu, intenționează Comisia să demareze o examinare a situației acestora și să publice în viitorul apropiat o statistică și o analiză a situației gospodăriilor compuse dintr-un singur membru?

Răspuns dat de dl Šemeta în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2014)

În conformitate cu ultimele date puse la dispoziție de ancheta privind statisticile Uniunii Europene referitoare la venit și la condițiile de viață (EU-SILC) ale Eurostat, 34,3 % dintre gospodăriile compuse dintr-un singur membru au fost supuse riscului de sărăcie sau de excluziune socială în UE-28 în 2012, față de 24,8 % în medie pentru toate tipurile de gospodării ([1]). Persoanele supuse riscului de sărăcie sau de excluziune socială sunt cele care trăiesc într-o gospodărie cu un venit disponibil pe adult-echivalent sub pragul sărăciei, stabilit la 60 % din venitul național mediu echivalat, cele care trăiesc în condiții de lipsuri materiale grave ([2]) sau cele cu vârsta mai mică de 60 de ani și care trăiesc într-o gospodărie cu o intensitate foarte scăzută a muncii, adică unde, în medie, adulții în vârstă de 18-59 de ani lucrează mai puțin de 20 % din potențialul lor total de muncă.

Eurostat a publicat datele din 2013 bazate pe ancheta asupra forței de muncă privind ocuparea forței de muncă și șomajul în gospodării compuse dintr-un singur membru la 29 aprilie 2014. ([3])

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_peps03&lang=en

([2]) Persoanele care trăiesc în condiții de lipsuri materiale sunt cele care trăiesc într-o gospodărie care nu își poate permite cel puțin 4 din următoarele 9 elemente: 1) să plătească chiria/ipoteca sau facturile la utilități la timp; 2) să încălzească în mod adecvat locuința; 3) să se confrunte cu cheltuieli neașteptate; 4) o săptămână de vacanță în afara locuinței; 5) carne, carne de pasăre, pește sau un echivalent proteic o dată la două zile; 6) un automobil; 7) o mașină de spălat; 8) un televizor color și 9) un telefon.

([3]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfst_hheredty&lang=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003707/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EU household statistics

According to Eurostat, single-member households were the largest single category of household in the EU-27 in 2011, the most recent data showing an EU average of three out of ten, mainly women or elderly people living alone. The percentage of such households is increasing, those concerned being increasingly vulnerable and exposed to the risk of poverty, particularly in the current economic climate.

Does the Commission have recent data regarding the social and economic situation of single-member households? If not, does it intend to launch an investigation and publish the relevant statistics and analyses in the immediate future?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

According to the latest data available from Eurostat's European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) survey, 34.3% of single person households were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU28 in 2012 against 24.8% in average for all types of households ([1]). People at risk of poverty or social exclusion are those: living in a household with an equivalised disposable income below the poverty threshold set at 60% of the national median equivalised income, or; severely materially deprived ([2]), or; those aged less than 60 and living in a household with very low work intensity, i.e. where on average adults aged 18-59 worked less than 20% of their total work potential.

Eurostat published the 2013 data based on the Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) on employment and unemployment in single-member households on 29 April 2014 ([3]).

([1]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_peps03&lang=en

([2]) People materially deprived are those living in a household not able to afford at least 4 of the following 9 items: 1) to pay rent/mortgage or utility bills on time; 2) to keep home adequately warm; 3) to face unexpected expenses; 4) a one week holiday away from home; 5) meat, chicken, fish or a protein equivalent every second day; having 6) a car; 7) a washing machine; 8) a colour TV; and 9) a telephone.

([3]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=lfst_hheredty&lang=en

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003709/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Statistici privind infertilitatea la nivelul UE

Tot mai multe cupluri din Uniunea Europeană și nu numai se confruntă cu probleme de infertilitate. Conform Organizației Mondiale a Sănătății, aceasta reprezintă o boală a sistemului de reproducere, definită prin incapacitatea de a concepe un copil. În România, de exemplu, unul din șase cupluri se confruntă cu probleme de infertilitate, iar natalitatea se află pe un trend descendent. Cu toate acestea, cuplurile afectate de infertilitate care vor să apeleze la fertilizarea in vitro pentru a avea un copil trebuie să suporte în continuare costurile integrale ale unei astfel de proceduri, în condițiile în care Ministerul Sănătății nu ia în calcul decontarea lor prin Fondul Unic de Asigurări Sociale de Sănătate în 2014-2015, iar subprogramul național de fertilizare in vitro a fost sistat la începutul anului 2013.

Dispune Comisia de date statistice referitoare la situația și procentul cuplurilor care se confruntă cu probleme de infertilitate din Uniunea Europeană, precum și la costurile de fertilizare din diferite state membre și subvenționarea lor de către acestea din urmă?

Chiar dacă este vorba despre politicile de sănătate — o competență exclusivă a statelor membre —, care este poziția Comisiei cu privire la acest subiect? De asemenea, are în vedere Comisia promovarea unui schimb de bune practici între statele membre în acest domeniu?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(23 mai 2014)

Conform raportului final din 2013 al proiectului finanțat de UE EURO-PERISTAT ([1]), până la 5-6 % din nașterile din Uniunea Europeană pot avea loc după utilizare unei anumite forme de tehnici de reproducere asistată.

În 2010, Comisia a publicat „Analiza comparativă a reproducerii asistate medical în UE: regulament și tehnologii" ([2]). Studiul indică practica existentă a tehnologiilor de reproducere asistată. Acesta oferă o imagine de ansamblu a legislației naționale și a politicilor de rambursare din statele membre, precum și a practicilor stabilite.

Organizarea și finanțarea serviciilor de sănătate și de îngrijire medicală — inclusiv deciziile referitoare la tratamentele de fertilizare disponibile și posibila lor rambursare — și definirea politicilor de sănătate este o chestiune care ține de responsabilitatea statelor membre.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301; „Sănătatea și îngrijirea femeilor însărcinate și a sugarilor în Europa în 2010" http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organs/docs/study_eshre_ro.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003709/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Statistics on infertility in the EU

An increasing number of couples in the European Union, as well as elsewhere, are experiencing infertility problems. According to the World Health Organisation, this is 'a disease of the reproductive system defined by the failure to achieve a pregnancy'. In Romania, for example, one in six couples are faced with infertility problems, and the birth rate is in decline. Despite this, couples experiencing infertility who want to use in vitro fertilisation in order to have a child still have to meet the entire cost of this procedure, given that the Ministry of Health has not made provision for it to be subsidised through the Single Health Insurance Fund in the period 2014-2015, and the national sub-programme for *in vitro* fertilisation came to an end in early 2013.

Does the Commission have any statistics on the percentage of couples experiencing infertility problems in the European Union and on their situation, as well as on how much fertility treatment costs in each Member State and the extent to which they each subsidise this?

Although this is a health policy issue — and therefore the sole competence of the Member States — what is the Commission's position with regard to it? Does the Commission plan to encourage an exchange of good practices between Member States in this field?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The 2013 final report of the EU-funded project Euro-Peristat ([1]) states that up to 5 to 6% of births in the European Union may occur after use of some form of assisted reproductive techniques.

In 2010 the Commission published the 'Comparative Analysis of Medically Assisted Reproduction in the EU: Regulation and Technologies' ([2]). The study maps the existing practice of assisted reproductive technologies. It provides an overview of national legislation and reimbursement policies in the Member States as well as established practices.

The organisation and financing of health services and medical care — including decisions related to fertility treatment available and its possible reimbursement — and the definition of health policies is a matter under the responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20101301 'Health and care of pregnant women and babies in Europe in 2010' http://www.europeristat.com/images/European%20Perinatal%20Health%20Report_2010.pdf

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organs/docs/study_eshre_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003710/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Concediul de maternitate al femeilor care recurg la o mamă surogat

Comunicatul de presă nr. 36/14 al Curții de Justiție a Uniunii relevă faptul că dreptul Uniunii nu impune ca o mamă beneficiară care a avut un copil datorită unui contract de reproducere umană asistată prin intermediul unei mame surogat să beneficieze de concediu de maternitate sau de un concediu echivalent.

În plus, în ceea ce privește Directiva 92/85/CEE privind lucrătoarele gravide, se arată faptul că obiectivul acesteia este promovarea îmbunătățirii securității și a sănătății la locul de muncă în cazul lucrătoarelor gravide, care au născut de curând sau care alăptează, aceste persoane fiind considerate un grup expus unor riscuri specifice.

Nu în ultimul rând, Curtea mai menționează faptul că, în cuprinsul acestei directive, dispoziția privitoare la concediul de maternitate se referă în mod expres la naștere și are ca scop protejarea mamei copilului în situația specifică de vulnerabilitate care decurge din sarcina sa.

În lumina acestei decizii, și a implicațiilor sale în practică, care este poziția Comisiei? Intenționează Comisia să elaboreze o nouă propunere de modificare a Directivei 92/85/CEE?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2014)

În 2008, Comisia a adoptat o propunere ([1]) de modificare a Directivei 92/85/CEE, care este în prezent blocată la nivelul negocierilor între cei doi colegiuitori. În propunerea Comisiei, mamelor care au avut un copil prin intermediul unei mame surogat, în baza unui contract de reproducere umană asistată, nu li se acordă drepturi maternale deoarece această directivă se referă la o modificare adusă unei directive privind sănătatea și siguranța, pe când aceste mame ar avea nevoie de concediu și de protecție specifică din alte motive decât sănătatea și siguranța. Nici amendamentele la propunerea Comisiei, adoptate de către Parlamentul European, nu conțin dispoziții referitoare la aceste mame.

([1]) COM(2008) 600/4.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003710/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Maternity leave for women who use surrogate mothers

Press release No 36/14 from the Court of Justice of the EU points out that EC law does not require that a mother who has had a baby through a surrogacy agreement should be entitled to maternity leave or its equivalent.

Moreover, as regards Directive 92/85/EEC on pregnant workers, the Court points out that the objective of that directive is to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding, such workers being considered a specific risk group.

The Court also notes that the provision relating to maternity leave in that directive expressly refers to confinement, and its purpose is to protect the mother in the especially vulnerable situation arising from her pregnancy.

What is the Commission's position in the light of this decision and its practical implications? Is the Commission intending to draw up a fresh proposal to amend Directive 92/85/EEC?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

In 2008, the Commission adopted a proposal ([1]) to amend Directive 92/85/EEC which is currently blocked in negotiations between the two co-legislators. In the Commission proposal maternity rights are not provided for mothers who have had their baby via a surrogacy agreement because this directive concerns an amendment to a health and safety directive whereas these mothers would need leave and specific protection for reasons other than health and safety. The amendments to the Commission proposal adopted by the European Parliament do not contain provisions for these mothers either.

([1]) COM(2008) 600/4.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003711/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Capacitatea statelor membre de a asigura gazul necesar

Gazul natural constituie un element esențial al aprovizionării cu energie a Uniunii Europene, reprezentând o pătrime din aprovizionarea cu energie primară și fiind utilizat, în principal, la producerea de energie electrică, la încălzire, ca materie primă pentru industrie și carburant pentru transporturi.

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 994/2010 privind măsurile de garantare a securității aprovizionării cu gaze naturale prevede ca:

„Statul membru sau, în cazul în care statul membru decide astfel, autoritatea competentă se asigură că se iau măsurile necesare pentru ca, până la 3 decembrie 2014, în cazul afectării infrastructurii unice principale de gaze, capacitatea infrastructurii rămase, determinată în conformitate cu formula N-1 prevăzută la punctul 2 din anexa I, să aibă capacitatea, fără a aduce atingere alineatului (2) din prezentul articol, de a satisface cantitatea totală de gaze a zonei calculate necesară pentru o zi de cerere de gaze excepțional de mare constatată statistic o dată la 20 de ani. Aceste măsuri nu aduc atingere, dacă se dovedește oportun și necesar, responsabilității operatorilor de sisteme de a face investițiile corespunzătoare, nici obligațiilor operatorilor de sisteme de transport prevăzute în Directiva 2009/73/CE și în Regulamentul (CE) nr. 715/2009."

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul măsurilor pe care trebuiau să le întreprindă statele membre pentru a se asigura că pot asigura cantitatea totală de gaze a zonei calculate necesară pentru o zi de cerere de gaze excepțional de mare constatată statistic o dată la 20 de ani?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(27 mai 2014)

Articolul 6 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 994/2010 prevede o obligație legată de infrastructură pentru statele membre. Respectiv, articolul prevede obligația ca, până la 3 decembrie 2014, statele membre să se asigure că infrastructura lor este suficient de robustă pentru a face față afectării elementului lor unic principal de infrastructură („standardul N-1").

Pe baza informațiilor furnizate de statele membre în planurile lor de acțiune preventive naționale, conform articolului 5 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 994/2010, se pare că capacitatea statelor membre de a face față afectării infrastructurii lor principale s-a îmbunătățit semnificativ în ultimii ani. Comisia se așteaptă ca, până în decembrie 2014, majoritatea statelor membre să fie capabile să respecte standardul „N-1". Cu toate acestea, pentru unele state membre, s-ar putea dovedi dificilă respectarea standardului „N-1" până la acea dată. Comisia colaborează îndeaproape cu aceste state membre pentru a găsi soluții de îmbunătățire a situației. Spre sfârșitul anului, se va finaliza un raport cuprinzător privind punerea în aplicare a Regulamentului nr. 994/2010.

Trebuie precizat, în acest context, că articolul 6 din Regulamentul (CE) nr. 994/2010 este doar unul dintre elementele activității Comisiei menite să crească rezistența UE în cazul întreruperii alimentării cu gaze. Regulamentul (UE) nr. 347/2013 („Regulamentul TEN-E") a fost gândit să promoveze proiectele de infrastructură cu cea mai mare valoare adăugată pentru piața internă a gazului („proiectele de interes comun"). În urma unei cereri din partea Consiliului European, Comisia lucrează, de asemenea, la un studiu aprofundat privind securitatea aprovizionării cu energie și o strategie de creștere a independenței energetice, studiu care va fi publicat în iunie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003711/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Security of gas supplies to Members States

Natural gas is an essential source of energy for the European Union, representing one-quarter of its energy supply. It is used principally for power generation, heating, industrial production and transport fuel.

Regulation (EU) No 994/2010, concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply, stipulates that:

'Member States or, where a Member State so provides, the Competent Authority shall ensure that the necessary measures are taken so that by 3 December 2014 at the latest, in the event of a disruption of the single largest gas infrastructure, the capacity of the remaining infrastructure, determined according to the N-1 formula as provided in point 2 of Annex 1, is able, without prejudice to paragraph 2 of this Article, to satisfy total gas demand of the calculated area during a day of exceptionally high gas demand, occurring with a statistical probability of once in 20 years. This is without prejudice, where appropriate and necessary, to the responsibility of system operators to make the corresponding investments and to the obligations of transmission system operators as laid down in Directive 2009/73/EC and Regulation EC No 715/2009.'

Can the Commission indicate what progress has been made by the Member States in taking the necessary measures to ensure the availability of gas supply to satisfy total demand in the calculated area during a day of exceptionally high demand occurring with its statistical probability of once in 20 years?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 provides for an infrastructure-related obligation for Member States. It foresees the obligation for Member States to make sure that their infrastructure is sufficiently robust to cope with a disruption of the single largest element of their infrastructure ('N-1 standard') by 3 December 2014.

On the basis of the information provided by Member States in their Preventive Action Plans pursuant to Article 5 of Regulation 994/2010, it appears that Member States' abilities to cope with a disruption of their largest infrastructure have significantly improved in recent years. The Commission expects that most Member States will manage to fulfil the 'N-1' standard by December 2014. However, for some Member States it may be difficult to fulfil the 'N-1' standard by that date. The Commission is working together with these Member States to find solutions to improve the situation. A comprehensive report on the implementation of Regulation 994/2010 will be completed later this year.

It should be noted in this context that Article 6 of Regulation 994/2010 is only one element of the Commission's work to improve the EU's resilience for gas interruptions. The recently adopted 'TEN-E'-Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 has been designed to promote infrastructure projects with the highest added value for the internal gas market ('Projects of Common Interest'). Following a request by the European Council, the Commission is also working on an in-depth study on energy supply security and a strategy on enhancing energy independence which will be published in June.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003712/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Securitatea aprovizionării cu gaze a UE

În ultimii zece ani, consumul de gaz în Europa a crescut rapid. Scăderea producției interne a fost însoțită de creșterea importurilor de gaze într-un ritm și mai rapid, ceea ce a condus la sporirea dependenței de importuri și la necesitatea abordării aspectelor referitoare la securitatea aprovizionării cu gaze. În plus, unele state membre se găsesc într-o poziție izolată în privința aprovizionării cu gaze („insulă de gaze"), ca urmare a absenței legăturilor de infrastructură cu restul Uniunii.

Conform Regulamentului (UE) nr. 994/2010 privind măsurile de garantare a securității aprovizionării cu gaze naturale, până la 3 decembrie 2014, Comisia trebuie:

a. să formuleze concluzii cu privire la mijloacele posibile de ameliorare a securității aprovizionării la nivelul Uniunii, să evalueze fezabilitatea efectuării unor evaluări ale riscurilor și a stabilirii planurilor de acțiune preventive și a planurilor de urgență la nivelul Uniunii și să prezinte Parlamentului European și Consiliului un raport cu privire la punerea în aplicare a regulamentului, care să conțină, printre altele, informații referitoare la progresele realizate în domeniul interconectivității piețelor; și

b. să prezinte Parlamentului European și Consiliului un raport cu privire la consistența planurilor de acțiune preventive și a planurilor de urgență ale statelor membre, precum și la contribuția acestora la solidaritate și la stadiul de pregătire din perspectiva Uniunii.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul acestor documente și când apreciază că acestea vor putea fi prezentate Parlamentului European?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(15 mai 2014)

Comisia Europeană efectuează o monitorizare continuă a securității aprovizionării cu gaze și pregătește un raport cuprinzând elementele prevăzute la articolul 14 din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 994/2010 privind măsurile de garantare a securității aprovizionării cu gaze naturale și de abrogare a Directivei 2004/67/CE a Consiliului. Acest raport va fi adoptat în cursul acestui an. În plus, dând curs solicitării Consiliului European, Comisia pregătește în prezent un studiu cuprinzător cu privire la securitatea energetică și o strategie privind consolidarea independenței energetice. Se preconizează publicarea acestor documente în luna iunie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003712/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Security of gas supply in the EU

Gas consumption in Europe has increased rapidly during the last 10 years. With decreasing domestic production, gas imports have increased even more rapidly, thus creating higher import dependence and the need to address security of gas supply aspects. In addition, some Member States find themselves on a gas island as a result of an absence of infrastructure connections with the rest of the Union.

Under Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply, by 3 December 2014 the Commission is to:

(a) draw conclusions as to possible means to enhance security of supply at Union level, assess the feasibility of carrying out risk assessments and establishing Preventive Action Plans and Emergency Plans at Union level and report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of this regulation, including, *inter alia*, the progress made on market interconnectivity; and

(b) report to the European Parliament and the Council on the overall consistency of Member States' Preventive Action Plans and Emergency Plans as well as their contribution to solidarity and preparedness from a Union perspective.

Can the Commission say what stage has been reached on these documents and when it expects them to be ready for submission to Parliament?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

The European Commission carries out a continuous monitoring of the security of gas supply and is preparing a report covering the elements required by Article 14 of the regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply and repealing Council Directive 2004/67/EC. This report will be adopted later this year. Moreover, in response to the European Council's request, the Commission is preparing a comprehensive study on energy security and a strategy on enhancing energy independence. These documents are expected to be published in June.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003713/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Creșterea natalității în UE

Conform ultimelor date publicate de Eurostat privind populația totală a Uniunii Europene, deși populația totală de la nivelul întregii UE a crescut în perioada 2012-2013 de la 504,6 milioane de cetățeni la 505,7 milioane de cetățeni, un număr de 11 state membre ale UE au înregistrat scăderi ale populației. Cifrele arată că aceste scăderi sunt înregistrate în general în statele care au fost afectate într-o foarte mare măsură de criza economică și financiară. Aș dori să întreb Comisia ce măsuri are în vedere, împreună cu statele membre, pentru a asigura, pe termen mediu și lung, creșterea natalității la nivelul întregii UE și, în special, în statele membre care au înregistrat o scădere a populației totale?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(28 mai 2014)

Răspunsul Comisiei la întrebările E-1799/14 și P-0568/2014 abordează aspectele ridicate de distinsa membră.

În plus, deși statele membre au competența de a decide cu privire la politicile de sprijinire a familiilor, Comisia ar putea sprijini astfel de politici dacă ele corespund obiectivului unui instrument de finanțare existent al UE, cum ar fi FSE, FEDR și EaSI (de exemplu, construcția de facilități pentru îngrijirea copiilor, măsuri de sprijinire a participării femeilor pe piața muncii).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003713/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Increase in the EU birth rate

According to the latest Eurostat statistics on the EU population, the total number of people living in the EU rose from 504.6 million to 505.7 million in the period 2012-2013, but in 11 Member States the population fell. The figures show that decline has generally occurred in states that have been seriously affected by the economic and financial crisis.

Can the Commission state what steps it intends to take, in conjunction with the Member States, to ensure a medium-term and long-term increase in the birth rate in the EU as a whole and particularly in Member States where the total population has been falling?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission's reply to E-1799/14 and P-0568/2014 addresses the questions raised by the Honourable Member.

Furthermore, while it is for Member States to decide on policies that support families, the Commission could potentially support such policies should they correspond to the purpose of an existing EU financing instrument, such as the ESF, ERDF and EaSI (e.g. construction of childcare facilities; measures supporting female participation in the labour market).

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003714/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Utilizarea unor niveluri minime de energie din surse regenerabile în cazul clădirilor

Controlul consumului de energie în Europa și intensificarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, împreună cu economiile de energie și creșterea eficienței energetice sunt factori care joacă un rol important în promovarea siguranței în aprovizionarea cu energie, promovarea dezvoltării tehnologice și a inovației și oferirea unor oportunități de ocupare a forței de muncă și de dezvoltare regională, în special în zonele rurale și în cele izolate.

Conform Directivei 2009/28/CE privind promovarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, până la 31 decembrie 2014, statele membre solicită, după caz, în reglementările și codurile lor privind construcțiile sau prin orice măsuri cu efect similar, utilizarea unor niveluri minime de energie din surse regenerabile în cazul clădirilor noi și al celor existente care fac obiectul unei renovări majore. Statele membre permit ca îndeplinirea respectivelor niveluri minime să fie realizată, printre altele, prin încălzire și răcire urbană produsă prin utilizarea unei proporții semnificative de surse regenerabile de energie.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul utilizării unor niveluri minime de energie din surse regenerabile în cazul clădirilor noi și al celor existente care fac obiectul unei renovări majore în statele membre?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(15 mai 2014)

Singura precizare pe care Comisia poate să o facă în cazul de față este aceea că planurile naționale de acțiune în domeniul energiei din surse regenerabile furnizează informații cu privire la măsurile avute în vedere pentru utilizarea de surse regenerabile de energie în clădiri. Măsurile planificate se concentrează în principal pe niveluri minime ale energiei termice solare pentru producerea de apă caldă menajeră (CY, EL, IT, PT, ES) ([1]). Termenul limită pentru punerea în aplicare a cerinței juridice prevăzute la articolul 13 alineatul (4) din Directiva 2009/28/CE, și anume de introducere în reglementările și codurile privind construcțiile ale statelor membre a utilizării unor niveluri minime de energie din surse regenerabile în cazul clădirilor noi și al celor existente care fac obiectul unei renovări majore, este 31 decembrie 2014. Comisia va avea mai multe detalii cu privire la îndeplinirea acestei cerințe după această dată.

([1]) COM(2013) 0483 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003714/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Minimum level of renewable energy in buildings

Measures to control energy consumption in Europe, step up the use of renewable energy sources, save energy and increase energy efficiency make a significant contribution to promoting the security of energy supply, technological progress, innovation, employment opportunities and regional development, particularly in rural and isolated areas.

Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources states that, by 31 December 2014, Member States shall, in their building regulations and codes or by other means with equivalent effect, where appropriate, require the use of minimum levels of energy from renewable sources in new buildings and in existing buildings that are subject to major renovation and shall permit those minimum levels to be fulfilled, *inter alia*, through district heating and cooling produced using a significant proportion of renewable energy sources.

Can the Commission say what progress has been made regarding the use of minimum levels of renewable energy in new buildings or existing buildings that are subject to major renovation?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

The Commission can only comment on this by saying that Member States' National Renewable Energy Action Plans provide information on the measures envisaged for using renewable energy sources in buildings. Measures planned are mostly focused on minimum levels of thermal solar energy for the production of domestic hot water (CY, EL, IT, PT, ES) ([1]). The deadline for implementing the legal requirement of Art 13(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC, i.e. of introducing in their building regulations and codes the use of minimum levels of energy from renewable sources and for existing buildings that are subject to major renovation, is 31 December 2014. The Commission will have more details on the fulfilment of this requirement after this date.

([1]) COM(2013)0483 final.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003715/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Punerea în aplicare a Directivei privind promovarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile

Controlul consumului de energie în Europa și intensificarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, împreună cu economiile de energie și creșterea eficienței energetice, constituie componente importante ale pachetului de măsuri necesare pentru reducerea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră.

Conform Directivei 2009/28/CE privind promovarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, până la 31 decembrie 2014, Comisia prezintă un raport prin care va urmări o evaluare a punerii în aplicare a prezentei directive, în special în ceea ce privește mecanismele de cooperare, pentru a garanta că, împreună cu posibilitatea continuării utilizării schemelor naționale de sprijin de către statele membre, așa cum se menționează la articolul 3 alineatul (3), aceste mecanisme permit statelor membre să realizeze obiectivele naționale definite în anexa I, cu un raport optim costuri-beneficii, o evaluare a progreselor tehnologice și concluziile care urmează a fi trase în vederea atingerii obiectivului de 20 % energie din surse regenerabile la nivel comunitar.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul realizării evaluării mai sus menționate și când preconizează Comisia că va prezenta Parlamentului European raportul respectiv?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003716/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Ponderea energiei din surse regenerabile utilizată în toate formele de transporturi

Controlul consumului de energie în Europa și intensificarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, împreună cu economiile de energie și creșterea eficienței energetice, constituie componente importante ale pachetului de măsuri necesare pentru reducerea emisiilor de gaze cu efect de seră.

Conform Directivei 2009/28/CE privind promovarea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile, până la 31 decembrie 2014, Comisia prezintă un raport privind obiectivul menționat la articolul 3 alineatul (4), care stabilește că fiecare stat membru se asigură că ponderea energiei din surse regenerabile utilizată în toate formele de transporturi în 2020 reprezintă cel puțin 10 % din consumul final de energie în transporturi în statul membru respectiv.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul realizării obiectivului mai sus menționat și când preconizează Comisia că va prezenta Parlamentului European raportul respectiv?

Răspuns comun dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(27 mai 2014)

Comisia lucrează deja în mod extensiv cu statele membre pentru încurajarea utilizării mai ample a mecanismelor de cooperare prevăzute de Directiva privind energia din surse regenerabile (precum transferurile statistice, proiectele comune și programele de sprijin comune) în vederea promovării utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile și atingerii obiectivelor 2020, ceea ce ar putea scădea cu 5% factura globală în vederea atingerii obiectivului. Documentul de orientare al Comisiei privind utilizarea mecanismelor de cooperare, adoptat la 5 noiembrie 2013 ([1]), oferă o imagine de ansamblu a obstacolelor percepute din calea utilizării mecanismelor de cooperare și le furnizează statelor membre orientări practice pentru depășirea obstacolelor respective și pentru încurajarea cooperării dintre ele, prin diferitele mecanisme prevăzute de Directiva privind energia din surse regenerabile. Comisia continuă să conlucreze cu autoritățile și părțile interesate din statele membre, oferind asistență practică statelor membre interesate de utilizarea acestor mecanisme ([2]), și va monitoriza progresul în domeniu în vederea includerii în raportul intermediar privind progresele înregistrate în domeniul energiei din surse regenerabile, pe care intenționează să-l adopte până la sfârșitul anului 2014 sau la începutul anului 2015.

([1]) Comunicarea intitulată „Realizarea pieței interne a energiei electrice și valorificarea la maximum a intervenției publice” [COM (2013)7243] și „Orientări privind utilizarea mecanismelor de cooperare” [SWD (2013)440].
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/doc/2014_design_features_of_support_schemes_task1.pdf

Directiva privind instalarea infrastructurilor pentru combustibili alternativi (votată de Parlamentul European la 15 aprilie) va fi și ea un stimulent pentru creșterea utilizării energiei din surse regenerabile în sectorul transporturilor și pentru atingerea obiectivului de 10% energie din surse regenerabile în transporturi până în 2020.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003715/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Implementation of the directive on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources

Moderating energy consumption in Europe and increasing the use of energy from renewable sources constitutes, along with energy savings and greater energy efficiency, an important component of the set of measures needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Under Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, the Commission is to present a report, by 31 December 2014, in which it gives an evaluation of the implementation of this directive, in particular with regard to cooperation mechanisms, in order to ensure that, together with the possibility for the Members States to continue to use national support schemes referred to in Article 3(3), those mechanisms enable Member States to achieve the national targets defined in Annex I on the best cost-benefit basis, of technological developments, and the conclusions to be drawn to achieve the target of 20% of energy from renewable sources at Community level.

Can the Commission indicate what stage it has reached in that evaluation and when it expects to submit the report in question to Parliament?

Question for written answer E-003716/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Use of renewables in all forms of transport

Control of energy consumption in Europe, increased use of renewables, energy saving and greater energy efficiency, are among the principal measures necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Under Council Directive 2009/28/EC on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, the Commission is required, by 31 December 2014, to submit a report on progress towards achievement of the target referred to in Article 3(4) requiring each Member State to ensure that by 2020 the share of energy from renewables in all forms of transport amounts to at least 10% of its total consumption.

Can the Commission say what progress has been made in meeting the above target? When does it plan to submit the report in question to the European Parliament?

Joint answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The Commission has already engaged in extensive work with Member States to encourage more ample use of cooperation mechanisms envisaged by the Renewable Energy Directive (e.g. statistical transfers, joint projects, and joint support schemes) for promoting renewable energy and achieving the 2020 targets, which could lower the overall bill for target achievement by 5%. The Commissions guidance document on the use of the cooperation mechanisms, adopted on 5th November 2013 ([1]), provides an overview of perceived barriers for use of the cooperation mechanisms and provides practical guidance for Member States aimed at overcoming such barriers and encouraging their cooperation through the various mechanisms foreseen in the Renewable Energy Directive. The Commission continues to work with Member State authorities and stakeholders, providing practical assistance to Member States interested to use these mechanisms ([2]), and it will follow up on the progress in this area in the forthcoming Renewable energy progress report it intends to adopt by the end of 2014/early 2015.

The directive on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructures (voted by the European Parliament on April 15th) will also be a driver to increase the use of renewable energy in the transport sector and to achieve the 10% target of renewable energy in transport by 2020.

([1]) Communication Delivering the internal electricity market and making the most of public intervention (COM(2013)7243) and Guidance on the use of the cooperation mechanisms (SWD(2013) 440).

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/renewables/studies/doc/2014_design_features_of_support_schemes_task1.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-003717/14
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(26. maaliskuuta 2014)

Aihe: Sunnuntain painottaminen viikoittaisena lepopäivänä

Eurooppalainen sunnuntaiallianssi (European Sunday Alliance) on äskettäin esittänyt vetoomuksen, että lainsäädännöllä vahvistettaisiin sunnuntain asemaa ja edistettäisiin sen säilyttämistä yleisenä lepopäivänä ja vapaapäivänä. Vaikka viikoittainen lepopäivä on hyödyllinen ja suositeltava monesta syystä, tämä aloite on ongelmallinen yleisen uskonnon- ja vakaumuksenvapauden kannalta. Sunnuntain aseman vahvistaminen lepopäivänä asettaisi joukon EU:n kansalaisia epäedullisempaan asemaan, koska monissa uskonnoissa viikoittainen lepopäivä on perinteisesti jokin muu päivä. Esimerkiksi juutalaisten, seitsemännen päivän adventistien ja seitsemännen päivän baptistien lepopäivä, sapatti, on lauantai. Sunnuntain priorisoinnilla on kielteisiä vaikutuksia myös muslimien uskonnon- ja vakaumuksenvapauteen. Yhdenvertaisuuden ja tasa-arvoisuuden kannalta olisi asianmukaisempaa varmistaa, että kaikilla on yhtäläiset mahdollisuudet viettää kunkin uskonnon perinteiden ja kunkin yksilön omantunnon mukaista lepopäivää kuin priorisoida yhtä tiettyä viikoittaista lepopäivää. Myös niiden kansalaisten kannalta, jotka eivät kuulu mihinkään uskontokuntaan tai joilla ei ole vakaumusta, olisi suositeltavampaa olla määräämättä, että kaikkien on mukautettava elämänsä uskonnollisista syistä vietettävään lepopäivään.

1. Lepopäivän viettäminen on erottamaton osa monia uskonnollisia perinteitä. Onko asianmukaista, että EU säätää tätä asiaa koskevia lakeja, joilla asetetaan osa kansalaisista epäedullisempaan asemaan uskonnollisista syistä?

2. Aikooko komissio parhaillaan tehdä lainsäädäntöaloitteita sunnuntain aseman vahvistamiseksi yleisenä lepopäivänä tai onko todennäköistä, että tällainen aloite on odotettavissa myöhemmin?

3. Miten komissio aikoo varmistaa yhtäläiset mahdollisuudet kaikkien uskonnollisten perinteiden ja kunkin yksittäisen henkilön omantunnon mukaisen lepopäivän viettämiseen?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(5. kesäkuuta 2014)

Komissio pitää erittäin tärkeinä uskonnonvapautta, uskonnon tunnustamisen vapaus mukaan luettuna, ja syrjintäkieltoa, jotka on vahvistettu Euroopan unionin perusoikeuskirjan 10 ja 21 artiklassa ja Euroopan ihmisoikeussopimuksessa.

On kuitenkin huomattava, että perusoikeuskirjan määräykset koskevat 51 artiklan 1 kohdan mukaan unionin toimielimiä, elimiä ja laitoksia. Ne koskevat jäsenvaltioita ainoastaan silloin, kun nämä soveltavat unionin oikeutta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003717/14
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Emphasising Sunday as a weekly day of rest

The European Sunday Alliance has recently made an appeal for legislation to enhance respect for Sunday and to promote its preservation as a work-free day and a common day of rest. Although a weekly day of rest is useful and advisable for many reasons, this initiative is problematic from the viewpoint of general freedom of religion or belief. Strengthening the position of Sunday as a day of rest would place a number of EU citizens at a disadvantage, because many religious traditions call for the celebration of other weekly days of rest. Jews, Seventh-Day Adventists and Seventh Day Baptists, for example, have their day of rest, the Sabbath, on Saturday. The freedom of religion or belief of Muslims will also be negatively affected by the prioritisation of Sunday. In fact, rather than setting one religious day of rest above others, it would be more appropriate, from the viewpoint of parity and equality, to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to celebrate the day of rest called for by each religious tradition and each individual believer's conscience. Also, from the viewpoint of those citizens with no religious affiliation or belief, it would be preferable not to dictate that everyone must arrange their lives around a day of rest promoted for religious reasons.

1. Given that celebrating a day of rest is an inseparable part of observance in many religious traditions, is it in any way appropriate for the EU to legislate in this area, making laws which would place some citizens at a disadvantage for religious reasons?

2. Does the Commission currently have plans to initiate legislation to promote the role of Sunday as a general day of rest, or is it foreseeable that such an initiative could be expected at some later date?

3. What will the Commission do to ensure equal opportunity to celebrate the day of rest called for by each religious tradition and each individual believer's conscience?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The Commission attaches great importance to the freedom of religion, including the freedom to manifest religion, and the prohibition of discrimination, enshrined in Articles 10 and 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and in the European Convention on Human Rights.

However, pursuant to Article 51(1) of the Charter, its provisions are addressed to the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union and to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003718/14
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Glücksspielstaatsvertrag in Deutschland

Am 1. Juli 2012 trat der neue Glücksspielstaatsvertrag in Kraft, in dem die deutschen Bundesländer gemeinsame Regeln für die Regulierung von Glücksspielen vereinbart haben. Die Änderung des Vertrags war notwendig geworden, nachdem der Europäische Gerichtshof das deutsche Glücksspielmonopol im Herbst 2010 für unzulässig erklärt hatte. Die Kommission äußerte 2011 auch beim neuen Staatsvertrag erhebliche Zweifel an der Kohärenz und Verhältnismäßigkeit der Beschränkungen. Unter der Bedingung, dass die Länder bis zum 1. Juli 2014 eine Evaluierung des Glücksspielstaatsvertrags vorlegen, sagte die Kommission zu, vorerst keine weiteren Maßnahmen gegen Deutschland zu ergreifen. Angesichts des bis heute ergebnislosen Vergabeverfahrens gilt die Einhaltung dieser Frist als unmöglich.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die Konformität der derzeitigen Situation in Deutschland mit dem Europarecht?

2. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission die offenbar weiter bestehende Schonfrist für Deutschland vor dem Hintergrund, dass gemachte Zusagen bislang nicht eingehalten wurden und auch in Zukunft nicht eingehalten werden können?

3. Wie rechtfertigt die Kommission die Sonderbehandlung Deutschlands mit Blick auf die am 20. November 2013 gegenüber anderen Mitgliedstaaten ergriffenen Maßnahmen?

4. Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission nach Auslaufen der gesetzten Frist am 1. Juli 2014 zu ergreifen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2014)

Der neue deutsche Staatsvertrag zum Glücksspielwesen ist im Jahr 2012 in Kraft getreten. Die Umsetzung dieses Vertrags setzte voraus, dass seine Bestimmungen in Ländergesetze fließen und die Vergabe von Lizenzen für die Annahme von Sportwetten auf dieser Grundlage erfolgt.

Nach den Informationen, die der Kommission aktuell vorliegen, ist dieser Prozess der Lizenzvergabe derzeit noch nicht abgeschlossen. Deshalb wird die Kommission zum Abschluss ihrer Bewertung weitere Informationen über die Anwendung des Staatsvertrags benötigen.

Die Kommission wird die Umsetzung des Staatsvertrags in den Bundesländern auch in Zukunft aufmerksam begleiten. Eventuelle Folgemaßnahmen hängen davon ab, wie die Bewertung der Vorschriften der Bundesländer ausfällt; hierzu soll im Laufe dieses Jahres auch die Anwendung des Rechtsrahmens geprüft werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003718/14
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: German State Treaty on Gambling

The new German State Treaty on Gambling, in which the German *Länder* agreed on common rules to regulate gambling, came into force on 1 July 2012. The previous Treaty had to be amended after the European Court of Justice declared the German gambling monopoly to be unlawful in autumn 2010. In 2011, the Commission also expressed serious doubts as to the consistency and proportionality of the restrictions laid down in the new State Treaty. The Commission pledged not to take any immediate further action against Germany on condition that the *Länder* submitted an assessment of the State Treaty on Gambling by 1 July 2014. Given that the procedure for granting licences has still not produced any results, it appears impossible for this deadline to be met.

1. In the Commission's assessment, does the current situation in Germany comply withEuropean law?

2. How does the Commission justify the fact that Germany evidently continues to enjoy agrace period, bearing in mind that the commitments made have not been met and cannotbe met in the future?

3. How does the Commission justify the special treatment given to Germany in view of thesteps taken against other Member States on 20 November 2013?

4. What action is the Commission planning to take after the expiry of the 1 July 2014deadline?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The new German State Treaty on Gambling entered into force in 2012. In order for it to be implemented, it was necessary to transform its provisions into State laws and to start applying such provisions as the regime for awarding licences for sport betting services.

According to the information currently available to the Commission, the process of starting to apply the licensing is still on-going. The Commission will therefore need more information on the application of the State Treaty to conclude its assessment.

The Commission will continue monitoring closely the implementation of the State Treaty in the German States. Subsequent measures to be taken will depend on the outcome of the assessment of the State laws, part of which will be the evaluation of the application of the legislative framework foreseen in the course of this year.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003719/14
an die Kommission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(26. März 2014)

Betrifft: Glücksspiel in Griechenland

Die Europäische Kommission hat als Hüterin der EU-Verträge die Aufgabe, die Umsetzung von EU-Recht und seine Durchsetzung im Bereich der grenzüberschreitenden Glückspiel-Angebote zu überwachen. Im Augenblick befasst sich die Kommission mit Beschwerden und Vertragsverletzungsverfahren mit Blick auf die Verletzung der EU-Binnenmarktregeln im Bereich von Glückspiel und Sportwetten in einer Reihe von Mitgliedstaaten. Am 20.11.13 hat die Kommission Vertragsverletzungsverfahren gegen sechs Mitgliedstaaten eröffnet und zwei begründete Stellungnahmen abgegeben. Dies ist löblich, aber es bleiben noch Fragen, was die Situation in weiteren EU-Staaten, zum Beispiel Griechenland, betrifft.

1. Welche Herangehensweise verfolgt die Kommission mit Blick auf die Gesetzgebung Griechenlands für seinen Glückspiel- und Sportwettenmarkt?

2. Wann will die Kommission Maßnahmen ergreifen, und auf welche der Beschwerden und Verfahren werden sich diese Maßnahmen beziehen?

3. Auf welche Weise und auf welcher Grundlage wird die Kommission vorgehen?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(16. Mai 2014)

Die Kommission verfolgt die im Jahr 2013 mitgeteilten Änderungen der griechischen Gesetzgebung mit höchster Aufmerksamkeit. Zu Beginn dieses Jahres wurden die griechischen Behörden um Übermittlung zusätzlicher Informationen und Unterlagen ersucht, die erforderlich sind, um die Analyse des rechtlichen Rahmens für Glücksspiele abzuschließen. Nach Vorlage der angeforderten Informationen wird die Kommission ihre Bewertung der Konformität der griechischen Rechtsvorschriften mit dem EU-Recht abschließen können. Eventuelle Folgemaßnahmen werden vom Ergebnis dieser Bewertung abhängen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003719/14
to the Commission
Jürgen Creutzmann (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Gambling in Greece

As guardian of the EU Treaties, the Commission has the task of implementing and enforcing EU legislation concerning offers of cross-border games of chance. At present the Commission is dealing with complaints and Treaty violation proceedings concerning breaches of EU internal market rules in the area of games of chance and sports betting in a number of Member States. On 20 November 2013 the Commission opened Treaty violation proceedings against six Member States and issued two reasoned opinions. That is welcome, but there are still questions about the situation in other EU states, including Greece.

1. What approach is the Commission adopting to Greece's legislation governing its market in games of chance and sports betting?

2. When will the Commission take measures, and to which of the complaints and Treaty violation procedures will these relate?

3. How, and on what basis, will the Commission proceed?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission has been closely monitoring the legislative changes in Greece notified in 2013. Earlier this year, the Greek authorities were asked to submit additional information and documentation necessary to finalise the analysis of the gambling legal framework. Upon submission of the requested information, the Commission will be able to conclude its assessment of the compliance of Greek legislation with EC law. Subsequent measures will depend on the outcome of this assessment.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003720/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Restrictions and prohibitions on the use of temporary agency work

A Commission press release of 21 March 2014 refers to restrictions and prohibitions on the use of temporary agency work, as covered by Directive 2008/104/EC.

It states that 'in most cases Member States have maintained the status quo'.

To which Member States does the Commission refer?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The press release ([1]) to which the Honourable Member refers relates to the adoption by the Commission, on 21 March 2014, of a report ([2]) on the application of Directive 2008/104/EC ([3]) on temporary agency work, drawn up in accordance with Article 12 of the directive.

Under Article 4 of the directive, prohibitions or restrictions on the use of temporary agency work shall be justified only on grounds of general interest. Member States were under an obligation to review those prohibitions and restrictions and to inform the Commission of the results of the review by 5 December 2011.

As far as the situation in each Member State is concerned, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the abovementioned report and to the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document. The latter document notably describes and explains the state of play in all Member States as regards the review of restrictions and prohibitions on the use of temporary agency work.

([1]) 'Working conditions: Commission reviews application of EU rules on temporary agency work', European Commission press release IP/14/289 of 21 March 2014.
([2]) COM(2014) 176 final and SWD(2014) 108 final.
([3]) Directive 2008/104/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on temporary agency work, OJ L 327, 5.12.2008, p. 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003721/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Occupation of Northern Cyprus

Whilst I welcome the Commission's attempt to address the problem of youth unemployment in Cyprus, may I ask the Commission what tangible steps, if any, are being taken to address the military occupation of the north of the island by Turkey, since this is a situation that adversely affects the social and economic development of Cyprus?

Has the Commission simply decided to accept the occupation as a fact of life?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its answer to written question E-012602/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003722/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Balance of conscripts and professionals in EU armed forces

Could the Commission advise me, with regard to those men and women currently under arms in the EU, as to how many are conscripts and how many are professional servicemen and women?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Honourable Member is invited to consult the figures in the annex.

Those figures are outsourced from the official information provided by the Member States, information from the European Defence Agency and from open sources (webpages of the Ministries of Defence of the Member States).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003723/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Asylum-seekers

A Commission press release of 24 March 2014 reveals that 70% of asylum cases in the EU are handled by five Member States, which include the UK. None of the five states concerned has any external borders.

This suggests that the rule by which asylum-seekers should be offered asylum by the first 'safe' country in which they arrive is being ignored, either by the asylum-seekers themselves, or by those Member States where they first arrive.

Could the Commission tell me what action it is taking, or plans to take, in order to ensure that Member States and asylum-seekers abide by the rules?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The purpose of the 'Dublin Regulation'[1] is to establish the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application. It does not aim to ensure an equal distribution of applicants throughout the EU. There is a hierarchy of criteria to determine which Member State is responsible. The first two criteria concern family reunification and legal entry/stay and only the third criterion relates to irregular entry in the Member State in which the applicant first entered the EU. It is therefore not surprising that a large number of applications are be made in States with no external land border without leading to a Dublin transfer. Of course, the five Member States in question do have external air and sea borders.

The statistics mentioned by the Honourable Member refer to applications lodged rather than final case determination.

That said, the Commission evaluated the Dublin system in 2007 ([1]) and recognised that there were some inefficiencies, including problems concerning a relatively low number of transfers of persons. A recent Eurostat publication ([2]) also recognised these inefficiencies. In order to address this issue, among others, the Commission proposed a reform of the Dublin Regulation that was ultimately adopted by Parliament and the Council and became applicable on 1 January 2014.

The Commission closely monitors the application of the recast Dublin Regulation, and regularly discusses the issue with Member States. Where appropriate, the Commission, as guardian of the Treaties, can launch infringement proceedings against any Member State that it considers is not abiding by Union law.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the evaluation of the Dublin system, 6.6.2007, COM(2007) 299 final.
([2]) See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Dublin_statistics_on_countries_responsible_for_asylum_application

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003724/14
upućeno Komisiji
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(26. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Rizici za sigurnost na radnom mjestu u zdravstvenom sektoru — kemijska opasnost

Širok spektar aktivnosti koje zdravstveni radnici obavljaju i okruženja u kojima rade ugrožavaju njihovo zdravlje i dovode ih u opasnost. Iako EU ostvaruje napredak u rješavanju izloženosti različitim vrstama opasnosti u zdravstvenom sektoru, na primjer Direktivom 2010/32/EU o sprečavanju ozljeda oštrim predmetima u bolničkom i zdravstvenom sektoru, dosta se još mora učiniti.

To posebno vrijedi kada se zdravstveni radnici izlažu kemijskim tvarima tijekom aktivnosti poput pripreme citotoksičnih/citostatičnih lijekova koji se koriste u liječenju pacijenata oboljelih od raka.

Upotreba kemoterapijskih agensa za liječenje pacijenata oboljelih od raka, koja se povećava zbog porasta postotka oboljelih od raka u Europi, izaziva zabrinutost sa stajališta zdravlja na radnom mjestu s obzirom na moguću izloženost ljekarnika i zdravstvenih radnika tijekom pripreme, dostave i primjene tih lijekova. Do izloženosti tim opasnim lijekovima može doći preko kontakta s kožom, udisanjem ili ozljeđivanjem. Iako je potvrđeno da postoje poteškoće u mjerenju razine izloženosti i dugoročnog utjecaja na zdravlje, prihvaćeno je da nesigurno rukovanje tim lijekovima izaziva ozbiljne štetne posljedice za zdravstvene radnike, poglavito rak, toksičnost organa, probleme s plodnošću, genetska oštećenja i prirođene mane.

Tu opasnost prepoznala je Europska agencija za sigurnost i zdravlje na radu, a i Glavna uprava za zapošljavanje, socijalna pitanja i uključivanje u svojim publikacijama te države članice u svojim nacionalnim smjernicama, međutim ne postoji usklađen pristup sprečavanju kemijskih opasnosti u zdravstvenom sektoru koji se pravilno odražava u zakonodavstvu EU-a.

S obzirom na navedeno, namjerava li Komisija razmotriti pitanje izloženosti zdravstvenih radnika opasnim lijekovima i kemikalijama, posebno tijekom pripreme parenteralnih lijekova, u predstojećim zakonodavnim prijedlozima o zdravlju na radnom mjestu?

Odgovor g. Andora u ime Komisije
(15. svibnja 2014.)

Kada je riječ o zaštiti radnika koji su izloženi opasnim kemikalijama, već postoji sveobuhvatno zakonodavstvo EU-a o sigurnosti i zaštiti zdravlja na radu. Točnije, ključne odredbe koje se primjenjuju u slučajevima kada su radnici izloženi opasnim kemijskim sredstvima, uključujući **kemijske opasnosti u zdravstvenom sektoru,** jesu Direktiva Vijeća 89/391/EEZ od 12. lipnja 1989. o uvođenju mjera za poticanje poboljšanja sigurnosti i zdravlja radni*ka na radu* ([1]) i Direktiva Vijeća 98/24/EZ od 7. travnja 1998. o zaštiti zdravlja i sigurnosti radnika na radu od rizika povezanih s kemijskim sredstvima ([2]). *Direktivom 92/85/EEZ* ([3]) utvrđuju se odredbe za zaštitu trudnih radnica te radnica koje su nedavno rodile ili doje od posebnih rizika koji proizlaze iz izloženosti opasnim kemijskim sredstvima.

Vodič za prevenciju i dobru praksu pod nazivom „Profesionalni zdravstveni i sigurnosni rizici u zdravstvenom sektoru" ([4])*, koji je Komisija objavila 2011., sadržava poglavlje posvećeno citostatičnim i citotoksičnim lijekovima u kojem su opisane radne situacije koje uključuju najveću izloženost u zdravstvenom sektoru, učinci na zdravlje radnika te posebne tehnike i postupci prevencije.*

Komisija trenutačno provodi detaljnu procjenu praktične provedbe 24 direktive o sigurnosti i zdravlju na radu u državama članicama, uključujući one prethodno navedene. Sve potrebe za daljnjim inicijativama u području zdravlja i sigurnosti na radu razmatrat će se u svjetlu rezultata procjene, koji bi trebali biti dostupni do kraja 2015.

([1]) SL L 183, 29.6.1989.
([2]) SL L 131, 5.5.1998.
([3]) Direktiva Vijeća 92/85/EEZ od 19. listopada 1992. o uvođenju mjera za poticanje poboljšanja sigurnosti i zdravlja na radu trudnih radnica te radnica koje su nedavno rodile ili doje, SL L 348, 28.11.1992.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6108&type=2&furtherPubs=yes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003724/14
to the Commission
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Occupational safety risks in the healthcare sector — chemical risks

Healthcare professionals have to deal with a wide range of activities and environments that pose a threat to their health and put them at risk. While the EU is making progress in addressing exposure to different types of risk in the healthcare sector, for example through Directive 2010/32/EU concerning prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector, more work still remains to be done.

This is the case with regard to exposure of healthcare professionals to chemical risks during activities such as the preparation of cytotoxic/cytostatic drugs used to treat cancer patients.

The use of chemotherapeutic agents to treat cancer patients — which is increasing on account of a surge in cancer rates in Europe — is raising concerns from an occupational health standpoint, given the potential exposure of pharmacists and healthcare professionals during the preparation, delivery and application of these medications. Exposure to these hazardous drugs can occur through contact with the skin, inhalation or injuries. Although the difficulty of measuring exposure levels and long-term impact on health is recognised, it is well accepted that unsafe handling of these drugs causes serious adverse effects on healthcare workers, namely cancer, organ toxicity, fertility problems, genetic damage and birth defects.

While this risk is recognised by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work and in publications by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and national guidelines in Member States, there is currently no harmonised approach to the prevention of chemical risks in the healthcare sector which is properly reflected in EU legislation.

In view of the above, does the Commission intend to address the issue of healthcare professionals' exposure to hazardous drugs and chemicals, in particular during the preparation of parenteral medicinal products, in its upcoming legislative proposals on occupational health?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

As far as the protection of workers exposed to hazardous chemicals is concerned, there is already comprehensive EU legislation on occupational safety and health. In particular, the key provisions applying in cases where workers are exposed to hazardous chemical agents, including chemical risks in the healthcare sector, are Council Directives 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work ([1]) and 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from risks related to chemical agents at work ([2]). Directive 92/85/EEC ([3]) lays down provisions for protecting pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding from specific risks arising from exposure to hazardous chemical agents.

One chapter of the guide to prevention and good practice entitled 'Occupational health and safety risks in the healthcare sector' ([4]) published by the Commission in 2011 is devoted to cytostatic and cytotoxic drugs and describes the work situations entailing the greatest exposure in the healthcare sector, the effects on workers' health and specific prevention techniques and procedures.

The Commission is currently carrying out a detailed evaluation of the practical implementation of 24 occupational safety and health Directives in the Member States, including those mentioned above. Any need for further initiatives on health and safety at work will be considered in the light of the findings, which are due to be made available by the end of 2015.

([1]) OJ L 183, 29.6.1989.
([2]) OJ L 131, 5.5.1998.
([3]) Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, OJ L 348, 28.11.1992.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6108&type=2&furtherPubs=yes

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003726/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Costo delle cure per gli immigrati irregolari

I dati ufficiali della programmazione sociosanitaria regionale mettono in luce che le cure per gli immigrati irregolari nel 2012 sono costate al bilancio regionale del Veneto oltre 8 milioni di euro.

Complessivamente i clandestini costano all'Italia 30 euro al giorno e al Veneto milioni di euro che lo Stato non riesce a rimborsare ai cittadini veneti. L'emergenza dei profughi è ormai un flusso continuo che ha saturato le risorse e i posti disponibili in Italia. Dalle denunce inoltrate alla Commissione da Olanda, Gran Bretagna e Germania proprio sul tema dei costi sanitari degli immigrati emerge considerato che molte amministrazioni locali si trovano costrette a tagliare le risorse.

Può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. ha raccolto dati sull'incidenza degli immigrati irregolari sui sistemi sanitari negli altri Stati membri;

2. ha intenzione di creare un Fondo ad hoc per sostenere i costi delle cure degli immigrati irregolari presenti negli Stati membri, evitando così che le amministrazioni locali debbano tagliare le risorse destinate ai servizi per i propri cittadini che hanno regolarmente contribuito al loro bilancio?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(2 luglio 2014)

La Commissione non ha raccolto dati sull'incidenza della migrazione irregolare sui sistemi sanitari degli Stati membri. Si richiama tuttavia l'attenzione dell'onorevole deputata su uno studio condotto nel 2011 dall'Agenzia per i diritti fondamentali intitolato «*Migrants in an irregular situation: access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States*» ([1]); lo studio analizza e valuta le problematiche con cui si confrontano gli Stati membri per trovare il modo migliore di soddisfare i bisogni sanitari dei migranti in situazione irregolare, alla luce di costi, valutazioni di pubblica sanità, rispetto dei diritti umani e aspetti riguardanti la gestione della migrazione.

L'Unione europea non intende creare un fondo specifico per coprire i costi connessi all'assistenza sanitaria dei migranti irregolari negli Stati membri. Si ricorda tuttavia che il Fondo Asilo, migrazione e integrazione (AMIF) ([2]) dà la possibilità di cofinanziare gli sforzi profusi dagli Stati membri per rispettare l'obbligo, derivante dalla normativa UE, di prestare assistenza sanitaria ai futuri rimpatriati (direttiva 2008/115/CE ([3])), ai richiedenti asilo (direttiva 2003/9/CE ([4])) o ai beneficiari di protezione internazionale (direttiva 2011/95/UE ([5])).

([1]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/migrants-irregular-situation-access-healthcare-10-european-union-member-states.
([2]) In attesa di pubblicazione nella Gazzetta ufficiale.
([3]) Direttiva 2008/115/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 16 dicembre 2008, recante norme e procedure comuni applicabili negli Stati membri al rimpatrio di cittadini di paesi terzi il cui soggiorno è irregolare, GU L 348 del 24.12.2008, pagg. 98-107.
([4]) Direttiva 2003/9/CE del Consiglio, del 27 gennaio 2003, recante norme minime relative all'accoglienza dei richiedenti asilo negli Stati membri, GU L 31 del 6.2.2003.
([5]) Direttiva 2011/95/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 13 dicembre 2011, recante norme sull'attribuzione, a cittadini di paesi terzi o apolidi, della qualifica di beneficiario di protezione internazionale, su uno status uniforme per i rifugiati o per le persone aventi titolo a beneficiare della protezione sussidiaria, nonché sul contenuto della protezione riconosciuta, GU L 337 del 20.12.2011, pagg. 9-26.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003726/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Cost of providing care to illegal immigrants

The official statistics published by the Veneto Regional Agency for Health and Social Care show that more than EUR 8 million of the regional budget for 2012 was spent on providing care to illegal immigrants.

Overall, illegal immigrants cost Italy EUR 30 a day, and the millions of euros that Veneto spends on them each year is not refunded to the region's citizens by the State. The continuous stream of asylum-seekers now entering Italy is placing great strain on the country's resources and saturating its job market. The complaints submitted to the Commission by the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany over the costs of providing healthcare to immigrants reveal that many local authorities are being forced to cut back on services.

1. Has the Commission amassed any data on the impact that illegal immigrants have on the health systems of other Member States?

2. Does it intend to set up an ad-hoc fund to cover the costs involved in providing care to illegal immigrants in Member States, and thus ensure that local authorities are not forced to cut back on the funding needed to provide services to their own citizens, who have duly contributed to these authorities' budgets by paying their taxes?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2014)

The Commission has not collected data on the impact that irregular migrants have on the health systems of Member States. The attention of the Honourable Member is, however, drawn to a study carried out by the Fundamental Rights Agency in 2011, titled 'Migrants in an irregular situation: access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States' ([1]) which analyses and assesses the challenges for Member States to find the most appropriate way to deal with the healthcare needs of migrants in an irregular situation, taking into account costs, public health considerations, respect for human rights but also migration management considerations.

The European Union does not intend to set up an ad hoc fund to cover the costs involved in providing care to irregular migrants in Member States. The attention of the Honourable Member is, however, drawn to the possibilities to be provided under the AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) ([2]) to co-finance Member States efforts to comply with their obligations under the relevant EU Directives to provide for healthcare to intended returnees (Directive 2008/115/EC ([3])), asylum-seekers (Directive 2003/9/EC ([4])) or beneficiaries of international protection (Directive 2011/95/EU ([5])).

([1]) http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/migrants-irregular-situation-access-healthcare-10-european-union-member-states
([2]) Publication in the Official Journal pending.
([3]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16.12.2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24/12/2008, p. 98-107.
([4]) Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27.1.2003 laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers ; OJ L 31, 06.2.2003.
([5]) Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13.12.2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted; OJ L 337, 20.12.2011, p. 9-26.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003727/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Violazione dei diritti umani in Centrafrica

L'Alto Commissario dell'ONU per i diritti umani, Navy Pillay, ha affermato che il Centrafrica è diventato un paese molto violento dove le persone vengono uccise, torturate, mutilate, bruciate e smembrate, mentre recentemente sono stati segnalati casi di decapitazione di bambini e cannibalismo. La causa di tanta brutalità risiederebbe nei continui scontri fra i ribelli musulmani seleka e le milizie cristiane anti-balaka.

Può la Commissione precisare:

1. se è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti;

2. come intende agire per proteggere l'incolumità dei civili e tutelare la loro libertà religiosa?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

Come dichiarato dall'AR/VP il 27 marzo 2014, l'UE condanna fermamente le uccisioni mirate di civili per motivi di religione o di appartenenza etnica. Destano particolare preoccupazione la vulnerabilità delle minoranze, sempre più spesso vittime di rappresaglie, il costante esodo di parti della popolazione e il massiccio afflusso di profughi nei paesi limitrofi, le cui strutture sono messe a dura prova.

L'Unione europea intende contribuire al ripristino della stabilità e della sicurezza a Bangui e nel resto del paese. Il 10 febbraio scorso, il Consiglio Affari esteri ha pertanto deciso di istituire un'operazione PSDC a sostegno della stabilizzazione, come richiesto dal Consiglio europeo del 19-20 dicembre 2013. L'operazione EUFOR RCA è parte integrante di un approccio globale, che comprende un'azione politica, militare e di sviluppo. La forza contribuirà pertanto sia agli interventi internazionali volti a proteggere le popolazioni più a rischio che al miglioramento delle condizioni di inoltro degli aiuti umanitari.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003727/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Human rights violations in the Central African Republic

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navy Pillay, has said that the Central African Republic is now a very violent country, where people are being killed, tortured, mutilated, burned and dismembered. There have also been recent reports of cannibalism and of children being decapitated. The cause of all this brutality lies in continuing confrontations between Muslim Seleka rebels and Christian anti-balaka militia.

Can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is it up to date with the facts outlined above?

2. What is it planning to do to protect civilians and their religious freedom?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

As declared in the HR/VP statement of the 27 March 2014, the EU strongly condemns the targeted killings of civilians on the basis of religion and ethnicity. It is particularly alarmed by the vulnerability of minorities who are increasingly victims of retaliation and concerned by the continuing exodus of parts of the population and the large number of refugees heading to neighbouring countries where facilities are stretched to the limit.

The European Union intends to take its part in these efforts to bring back stability and security in Bangui and the rest of the country. Thus, On 10 February, the Foreign Affairs Council decided to establish a CSDP operation to contribute to stabilisation efforts, as requested by the European Council on 19-20 December 2013. The EUFOR RCA operation is an integral part of a comprehensive approach, encompassing political, military, and development action. The force will thereby contribute both to international efforts to protect the populations most at risk and to improve the conditions for delivering humanitarian aid.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003728/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Emergenza immigrazione in Italia

Eurostat, l'ufficio di statistica dell'UE, ha comunicato in queste ore che, nel 2013, sono state 435 000 le richieste di asilo in Europa con un forte rialzo rispetto al 2012 quando ne sono state registrate 335 000. Secondo le stime le domande più numerose sono state presentate da cittadini di nazionalità siriana.

Il 70 % delle richieste si è concentrato in Germania, Francia, Svezia, Regno Unito e Italia. Nel 2013 il più alto numero di richieste d'asilo è stato registrato in Germania (127 000, pari al 29 % dell'insieme delle domande), seguito da Francia (65 000 il 15 %), Svezia (54 000 il 13 %), Regno Unito (30 000 il 7 %) e Italia (28 000 il 6 %). Preso atto che nel 2013 il 70 % di tutti i richiedenti asilo dell'UE-28 si è concentrato in soli cinque Stati membri può la Commissione riferire:

1. quali misure intende adottare in questi 5 Stati membri per sostenerli a far fronte a questo maggiore afflusso migratorio;

2. se intende rivedere la ripartizione delle risorse e mettere a disposizione di questi 5 Stati membri nuovi fondi per far fronte a questi flussi migratori eccezionali;

3. se intende aprire un tavolo di coordinamento per avviare una gestione coordinata e solidale del fenomeno che definisca chiare responsabilità anche per gli altri 23 Stati membri che non sono interessati da questi flussi migratori eccezionali;

4. a fronte dell'incremento del numero dei profughi che continuano a affluire sulle coste italiane, come intende sostenere le autorità italiane a gestire un'emergenza che sta mettendo a dura prova l'economia e la sicurezza dell'Italia?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

Nel 2013 la Commissione europea ha già attivato diverse misure per dare sostegno agli Stati membri interessati, compresa la mobilitazione di finanziamenti d'emergenza pari a 50 milioni di euro su richiesta di Italia, Germania, Paesi Bassi, Bulgaria, Malta, Francia, Ungheria, Cipro e Grecia. L'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo sta fornendo un aiuto speciale a Italia, Grecia e Bulgaria.

Quest'anno la Commissione europea segue da vicino gli sviluppi e le crescente pressioni nell'area del Mediterraneo centrale ed è pronta ad intervenire mobilitando gli strumenti di emergenza su richiesta degli Stati membri. L'entrata in vigore del meccanismo di allerta rapido di cui all'articolo 33 del regolamento di Dublino riveduto ([1]) permette alla Commissione di aiutare gli Stati membri a far fronte a situazioni di pressione sui loro sistemi di asilo o di vulnerabilità degli stessi.

La Commissione non intende creare un apposito comitato di coordinamento. Tuttavia, sta monitorando l'attuazione delle misure previste dalla comunicazione sui lavori della task force per il Mediterraneo ([2]), che comprendono una forte dimensione di solidarietà.

La Commissione è pertanto pronta a sostenere l'Italia con gli strumenti disponibili. Finora non le è pervenuta nessuna richiesta ufficiale di sostegno. La Commissione sta anche considerando l'ipotesi di attivare l'articolo 33, paragrafo 1), del regolamento di Dublino per l'Italia.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 604/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 26 giugno 2013, che stabilisce i criteri e i meccanismi di determinazione dello Stato membro competente per l'esame di una domanda di protezione internazionale presentata in uno degli Stati membri da un cittadino di un paese terzo o da un apolide; GU L 180 del 29.6.2013, pag. 31.

([2]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003728/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Immigration crisis in Italy

The European Office for Statistics, Eurostat, has just reported that 435 000 requests were made for asylum in Europe in 2013, a substantial increase over 2012, when 335 000 requests were recorded. The figures suggest that the majority of requests were made by people of Syrian nationality.

Some 70% of requests were made in Germany, France, Sweden, the UK and Italy. In 2013, the highest number of requests for asylum were recorded in Germany (127 000, which is equivalent to 29% of all requests), followed by France (65 000, or 15%), Sweden (54 000, or 13%), the UK (30 000, or 7%) and Italy (28 000, or 6%). Given that, in 2013, some 70% of all asylum-seekers in the EU-28 were concentrated in just five Member States, can the Commission provide the following information:

1. What measures is it planning to take in these five Member States to help them deal with this major influx of migrants?

2. Is it planning to review the allocation of resources and make new funds available to these five Member States to help them cope with these unusual migration flows?

3. Is it planning to set up a coordination committee to ensure coordinated, shared management of the situation and to clearly define responsibilities, including those of the other 23 Member States that are not being affected by these unusual migration flows?

4. Given the rising number of refugees continuing to arrive on Italy's coasts, how does the Commission intend to support the Italian authorities in managing a crisis that is severely testing Italy's economy and security?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The European Commission has already activated several measures to support Member States concerned in 2013, including by mobilising EUR 50 million in emergency funding upon the requests of Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, Bulgaria, Malta, France, Hungary, Cyprus and Greece. The European Asylum Support Office is providing special support to Italy, Greece and Bulgaria.

In 2014 the European Commission is closely following developments and the increasing pressure on the Central Mediterranean area and it is ready to respond by the mobilisation of emergency instruments upon request by Member States. The entry into force of the Early Warning Mechanism in Article 33 of the revised Dublin Regulation ([1]) allows the Commission to assist Member States to deal with a situation of pressure on, or the vulnerability of, their asylum systems.

The Commission does not intend to set up a dedicated coordination committee. However, it is monitoring the implementation of the steps set out in the communication on the Work of the Task Force Mediterranean ([2]), which included a strong solidarity dimension.

The Commission therefore stands ready to support Italy with the instruments available. No official request for support has been submitted to the Commission so far. The Commission is also considering the activation of Art.33(1) of the Dublin Regulation for Italy.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person; OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p. 31-59.

([2]) COM(2013) 869 final.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003729/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aumento dei decessi causati dall'inquinamento atmosferico

L'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità ha reso noti dati molto significativi circa le innumerevoli morti provocate dall'inquinamento dell'aria. Si parla di sette milioni di persone decedute a causa della contaminazione dell'aria, a sua volta responsabile non solo di malattie cardiovascolari, come infarti e ischemie miocardiche, o respiratorie, ma anche di ostruzioni croniche polmonari. Le regioni più colpite dal fenomeno sono il Sudest asiatico e il Pacifico occidentale.

1. È la Commissione al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Come intende intervenire per evitare che gli stessi fenomeni interessino l'Europa?

3. In che modo intende far rispettare le leggi già esistenti in materia di riduzione dell'inquinamento ambientale?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione è consapevole della recente valutazione e pubblicazione dell'OMS, con la quale porta avanti da tempo una collaborazione in materia di valutazione dei rischi per la salute derivanti dall'inquinamento atmosferico nell'ambito delle politiche dell'UE contro tale fenomeno ([1]).

2. Nel dicembre 2013 la Commissione ha proposto un pacchetto «Aria pulita». ([2]) La strategia punta a raggiungere la piena attuazione della legislazione in vigore al più tardi entro il 2020 e a ridurre ulteriormente entro il 2030 l'inquinamento e gli effetti sulla salute ad esso associati. Le misure di riduzione trovano attuazione, da una parte, nella proposta di direttiva concernente la riduzione delle emissioni nazionali di determinati inquinanti atmosferici (COM(2013) 920 final) e dall'altra, nella proposta di direttiva relativa alla limitazione delle emissioni nell'atmosfera di taluni inquinanti originati da impianti di combustione medi (COM(2013) 919 final).

3. L'attuazione dell'attuale legislazione europea spetta innanzitutto alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri. La Commissione sostiene tale attuazione, ove opportuno, attraverso i finanziamenti dell'UE (anche nell'ambito degli accordi di partenariato con gli Stati membri sulle priorità di finanziamento per il periodo 2014-2020) e altre misure di sostegno. Qualora sia comprovato che vi è una possibile violazione delle disposizioni concrete della legislazione europea e che le autorità nazionali non adottano alcuna misura per porvi rimedio, la Commissione può adottare provvedimenti esecutivi ed ha già avviato casi «EU Pilot» e diversi procedimenti d'infrazione nei confronti degli Stati membri per superamento dei valori limite di emissione di PM10 e NO_2 in relazione alla qualità dell'aria ambiente.

([1]) Vedere i progetti OMS REVIHAAP e HRAPIE: http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/activities/health-aspects-of-air-pollution-and-review-of-eu-policies-the-revihaap-and-hrapie-projects

([2]) Il pacchetto «Aria pulita»: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003729/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Increase in the number of deaths caused by atmospheric pollution

The World Health Organisation has recently published a highly significant report on the countless deaths that are attributable to atmospheric pollution. The report reveals that seven million people died in 2012 as a direct result of poor air quality, which can lead not only to cardiovascular diseases (such as myocardial infarction and ischemia) and respiratory disorders, but also to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The phenomenon is most widespread in south-east Asia and the western Pacific.

1. Is the Commission aware of the facts that have been given above?

2. What actions does it intend to take in order to prevent the same phenomena from afflicting Europe?

3. How does it intend to ensure that the laws already in place for reducing environmental pollution are respected?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the recent assessment and publication by the WHO, with which it has a long standing cooperation on health risk assessment of air pollution impacts relevant for EU air pollution policy ([1]).

2. The Commission proposed its Clean Air Policy Package in December 2013 ([2]). The policy aims at full compliance with existing legislation by 2020 at the latest, and at further reductions in pollution and associated health impacts by 2030. The latter reductions are implemented in the proposals for Directives to limit total national emissions of air pollution, on the one hand (COM(2013) 920 final), and to set strict standards for medium-scale combustion plants on the other (COM(2013) 919 final).

3. The implementation of existing European legislation is primarily the responsibility of Member States' competent authorities. The Commission supports compliance through EU funding as appropriate (including in the context of the Partnership Agreements with Member States on funding priorities for the period 2014-2020) and other supporting measures. When there is evidence that there is a possible breach of concrete provisions of EC law and that national authorities are not taking action to address it, the Commission can pursue enforcement action and it has already opened EU pilots and several infringement cases against Member States in breach of the PM10 and NO_2 ambient air quality limit values.

([1]) See WHO Revihaap and Hrapie projects: http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/air-quality/activities/health-aspects-of-air-pollution-and-review-of-eu-policies-the-revihaap-and-hrapie-projects.

([2]) The Clean Air Policy Package: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003731/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Kenya: massacro di cristiani

In Kenya, nella città costiera di Mombasa, lo scorso 23 marzo venti fedeli cristiani sono stati massacrati da un commando di islamici armati.

Preso atto che fonti d'intelligence internazionale riferiscono di una probabile pianificazione di un futuro «attacco su larga scala», può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Quali misure intende adottare per tutelare l'incolumità dei cristiani in Kenya e il loro diritto di professare la propria religione?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

L'AR/VP è a conoscenza di una serie di violenti incidenti in Kenya tra cui il recente attacco a una chiesa di Likoni, vicino a Mombasa, in cui sarebbero rimaste uccise sei persone. Dall'incursione keniota in territorio somalo dell'ottobre 2011 vi è un rischio di ritorsioni da parte di gruppi militanti. Non è stato tuttavia dimostrato che questo recente attentato sia attribuibile ai sostenitori di Al-Shabab o a gruppi estremisti analoghi. Le autorità non hanno ancora concluso le indagini, ma la polizia avrebbe sparato su due persone sospette che opponevano resistenza all'arresto.

L'AR/VP è estremamente preoccupata per questi incidenti e segue con estrema attenzione l'evolversi della minaccia terroristica in Kenya. Nell'ambito del suo dialogo con le autorità keniote, l'UE solleva periodicamente la questione della sicurezza di tutti i cittadini e di tutti gli stranieri che si trovano nel paese.

Al fine di promuovere attivamente una società pacifica e armoniosa in Kenya, l'UE finanzia progetti volti ad allentare le tensioni in zone notoriamente ad alta concentrazione di violenza. L'UE sostiene inoltre azioni volte a contrastare l'estremismo violento, tra cui il programma STRIVE nel Corno d'Africa che mira a promuovere iniziative locali quali il dialogo interconfessionale a Mombasa e in altre località. L'UE sta preparando progetti volti a lottare contro il finanziamento del terrorismo e a migliorare la capacità delle autorità keniote di prevenire questi violenti attacchi e di rispondervi.

L'AR/VP attribuisce la massima importanza alla libertà di religione e si adopera con impegno per assicurare la coesistenza pacifica delle comunità religiose in Africa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003731/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Massacre of Christians in Kenya

On 23 March, a group of Islamic militants massacred 20 devout Christians in the Kenyan coastal city of Mombasa.

Given that international intelligence sources indicate that a future 'large-scale attack' is most likely being planned, could the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of the facts described above?

2. What measures does it intend to adopt in order to guarantee the safety of Christians in Kenya and protect their right to practise their religion?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The HR/VP is aware of a series of violent incidents in Kenya, including the recent attack on a church in Likoni near Mombasa in which six people are reported to have been shot dead. Since Kenya's incursion into Somali territory in October 2011 there is a risk of retaliatory action by militant groups. It is however not proven that this recent attack was perpetrated by affiliates of Al-Shabab or similar extremist groups. The authorities have not yet concluded their investigation, but two suspects are reported to have been shot by police as they resisted arrest.

The HR/VP is very concerned about these incidents and follows closely the evolving situation of potential terrorist attacks in Kenya. The EU regularly raises security concerns in its dialogue with Kenyan authorities to ensure the safety of all Kenyans and foreigners staying in the country.

To actively foster a peaceful and harmonious society in Kenya, the EU funds projects aimed at defusing tensions in known hotspots of violence. The EU also supports actions to counter violent extremism including a programme ('Strive' in the Horn of Africa) that will promote local initiatives such as interfaith dialogue in Mombasa and other locations. The EU is preparing projects on countering terrorism finance and strengthening the capacity of Kenyan authorities to prevent and to respond to such violent attacks.

The HR/VP attaches utmost importance to religious freedom and is fully committed to ensuring peaceful co-existence of religious communities in Africa.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003732/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Rapex: aumento dei prodotti di origine sconosciuta e dannosi per la salute

In base ai dati elaborati da Rapex, il sistema di allerta rapida dell'UE per i prodotti non alimentari pericolosi, nel 2013 sono aumentate in modo significativo le segnalazioni riguardanti prodotti cinesi non a norma, nocivi, che mettono a repentaglio la salute e l'incolumità dei cittadini europei. Si tratta principalmente di giocattoli e capi d'abbigliamento ma anche di accessori, apparecchiature elettroniche, autoveicoli e cosmetici.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quali misure intende adottare per proteggere la salute dei cittadini europei, considerando che i prodotti in questione, per gamma e tipologia, interessano tutte le fasce d'età?

2. Ritiene che gli strumenti e i controlli oggi implementati a livello nazionale e unionale siano sufficienti per arginare la minaccia rappresentata da questi prodotti?

3. Reputa necessario rafforzare la sorveglianza del mercato da parte delle autorità nazionali in cooperazione con le dogane?

4. Ritiene che, aumentando la tracciabilità di questi prodotti, si permetterebbe ai consumatori di evitare quelli di origine potenzialmente dannosa per la loro salute?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione presta la massima attenzione ai rischi dei prodotti provenienti dalla Cina. Attraverso il sistema Rapex-Cina, le autorità cinesi ([1]) ricevono informazioni dalla Commissione relative ai prodotti di origine cinese considerati pericolosi, e riferiscono circa le azioni correttive prese contro gli operatori economici stanziati in Cina ([2]). Inoltre, la Commissione, con il Programma per la tutela dei consumatori, contribuisce economicamente a un'azione congiunta tra le autorità di contrasto di dieci Stati membri e della Cina in merito alla sicurezza dei giocattoli allo scopo di sviluppare pratiche condivise per quanto riguarda la vigilanza, i test e lo scambio di informazioni.

2. Nel febbraio 2013 la Commissione ha presentato proposte volte a rivedere la normativa sulla sicurezza dei prodotti e sulla vigilanza del mercato. Le proposte mirano, tra l'altro, a potenziare l'applicazione delle norme in materia di sicurezza dei prodotti all'interno del mercato e alle frontiere esterne. Le due proposte legislative sono oggetto della procedura legislativa ordinaria. Il Parlamento europeo ha adottato la sua risoluzione legislativa in data 15 aprile 2014.

3. Una delle due proposte sopra menzionate riguarda una maggiore cooperazione tra le autorità di controllo del mercato e quelle incaricate del controllo dei prodotti alle frontiere esterne (proposta di regolamento sulla vigilanza del mercato dei prodotti (COM(2013) 75) ([3]).

4. L'altra proposta di regolamento sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo (COM(2013) 78) ([4]) mira a definire obblighi chiari per gli operatori economici, nonché per una migliore identificazione di prodotti e la loro tracciabilità, quali l'indicazione sul prodotto o sull'imballaggio del paese di origine, del numero di tipo di lotto o di serie, del nome del produttore o dell'importatore e il relativo indirizzo.

([1]) China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) (Amministrazione generale per la qualità, la vigilanza, l'ispezione e la quarantena della Repubblica Popolare Cinese).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/international_cooperation/bilateral_cooperation/index_en.htm
([3]) La proposta fa parte del «pacchetto sicurezza dei prodotti e vigilanza del mercato», http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/psmsp/index_en.htm
([4]) La proposta fa parte del «pacchetto sicurezza dei prodotti e vigilanza del mercato», http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/psmsp/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003732/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: RAPEX: increase in the amount of products of unknown origin posing a health risk

According to the statistics compiled by RAPEX, the EU's rapid alert system for hazardous non-food products, the number of warnings raised over non-compliant and harmful Chinese products increased dramatically in 2013. These products, which pose a severe threat to the health and safety of European citizens, are principally toys and items of clothing, but also include accessories, electronic appliances, motor vehicles and cosmetics.

1. In light of the above, what measures does the Commission intend to adopt in order to protect the health of European citizens, given that the products in question, owing to their nature and sheer range, are intended for all age groups?

2. Does it believe that the instruments and controls currently in place on both a national and EU level are sufficient to stem the threat posed by these products?

3. Does it feel that the market needs to be monitored more closely by national authorities, working in tandem with customs agencies?

4. Does it believe that increasing the traceability of these products will allow consumers to steer clear of any whose origin could pose a threat to their health?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

1. The Commission is paying close attention to the risks of products originating in China. Through the 'RAPEX-China system', Chinese authorities ([1]) receive information from the Commission on identified dangerous products of Chinese origin and regularly report back on corrective actions taken against economic operators at source in China ([2]). Moreover, the Commission financially contributes Consumer Programme to a Joint Action between enforcement authorities of ten Member States and China on toys safety with the aim of developing common practices with regard to surveillance, testing and information exchange.

2. In February 2013, the Commission presented proposals to revise the Product Safety and Market Surveillance legislation. They aim, among others, at strengthening the enforcement of product safety rules within the internal market and at the external borders. The two legislative proposals are subject to the ordinary legislative procedure and the European Parliament adopted its legislative resolution on 15 April 2014.

3. Enhanced cooperation between market surveillance authorities and authorities in charge of controls of products at the external borders is addressed by one of the two proposals referred to above (Proposal for a regulation on market surveillance of products (COM[2013]75) ([3])

4. The other Proposal for a regulation on consumer product safety (COM[2013]78) ([4]) aims at setting clear obligations on economic operators, including for better product identification and their traceability such as indication on the product or its packaging of the country of origin, of the type, batch or serial number and of the manufacturer's or importer's name and address.

([1]) China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/international_cooperation/bilateral_cooperation/index_en.htm
([3]) The proposal is part of the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/psmsp/index_en.htm
([4]) The proposal is part of the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package, http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/psmsp/index_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003733/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: El Gobierno aplica quitas del 50 % a los acreedores de las autopistas en crisis — El Estado asumirá 2 300 millones de deuda — Artículo 107, apartado 1 del TFUE

Cristóbal Montoro, Ministro de Hacienda, y el Ministerio de Fomento explicarán a la banca y las constructoras que las quitas a la deuda contraída por las nueve autopistas de peaje en concurso de acreedores serán al final del 50 %. Ese es el plan del Gobierno y se lo comunicará a los afectados en una reunión en la que también participará la patronal Seopán. Con este proyecto se pretende cerrar el contencioso abierto hace meses con las autopistas que quebraron en cadena. Esas vías —esencialmente las autopistas radiales de Madrid— entraron en concurso de acreedores porque los ingresos que obtenían mediante los peajes eran muy reducidos en relación con el coste de la infraestructura ([1]).

El Gobierno creará una empresa pública que aglutinará las citadas nueve concesiones de autopistas en quiebra. Los bancos recibirán el 50 % de la deuda, que sí le pagará el Estado mediante un bono negociable con un vencimiento a 30 años. La rentabilidad anual de ese bono será del 1 % como mínimo y podrá ser vendido por los tenedores del mismo. Fuentes consultadas dijeron que el bono nacería con una alta calificación de solvencia y no se contabilizaría como déficit público. Los bancos afectados son BBVA, Santander, Bankia, CaixaBank, Banc Sabadell y Banco Popular. En conjunto, los bancos tienen créditos concedidos a las autopistas en concurso de acreedores por valor de 3 900 millones de euros y las constructoras por unos 470 millones. Teniendo en cuenta otras deudas menores de otros acreedores, el pago que efectuará el Estado a través de dichos bonos será de unos 2 300 millones. Adicionalmente, la empresa nacerá con otra deuda de 1 200 millones contraída con los propietarios de tierras cuyos terrenos se expropiaron para la construcción de las autopistas de peaje y que aún no han cobrado. Después de esta operación, el Estado central será propietario de las nueve operadoras y podría, por tanto, darlas en concesión nuevamente cuando lo considere oportuno.

La nueva sociedad integraría a nueve concesionarias que suman 748 kilómetros de autopistas, el 22 % de la red española de peaje. Son las autopistas radiales de Madrid, la que une la capital con Barajas, la Madrid-Toledo, la Ocaña-La Roda, la Cartagena-Vera y la circunvalación de Alicante.

¿Ha recibido la Comisión la notificación de las autoridades españolas sobre esta ayuda? ¿Está satisfecha con la información recibida? ¿Nos la puede facilitar?

¿Considera la Comisión que estas ayudas estatales (artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFUE) distorsionan la competencia favoreciendo a determinadas empresas?

¿Considera que estas ayudas públicas están dirigidas a reducir el déficit público del Estado?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de mayo de 2014)

Las autoridades españolas no han notificado a la Comisión sus planes de creación de una empresa pública que agrupara las autopistas en quiebra y las posibles medidas correspondientes, como el tratamiento de la deuda de los bancos y empresas de construcción. No obstante, como se señala en su respuesta de 19 de diciembre de 2013 a la pregunta P-013590/2013 de Su Señoría, la Comisión ha pedido información y aclaraciones a las autoridades españolas sobre la llamada «Empresa Nacional de Autopistas» y las medidas a las que se hace referencia en la prensa. Las autoridades españolas no han facilitado aún la información solicitada, alegando que las medidas están en fase de planificación y todavía pueden cambiar. La Comisión confía en que las autoridades españolas faciliten la información solicitada una vez que las medidas hayan sido aprobadas.

Sobre la base de lo anterior, la Comisión no dispone, en este momento, de información suficiente y, por consiguiente, no puede pronunciarse sobre si las medidas constituyen ayuda estatal en el sentido del artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFUE. En caso de que las medidas constituyeran ayuda estatal, la Comisión tomaría todas las medidas necesarias con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales.

En el contexto de los procedimientos de ayuda estatal, no corresponde a la Comisión comentar la relación entre las medidas y el nivel del déficit español. La Comisión limita su análisis a la existencia de ayuda estatal y su compatibilidad con el mercado interior.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20140325/54404062132/quitas-50-acreedores-autopistas-crisis.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003733/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Spanish Government offers 50% debt release to the creditors of crisis-stricken motorways: Spanish state to take over EUR 2.3 billion worth of debt — Article 107(1) TFEU

Spain's Finance Minister, Cristóbal Montoro, and the Ministry of Public Works are to explain to the banks and construction companies that a 50% haircut will be applied to the debts owed by the nine toll motorways currently undergoing insolvency proceedings. This is the government's plan and it will inform the affected parties of it at a meeting which will also be attended by the national association of construction companies, Seopan. With this proposal, the government hopes to put an end to the process launched several months ago when the motorways folded in quick succession. These motorways — most of them around Madrid — filed for bankruptcy because their income from tolls was minimal compared to the cost of their infrastructure ([1]).

The government is to create a public enterprise which will group together the nine bankrupt motorways, The banks will receive 50% of the debt, which will be paid by the state via a negotiable 30-year bond with a minimum annual return of 1%, which can be sold by its holders. Sources consulted said that the bond will be launched with a high solvency rating and will not be calculated as part of the public debt. The affected banks are BBVA, Santander, Bankia, CaixaBank, Banc Sabadell and Banco Popular. Overall, the banks provided EUR 3.9 billion in credit to the motorways at the creditors meeting and a further EUR 470 million to the construction companies. Taking into account other lesser debts to other creditors, the total amount paid out in bonds by the state will be around EUR 2.3 billion. The new company will start out with another debt of EUR 1.2 billion owed to the landowners whose land was expropriated to build the toll motorways and who have still not been paid. Following this operation, the nine operators will be centrally owned by the state, which can tender the concessions when it considers opportune to do so.

The new company will be made up of the nine concessionaries, which account for 748 km of motorways and 22% of the Spanish toll road network. The motorways involved are the Madrid ring-roads, the Madrid-Barajas, Madrid-Toledo, Ocaña-La Roda and Cartagena-Vera stretches and the Alicante ring-road.

Has the Commission been notified by the Spanish authorities of this aid? Is it satisfied with the information received? Can it provide this information?

Does the Commission consider that this state aid (Article 107(1) TFEU) distorts competition by favouring certain enterprises?

Does it believe this state aid is designed to reduce Spain's public deficit?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The Spanish authorities have not notified to the Commission their plans concerning the setting up of a public company grouping together the bankrupt motorways and the possible measures linked to it, like the treatment of the debt of the banks and construction companies. However, as noted in its reply of 19 December 2013 to Question P-013590/2013 from the Honourable Member, the Commission has requested information and clarification from the Spanish authorities on the so-called 'National Motorway Company' and the measures referred to in the press. The Spanish authorities have not yet provided the information requested, alleging that the measures are in the planning stage and may be subject to changes. The Commission is confident that the Spanish authorities will provide the information requested once the measures have been decided.

On the basis of the above, the Commission does not possess at this stage enough information and therefore cannot take a view on whether the measures would constitute state aid in the sense of Article 107(1) TFEU. Should the measures constitute state aid, the Commission will take all necessary actions in line with state aid rules.

In the context of state aid procedures, it is not for the Commission to comment on the relationship between the measures and the level of the Spanish deficit. The Commission confines its analysis to the existence of state aid and its compatibility with the internal market.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/economia/20140325/54404062132/quitas-50-acreedores-autopistas-crisis.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003734/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Incumplimientos del Proyecto Minero de Uranio de Salamanca

— Considerando lo siguiente: Juan Antoni López de Uralde y Víctor Cavac han dirigido a la Comisión Europea una queja contra el Estado Español por infracción y mala aplicación de la normativa comunitaria en relación con el proyecto de explotación de minas de uranio denominado «Retortillo-Santidad» situado en los términos municipales de Villavieja de Yeltes y Retortillo en Salamanca (España) ([1]).

— El Proyecto Minero de Uranio denominado «Retortillo-Santidad» es un proyecto de Berkeley Minera España S.A., filial de la compañía australiana Berkeley Resources Ltd, que pretende explotar 2 517 hectáreas para la extracción y procesado de mineral de uranio por lixiviación estática.

— El proyecto coincide territorialmente con dos zonas protegidas dentro de la red Natura 2000: el espacio LIC «Riberas de los ríos Huebra, Yeltes, Uces y afluentes» (en el marco de la Directiva 92/43/CEE relativa a la conservación de hábitats naturales) y la zona ZEPA «Riberas de los ríos Huebra y Yeltes» (en el marco de la Directiva 79/409/CEE de protección de las aves).

— La declaración favorable emitida por la Junta de Castilla y León incumple la normativa europea en materia de protección de espacios naturales y no tiene en cuenta los graves riesgos para el entorno y la salud de dicho proyecto.

— La Directiva 2011/92/UE relativa a la evaluación de proyectos sobre el medio ambiente estipula que se debe incluir una descripción de las características del conjunto del proyecto y que la empresa está tratando de fraccionar el proyecto global en varios proyectos parciales para así escapar del examen y control de todas sus actividades.

— La declaración de impacto ambiental del proyecto no menciona los riesgos para la salud derivados de las partículas radioactivas liberadas en las explosiones a cielo abierto, así como de la contaminación de la atmósfera, acuíferos y ríos.

— Se está incumpliendo la normativa europea en materia transfronteriza (Directiva 2011/92/UE) ya que la Junta de Castilla y León no ha comunicado en la tramitación de la declaración de impacto ambiental los detalles del proyecto al Gobierno de Portugal, país afectado debido a la proximidad geográfica;

¿Considera la Comisión que este proyecto vulnera la normativa europea? ¿Qué mecanismos tiene la Comisión para asegurar que los Estados miembros cumplan la normativa europea? ¿Qué acciones pretende realizar la Comisión ante el incumplimiento de la normativa europea por dicho proyecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión está investigando el caso. Si la evaluación de la información disponible apunta a un posible infracción, la Comisión decidirá la línea de actuación más adecuada para garantizar la conformidad del proyecto con las disposiciones pertinentes de la legislación medioambiental de la UE.

([1]) http://www.partidoequo.es/documentos/queja_comision_europea.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003734/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Infringements by uranium mining project in Salamanca

A complaint has been lodged with the Commission by Juan Antoni López de Uralde and Víctor Cavac against Spain, for infringement and poor implementation of Community law in relation to the Retortillo-Santidad uranium mining project in the municipalities of Villavieja de Yeltes and Retortillo (Salamanca, Spain) ([1]).

The Retortillo-Santidad uranium mining project is operated by Berkeley Minera España S.A., a branch of the Australian company Berkeley Resources Ltd It seeks to use a 2 517 hectare area to extract and process uranium by means of heap leach mining.

The zone covered by the project coincides with that of two protected areas belonging to the Natura 2000 network: the Site of Community Interest (SCI) 'Riberas de los ríos Huebra, Yeltes, Uces y afluentes' (under Directive 92/43/EEC on the preservation of natural habitats) and the Special Protected Area (SPA) for Birds 'Riberas de los ríos Huebra y Yeltes' (under Directive 79/409/EEC on the protection of wild birds).

The positive decision announced by the regional government of Castile and Leon infringes European law on the protection of natural spaces and does not take into consideration the serious environmental and health risks posed by the project.

Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment stipulates that a description of the characteristics of the project as a whole must be provided. In this case, the company is trying to split the overall project into a number of segments in order to avoid all its activities being monitored and scrutinised.

The project's environmental impact assessment fails to mention the health risks associated with radioactive particles released by open pit dynamiting, as well as contamination of the atmosphere, aquifers and rivers.

European law on cross-border matters (Directive 2011/92/EU) has been infringed, as the regional government of Castile and Leon processed the environmental impact declaration without providing the Portuguese Government with details of the project, which also affects Portugal due to its proximity.

Does the Commission believe that this project breaches EC law? What mechanisms does the Commission have at its disposal to ensure that Member States comply with European regulations? What action does the Commission intend to take in response to this project's infringement of European rules?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

The Commission is currently investigating this matter. If the assessment of the available information points to a potential infringement, the Commission will decide on the adequate course of action to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of EU environmental law.

([1]) http://www.partidoequo.es/documentos/queja_comision_europea.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003735/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Violencia de género y el asesinato de una prostituta

El pasado lunes 23 de marzo el Gobierno español afirmó que asesinar a una prostituta no constituye violencia de género, alegando que no existe un vínculo afectivo entre el agresor y la víctima. Con esta afirmación el Gobierno respondía a dos diputadas socialistas que preguntaban por qué no se había considerado violencia de género el asesinato de una prostituta marroquí a manos de un militar español ([1]).

El artículo 1 de la Ley Orgánica española de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género entiende por violencia de género la «manifestación de la discriminación, la situación de desigualdad y las relaciones de poder de los hombres sobre las mujeres» que «se ejerce sobre estas por parte de quienes sean o hayan sido sus cónyuges o de quienes estén o hayan estado ligados a ellas por relaciones similares de afectividad, aun sin convivencia».

La Directiva 2012/29/UE por la que se establecen normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos dice textualmente que se entiende como violencia por motivos de género «la violencia dirigida contra una persona a causa de su sexo, identidad o expresión de género, o que afecte a personas de un sexo en particular de modo desproporcionado». Esta Directiva define como víctimas a «la persona física que haya sufrido un daño» así como a «los familiares de una persona cuya muerte haya sido directamente causada por un delito y que haya sufrido un daño o perjuicio como consecuencia de la muerte de dicha persona». Además, en el capítulo 2 de dicha Directiva se afirma que se debe garantizar información y apoyo a las víctimas, incluidos sus familiares.

Teniendo en cuenta lo aquí expuesto:

¿Considera la Comisión que la definición del concepto de «violencia de género» que figura en la Ley Orgánica española de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género es incompleta?

¿Considera la Comisión que la definición que proporciona la legislación española debe ser revisada, a fin de incluir en la misma no solo la violencia de pareja sino todos los tipos de violencia de género, tal y como contempla la Directiva 2012/29/UE?

¿Considera la Comisión que la UE debe elaborar una directiva destinada a regular concretamente la violencia contra las mujeres, tal y como ha solicitado el Parlamento Europeo en la reciente Resolución Parvanova?

¿Cree la Comisión que el asesinato de esta prostituta en España debe considerarse un caso de violencia de género y, en consecuencia, contabilizarse como tal?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(2 de junio de 2014)

La Directiva 2012/29/UE ([2]) establece normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos. La Directiva se aplica a los delitos penales cometidos en la Unión Europea y a los procesos penales celebrados en la EU. Su objetivo no es tipificar como infracción penal determinados actos o conductas llevados a cabo en los Estados miembros. Para que la Directiva se aplique y defina como «víctima» a una persona que haya sido objeto de un acto específico, es preciso que tales actos estén tipificados penalmente y se puedan castigar con arreglo a la legislación nacional. La Directiva, que deberá ser aplicada por los Estados miembros antes del 16 de noviembre de 2015, garantizará los derechos procesales en los procesos penales, el acceso a servicios de apoyo generales y especializados, así como la evaluación individual de las necesidades de las víctimas. Sobre la base de esta evaluación individual se tomará una serie de medidas especiales para proteger y apoyar a las víctimas vulnerables.

([1]) http://www.europapress.es/nacional/noticia-gobierno-precisa-asesinar-prostituta-no-violencia-genero-20140323113949.html

([2]) Directiva 2012/29/UE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 25 de octubre de 2012, por la que se establecen normas mínimas sobre los derechos, el apoyo y la protección de las víctimas de delitos, y por la que se sustituye la Decisión marco 2001/220/JAI del Consejo, DO L 315/57 de 14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003735/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Violence against women and the killing of a prostitute

On 23 March 2014, the Spanish Government stated that the killing of a prostitute does not constitute gender-based violence as there is no emotional link between the perpetrator and the victim. This was the answer given by the government to two female Socialist members of parliament who asked why the killing of a Moroccan prostitute by a Spanish soldier had not been treated as a case of gender-based violence.

Article 1 of Spain's law on integral protection measures to combat gender-based violence interprets gender-based violence as the 'expression of discrimination, the situation of inequality and power exerted over women by men' to which women are subjected 'by their current or former spouses or persons linked to them by similar ties of affection, with or without cohabitation'.

In Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, gender-based violence is textually defined as 'violence that is directed against a person because of that person's gender, gender identity or gender expression or that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately'. This directive defines the victim as 'a natural person who has suffered harm' and 'family members of a person whose death was directly caused by a criminal offence and who have suffered harm as a result of that person's death'. Chapter 2 of the directive also guarantees the right of victims and their families to receive information and support.

In light of the above:

Does the Commission consider the definition of 'gender-based violence' used in the Spanish law on integral protection measures to combat gender-based violence to be incomplete?

Does the Commission consider that the definition observed by Spanish law should be revised to include not only inter-spousal violence but all forms of violence against women, as provided for in Directive 2012/29/EU?

Does the Commission believe that the EU should draft a directive to specifically address violence against women, as was requested by Parliament in its recent Parvanova Resolution?

Does the Commission consider this case involving the killing of a prostitute in Spain should be viewed as a case of gender-based violence and should therefore be counted as such?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

Directive 2012/29/EU ([1]) established minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of all victims of crime. The directive applies to criminal offences committed in the European Union and to criminal proceedings that take place in the EU. Its objective is not to criminalise certain acts or behaviours in the Member States. Whether or not the directive will apply and define as a 'victim' a person who has been a subject to a specific act depends on whether such acts are criminalised and prosecutable under national law. The directive, which must be implemented by Member States by 16 November 2015, will ensure procedural rights in criminal proceedings, access to general and specialist support services and individual assessment of the victims' needs. On the basis of this individual assessment, a whole range of special measures will be put in place to protect and support vulnerable victims.

([1]) Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25.10.2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA ,OJ L 315/57, 14.11.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003736/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Tawergha

Tawergha in Libya was the scene of a battle during the country's civil war in 2011. By the end of 2011 the city had been virtually emptied of its inhabitants. However, reports from NGOs such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International highlight that Tawerghans remain refugees and are unable to return to their homes due to intimidation and violence by militias.

Is the High Representative aware of this situation? What steps are being taken by the EU to encourage reconciliation and the return of the Tawerghan population to their homes?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The EU is well aware of the situation of Internally Displaced People (IDP) in Libya, including the Tawerghans. The EU has raised the situation of the Tawerghans with the Libyan authorities and has called on the government to address the situation. The EU Delegation in Libya has visited Tawerghans camps repeatedly to listen to the claims of their representatives. The EP Special Rapporteur for Libya, Ms Ana Gomes, also visited one of these camps.

Throughout the dialogue with the EU the Libyan government has expressed its willingness to address this issue and do the necessary to allow for the return of the Tawerghans to their village. However, the role of some militias who are directly involved in the ongoing displacement of the Tawerghans has undermined these efforts.

The prolongation of the post-conflict situation in Libya and the inability of the Libyan government to address all the existing needs have brought the EU to address protection of vulnerable groups in its activities and programmes. For instance the 'Better quality education and increased inclusion of all children' programme implemented by Unicef started in January 2012 and worked with IDPs children. Another programme 'Libyan Protection government initiative' has been helping the relevant government ministries and non-state actors to better support the specific needs of IDPs and designed an interactive webpage on their situation in Libya. A new EU-funded programme on protection amounting to EUR 2.4 million will start in 2014. It will address the protection needs of vulnerable, marginalised and at-risk groups, including IDPs, by broadening access to psychosocial rehabilitation and socioeconomic integration.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003737/14
to the Commission
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EU-funded project in Baia Mare (Romania)

The European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Romanian Government have funded a project for the wastewater and waste infrastructure in the Romanian town of Baia Mare. However, Amnesty International highlights that this project has led to forced evictions of Roma families in the Craica settlement in Baia Mare. Demolition orders have been issued for 21 homes. Residents were told that they would be allowed to rebuild their houses in another part of the Craica settlement, but Amnesty International suggests that the affected families have been prevented from rebuilding their homes elsewhere.

Is the Commission aware of this issue? Is it satisfied that an adequate impact assessment was conducted, especially with regard to those affected by the resettlement? What measures are in place to ensure human rights are upheld when Community funds are spent in such projects?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the issue of forced evictions of the Roma families in Romania and has been consulted by various organisations about the Craica settlements.

In October 2013, the Commission addressed this question in a letter sent to the Romanian National Council for Combating Discrimination, which consulted the Commission on this matter. More recently, the Commission provided Amnesty International with access to all the documents related to the project for water and wastewater infrastructure in Maramures County affecting the Craica settlements.

This type of project is subject to Commission appraisal and national authorities have to provide evidence that relevant legislative requirements are fulfilled, including an environmental impact assessment report. Based on the information provided by the managing authority of the Romanian Environment Programme, it was confirmed that all necessary lands for investments in the area are the property of the local authorities participating in the project. The presence of shelters and temporary houses on the Craica site was known by the Baia Mare municipality, which took the necessary initiatives to minimise the impact of construction works on the population living in the area. According to the information received, over the last 2 years the municipality has established a dialogue with the local Roma community and provided alternative accommodation to inhabitants willing to move. No official complaint about the new accommodation has been registered.

The works for the construction of the wastewater pipeline crossing the area are finalised and no official complaint about the implementation of those works has been registered.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003738/14
à la Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 mars 2014)

Objet: Conséquences du vote suisse

Le 9 février 2014, la Suisse a voté, lors d'un référendum d'initiative populaire proposé par l'Union démocratique du centre, la limitation de «l'immigration de masse».

Le dynamisme économique de la Suisse en fait un pays attractif pour les citoyens européens en recherche d'un emploi. Ainsi, ils sont près de 80 000 à s'y installer tous les ans. En 2013, les étrangers représentaient 23,5 % de la population helvétique, soit 1,88 million de personnes. Les Italiens et les Allemands sont les plus nombreux, avec respectivement 291 000 et 284 200 ressortissants. Ils sont suivis par les Portugais (237 000) et les Français (104 000).

Les conséquences de ce vote sont encore difficiles à évaluer, et le gouvernement suisse, pourtant hostile à ce résultat, a assuré qu'il allait l'appliquer «rapidement et de manière conséquente».

Le texte du référendum prévoit notamment le rétablissement de quotas et de contingents annuels de travailleurs étrangers, y compris européens, en fonction des besoins du pays, et précise que «ces plafonds doivent inclure les frontaliers».

1. De quels recours juridiques les frontaliers européens travaillant en Suisse bénéficient-ils en cas de menaces de licenciement suite à ce référendum?

2. Dans quelle mesure ce vote oblige-t-il l'Union européenne à revoir ses accords de libre-circulation avec la Suisse? Que pense la Commission de l'établissement de quotas intra-communautaires de travailleurs?

3. La Commission envisage-t-elle une renégociation de la participation de la Suisse aux programmes européens communs tels que Horizon 2020 ou Erasmus+?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(20 mai 2014)

À la suite du référendum, le législateur suisse dispose désormais de trois ans pour adopter la législation mettant en œuvre l'initiative qui vise à introduire des contingents annuels en matière d'immigration. La compatibilité de cette législation de mise en œuvre avec l'accord UE-Suisse sur la libre circulation des personnes ainsi que toute initiative éventuelle seront analysées lorsque les dispositions exactes du projet d'acte législatif seront connues. Entretemps, le Conseil fédéral suisse a assuré l'Union européenne qu'il continuerait à honorer les engagements internationaux existants.

La Commission européenne est convaincue que la libre circulation des personnes est l'une des plus grandes réalisations de l'intégration européenne et s'opposera, dans le cadre de ses relations avec la Suisse, à toute tentative de limiter ou de remettre en question cette liberté.

Les directives de négociation du Conseil concernant l'association et la participation de la Suisse aux programmes Horizon 2020 et Erasmus+ lient clairement ces accords apparentés à la signature du protocole étendant l'accord UE-Suisse sur la libre circulation des personnes à la Croatie. Par conséquent, la Commission européenne a suspendu les négociations concernant ces accords jusqu'à la conclusion formelle du protocole par la Suisse.

La Commission européenne salue cependant la récente décision du Conseil fédéral suisse de financer des mesures transitoires relatives à la participation de la Suisse à Erasmus+ en 2014. Les mesures annoncées permettront de poursuivre la mobilité EU-Suisse dans les deux sens, ainsi que le financement de projets de coopération universitaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003738/14
to the Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Implications of the vote in Switzerland

On 9 February 2014, Switzerland voted to restrict 'mass immigration', in a referendum that was part of a popular initiative proposed by the Swiss People's Party.

Switzerland's economic dynamism makes it an attractive country for European citizens who are looking for work, which is why nearly 80 000 Europeans settle in Switzerland every year. In 2013, foreign nationals made up 23.5% of the country's population, amounting to 1.88 million people. Italians and Germans comprise the largest proportions, with 291 000 and 284 200 people respectively, followed by Portuguese (237 000) and French (104 000).

The implications of this vote are still difficult to quantify, and the Swiss Government, whilst fiercely opposed to the vote, has pledged that it would apply the policy 'rapidly and consistently'.

The wording of the referendum notably sought to re-establish annual quotas of foreign workers, including those from Europe, in accordance with the country's requirements, and stated that 'these limits must include those people who commute into Switzerland'.

1. What legal remedies are available to those people working in Switzerland, but living on the other side of the border, who are at risk of losing their jobs as a result of this referendum?

2. To what extent will this vote compel the European Union to review its freedom of movement agreements with Switzerland? What view does the Commission take on the establishment of intra-Community quotas on workers?

3. Does the Commission intend to renegotiate Switzerland's participation in European programmes such as Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

As a consequence of the referendum, the Swiss legislator now has three years to adopt the necessary implementing legislation for the initiative which aims to introduce annual quantitative limits to immigration. Compliance of the implementing legislation with the EU-Swiss Agreement on the free movement of persons as well as any possible initiatives will be analysed once the details of the draft legislation are known. In the meantime, the Swiss Federal Council has assured the EU that it will continue to fulfil its existing international obligations.

The European Commission believes that the free movement of persons is one of the greatest achievements of EU integration, and will counter all attempts to limit or to call into question this freedom in its relations with Switzerland.

The Council's negotiating directives for Swiss association and participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ clearly link these related agreements to the signature of the protocol extending the EU-Swiss agreement on the free movement of persons to Croatia. The European Commission has consequently put negotiations of these agreements on hold until Switzerland formally concludes the Protocol.

The European Commission however welcomes the recent decision of the Swiss Federal Council to fund transitory measures for the participation of Switzerland in Erasmus+ in 2014. The announced measures will allow a continuation of EU-Swiss mobility in both directions, as well as as the funding of academic cooperation projects..

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003739/14
à la Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 mars 2014)

Objet: Vers une macrorégion pour la Méditerranée occidentale

En 2009 naissait autour de la mer Baltique la première stratégie macrorégionale. Celle-ci avait pour objectif la coordination, sur un territoire géographique fonctionnel, de différentes politiques autour d'objectifs communs. Ce type de stratégie macrorégionale a ensuite été transposé sur d'autres territoires, avec la macrorégion pour le Danube ou encore celle pour les Alpes.

Ces stratégies permettent une meilleure synergie entre les différentes politiques européennes d'aménagement du territoire, à l'instar de la politique maritime intégrée, de la politique de cohésion ou des réseaux transeuropéens de transports.

En juin 2012, le rapport du Parlement européen sur «l'évolution des stratégies macrorégionales» soulignait le retour d'expérience positif de ces macrorégions et demandait l'élaboration d'une stratégie macrorégionale pour la Méditerranée, avec trois sous-ensembles: la Méditerranée orientale, la mer adriatico-ionienne et la Méditerranée occidentale.

1. La Commission considère-t-elle qu'un espace comme «l'arc latin méditerranéen», comprenant l'Espagne, la France, l'Italie, le Maroc, l'Algérie et la Tunisie et dont les territoires partagent de nombreux défis et traits communs, pourrait se présenter comme un candidat cohérent et légitime à la création d'une macrorégion?

2. La Commission prévoit-elle des mécanismes de coordination territoriale entre les différentes politiques européennes mises en œuvre en Méditerranée occidentale, notamment les programmes transnationaux de l'objectif de coopération territoriale européenne, les programmes Culture et Erasmus +, les programmes de bassins de l'instrument européen de voisinage et les stratégies de l'ARLEM et de l'Union pour la Méditerranée?

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

La Commission a souligné, dans son rapport concernant la valeur ajoutée des stratégies macrorégionales, en s'appuyant sur les leçons tirées des deux stratégies macrorégionales existantes dans la région de la mer Baltique et dans celle du Danube, que de nouvelles initiatives ne devraient être entreprises que s'il existe des besoins spécifiques d'améliorer la coopération à haut niveau, apportant une véritable valeur ajoutée au niveau de l'UE, qui devraient ensuite se traduire en un nombre limité d'objectifs bien définis. Sur la base de ces recommandations et des conclusions du Conseil d'octobre 2013, le Conseil a chargé la Commission de préparer deux nouvelles stratégies, pour la région de l'Adriatique et de la mer Ionienne ainsi que pour la région alpine, toutes deux ayant de forts liens politiques et une longue tradition de coopération dans leurs régions respectives.

Les pays qui souhaitent coopérer de façon plus étroite et qui remplissent notamment les critères mentionnés dans le rapport sur la valeur ajoutée peuvent demander une stratégie macrorégionale par l'intermédiaire du Conseil. Comme condition préalable fondamentale, les pays participants doivent être prêts à traduire leur engagement politique en ressources administratives et à faire la preuve de leur capacité à produire des résultats concrets et clairs.

La Commission accueille favorablement toutes les initiatives en faveur d'une utilisation plus efficace des nombreuses sources de financement existantes pour la région méditerranéenne (occidentale), notamment les nombreux programmes de coopération territoriale 2014-2020 qui seront mis en œuvre dans la région, mais également d'autres programmes sectoriels à l'échelle européenne (COSME, Culture, Erasmus +, LIFE, etc.). En parallèle, la Commission encourage les pays concernés à maximiser les synergies avec les autres bailleurs de fonds et à exploiter au mieux les structures existantes, notamment l'Union pour la Méditerranée et sa dimension territoriale, l'Assemblée régionale et locale euro-méditerranéenne (ARLEM).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003739/14
to the Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Towards a western Mediterranean macro-region

In 2009, the first strategic macro-region was established around the Baltic Sea. Its aim was to coordinate a variety of policies based on common aims across a functional geographical area. This type of macro-regional strategy has since been applied in other regions, in the form of the Danube and Alpine macro-regions.

Such strategies enable greater synergy to be achieved between the various European regional infrastructure policies, such as integrated maritime policy, cohesion policy or trans-European transport networks.

In June 2012, the European Parliament's report on the 'evolution of macro-regional strategies' underlined the positive feedback from these macro-regions and called for the creation of a macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean, with three subdivisions for the eastern Mediterranean, the Adriatic and Ionian seas and the western Mediterranean.

1. Does the Commission believe that an area such as the 'Latin-Mediterranean arc' of Spain, France, Italy, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia — countries with a number of shared challenges and traits — might constitute a coherent, legitimate candidate for the creation of a macro-region?

2. Is the Commission planning any regional coordination mechanisms for the various European policies being implemented in the western Mediterranean, in particular the transnational European regional cooperation policies, the Culture and Erasmus+ programmes, the programmes for sea basins under the European Neighbourhood Instrument and the Mediterranean strategies of ARLEM and the EU?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission has stressed in its report on the added value of macro-regional strategies, building on the lessons learnt from the two existing macro-regional strategies in the Baltic Sea Region and Danube Region, that new initiatives should only be launched if there are particular needs for improved and high-level cooperation, with clear added value at EU level, which should then be translated into a limited number of well-defined objectives. Based on these recommendations and the Council conclusions of October 2013, the Council mandated the Commission to prepare two new strategies, for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, and the Alpine Region, both with strong political ties and a history of cooperation in their respective regions.

Countries which wish to cooperate more closely and which fulfil, in particular, the criteria stipulated in the added value report, may request a macro-regional strategy through the Council. As a key pre-requisite, the participating countries must be ready to translate the political commitment into administrative resources, and to demonstrate their capacity to bring forward practical and clear results.

The Commission welcomes any moves towards a better use of the many existing sources of funding for the (western) Mediterranean area, including the numerous 2014-2020 territorial cooperation programmes which will operate there, but also other European-wide sectoral programmes (COSME, Culture, Erasmus +, LIFE, etc.). At the same time, the Commission encourages the countries concerned to maximise synergies with other donors and to make best use of existing structures, including the Union for the Mediterranean and its territorial dimension, the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003740/14
à la Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 mars 2014)

Objet: Importation intra-européenne de produits du tabac

Le 14 mars 2013, La Cour de justice de l'Union européenne jugeait que la France n'avait pas respecté les règles de libre circulation des marchandises entre les pays de l'Union européenne en imposant des quotas stricts sur l'achat de cigarettes en provenance d'autres États membres de l'Union européenne; l'Assemblée nationale française avait alors modifié le code des impôts concernant ces quotas en décembre 2013.

Ainsi, depuis le 1er janvier 2014, chaque personne peut ramener en France 10 cartouches de cigarettes et 1 000 cigares en provenance d'un autre État membre de l'Union. La réglementation autorise également ces nouveaux quotas pour les voitures de cinq personnes, soit jusqu'à 50 cartouches (10 000 cigarettes) et 5 000 cigares par véhicule.

L'inquiétude est grande pour les buralistes des régions frontalières: les achats transfrontaliers représentent déjà entre 15 % et 20 % du marché français. Chaque année, environ 500 millions de paquets fumés en France sont achetés en Belgique, Espagne, Italie ou au Luxembourg, pays où les cigarettes sont les moins chères d'Europe.

Ce mode d'achat représenterait un manque à gagner fiscal d'environ 2,5 milliards d'euros par an.

1. La Commission ne considère-t-elle pas que l'augmentation des quotas à 10 cartouches de cigarettes par personne risque de profiter, avant tout, aux marchés de la contrebande?

2. La France pourrait-elle diminuer ces quotas sans enfreindre l'arrêt de la Cour de justice de l'Union européenne afin de poursuivre ses objectifs de lutte contre le tabagisme et de lutte contre la contrebande?

3. La Commission envisage-t-elle prochainement une proposition législative concernant l'harmonisation des droits d'accise dans l'Union en ce qui concerne les produits du tabac afin de lutter contre le tourisme fiscal?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(20 mai 2014)

Selon les informations de la Commission, les quantités mentionnées par l'Honorable Parlementaire ne constituent pas des limites quantitatives ou quotas. En effet, les États membres ne peuvent pas introduire de telles limites concernant les produits du tabac applicables aux voyageurs au sein de l'UE.

En vertu de la législation de l'UE, il convient d'établir une distinction entre le tabac détenu pour usage personnel et celui destiné à des fins commerciales. Conformément à l'article 32 de la directive 2008/118/CE du Conseil, les particuliers sont autorisés à acheter du tabac manufacturé dans un État membre avec exonération de droits d'accise dans l'État membre de destination lorsque les marchandises sont destinées à l'usage personnel du voyageur et transportées par lui-même. La quantité des produits (pour lesquels la directive prévoit des «niveaux indicatifs» minimaux) n'est qu'un des nombreux aspects à prendre en compte pour déterminer si les produits sont destinés à l'usage personnel du voyageur, et donc non destinés à être vendus.

En ce qui concerne les éventuels progrès sur la voie de l'harmonisation, la révision assez récente de la directive du Conseil sur la taxation du tabac en 2010 [Directive 2010/12/UE — codification: Directive 2011/64/UE] a déjà réduit l'écart entre les États membres ayant le plus bas niveau de taxation du tabac et les États membres ayant le plus haut niveau. Une période de transition est toujours applicable dans neuf États membres afin d'atteindre les niveaux minimaux de l'UE pour les droits d'accise sur les cigarettes jusqu'au 31 décembre 2017, trois de ces neuf États membres ayant déjà atteint ces niveaux. En outre, la Commission évalue actuellement le fonctionnement de la directive, afin de décider d'une éventuelle future révision en 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003740/14
to the Commission
Marie-Thérèse Sanchez-Schmid (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Intra-European imports of tobacco products

On 14 March 2013, the European Court of Justice ruled that France, by imposing strict quotas on purchases of cigarettes originating in other EU Member States, had failed to comply with the rules on the free movement of goods within the countries of the European Union. The French National Assembly subsequently amended the Tax Code in relation to these quotas in December 2013.

Consequently, since 1 January 2014 individuals have been permitted to bring 10 cartons of cigarettes and 1 000 cigars originating in another EU Member State into France. The regulations also allow these new quotas to be applied to cars with five occupants, i.e. up to 50 cartons (10 000 cigarettes) and 5 000 cigars per vehicle.

This is a matter of great concern for tobacconists in border regions: cross-border purchases already account for between 15% and 20% of the French market. Every year some 500 million packs are smoked in France after having being purchased in Belgium, Spain, Italy or Luxembourg, the countries with the cheapest cigarettes in Europe.

Purchases of this type correspond to an annual loss of some 2.5 billion euros in tax revenue.

1. Does the Commission not believe that raising quotas to 10 cartons of cigarettes per person risks benefiting the black market above all else?

2. Could France reduce these quotas without infringing the ruling of the European Court of Justice, so that it may continue to fight against smoking and smuggling?

3. Does the Commission intend in the near future to propose a bill on harmonising excise duties on tobacco products in the Union in order to combat tax tourism?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

According to the information of the Commission, the quantities mentioned by the honourable member do not constitute quantitative limits or quotas. Indeed, Member States may not introduce such limits on tobacco products applicable for travellers within the EU.

Under EU legislation, a distinction is made between tobacco owned for personal use or for commercial purposes. Pursuant to Article 32 of Council Directive 2008/118/EC, private individuals are allowed to buy manufactured tobacco in one Member State with no excise duty to pay in the Member State of destination if the goods are for the own use of the traveller and transported by himself. The quantity of the products (for which the directive provides minimum 'guide levels') is but one of several aspects to be taken into account to determine if the products are for the own use of the traveller, and thus not intended to be sold.

As regards possible progress towards further harmonisation, the relatively recent revision of the Council Directive on tobacco taxation in 2010 [Directive 2010/12/EU — codification: Directive 2011/64/EU] has already narrowed the gap between Member States with the lowest levels of tobacco taxation and the Member States with the highest one. A transitional period is still applicable in nine Member States in order to reach the EU minimum levels for excise duties on cigarettes until 31 December 2017, with three of these nine Member States having already reached these levels. Furthermore, the Commission is currently evaluating the functioning of the directive, so as to decide on a possible future revision in 2015.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003741/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo progetto di «smartphone socialmente responsabile»

Nel 2010 è stato avviato da una società olandese un progetto nel settore della telefonia per sviluppare uno «smartphone etico» tramite i fondi di diverse ONG. Si tratta di uno smartphone ecocompatibile e in linea con i principali orientamenti in tema di responsabilità sociale d'impresa. La novità consiste essenzialmente nel fatto che ogni singolo componente dello smartphone sarebbe prodotto in maniera del tutto trasparente, rispettando l'ambiente e i diritti economici e umani di ogni individuo coinvolto nel processo di produzione. In effetti, uno dei materiali attualmente utilizzati per la produzione degli smartphone è il coltan, prodotto all'80 % in miniere della Repubblica democratica del Congo, dove sono altissimi i numeri relativi ai casi di sfruttamento illegale dei lavoratori. Infine, parte dei ricavi delle vendite è destinata a finanziare un programma su scala mondiale orientato al riciclo dei telefoni cellulari.

Il telefonino dispone di software e hardware aggiornati e di un prezzo nella media rispetto agli altri concorrenti, tanto che già nel maggio 2013 sono stati prodotti 25mila di questi dispositivi, tutti venduti, e ora si attende una nuova release dello smartphone.

In merito allo smartphone in questione, la Commissione:

1. È a conoscenza del progetto?

2. Può chiarire se il progetto ha beneficiato anche di finanziamenti europei?

3. Ritiene che questo modello di business possa essere considerato come una buona pratica, anche alla luce del dibattito in seno alle istituzioni europee in tema di responsabilità sociale d'impresa e diffusione di informazioni non finanziarie?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

1. Sì, la Commissione è a conoscenza dello sviluppo dell'iniziativa «smartphone etico».

2. La Commissione non ha adottato alcun progetto relativo allo sviluppo di uno smartphone socialmente responsabile.

3. La Commissione accoglie con favore lo sviluppo di uno «smartphone etico» quale importante esempio di come produrre in maniera socialmente responsabile e sostenibile e quale valido modello d'imprenditoria sociale.

Lo sviluppo di uno «smartphone etico» è in linea con la recente proposta della Commissione di un regolamento che istituisce un sistema europeo di autocertificazione dell'esercizio del dovere di diligenza nella catena di approvvigionamento per gli importatori responsabili di stagno, tungsteno, tantalio, dei loro minerali e di oro, originari di zone di conflitto e ad alto rischio [COM(2014) 111]. È anche in linea con l'approccio integrato sull'approvvigionamento responsabile di minerali provenienti da zone di conflitto e ad alto rischio [JOIN (2014) 8].

La direttiva riguardante la comunicazione di informazioni di carattere non finanziario e di informazioni sulla diversità da parte di talune società e di taluni gruppi di grandi dimensioni è applicabile solo ad alcune grandi imprese con più di 500 dipendenti. Poiché la direttiva non impone obblighi alle imprese più piccole, essa potrebbe non essere applicabile all'anzidetto progetto di smartphone etico. Tuttavia, ciò non significa che il progetto non debba trarre beneficio da una maggiore trasparenza. La trasparenza e la comunicazione riguardo la produzione dello «smartphone etico» potrebbero contribuire a migliorare i risultati finanziari e non finanziari a lungo termine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003741/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: New 'socially responsible smartphone' project

In 2010 a Dutch company launched a telephone project to develop an 'ethical smartphone' with money from a number of non-governmental organisations. The phone is environmentally friendly and complies with all the main guidelines on corporate social responsibility. Essentially, what is new is that each individual component of the smartphone is manufactured in a completely transparent fashion that does not harm the environment and respects the economic and human rights of everyone involved in the production process. One of the materials currently used in smartphone production is coltan, 80% of which is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the illegal exploitation of workers is rife. Some of the proceeds from sales of the smartphone will be channelled into a global mobile phone recycling scheme.

The mobile boasts up-to-date software and hardware and has a mid-range price tag. The 25 000 handsets produced in May 2013 have already sold out, and a new release of the smartphone is now expected.

1. Is the Commission aware of this smartphone project?

2. Can it say whether the project has received European funding?

3. Does it think this business model can be regarded as good practice, not least in view of the current debate within the European institutions on corporate social responsibility and the disclosure of non-financial information?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(2 June 2014)

1. Yes, the Commission is aware of the development of the 'ethical smartphone' initiative.

2. The Commission has no projects in place for the development of a socially responsible smartphone.

3. The Commission welcomes the development of the 'ethical smartphone' as an important example of how to produce in a socially responsible and sustainable way. It also represents a good model for social enterpreneurship.

The development of the 'ethical smartphone' is in line with the recent Commission proposal for a regulation setting due diligence requirements for the responsible importation of tin, tungsten and tantalum, their ores and gold originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas (COM(2014) 111). It is also in line with the EU's integrated approach on responsible sourcing of minerals originating in conflict-affected and high-risk areas (JOIN(2014) 8).

The directive on disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large companies and groups is only applicable to certain large companies with more than 500 employees. As the directive does not impose obligations on smaller companies, it may not be applicable to the mentioned project of the ethical smartphone. However, this does not mean that the project would not benefit from better transparency. Transparency and communication on the production of the 'ethical smartphone' could help improve long-term financial and non-financial performance.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003742/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Piano di eliminazione della rosolia e del morbillo dall'Europa entro il 2015

L'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità si è prefissata l'obiettivo di eliminare totalmente il morbillo e la rosolia dal suolo europeo entro il 2015. Negli ultimi due anni sono stati circa 8mila i casi di morbillo registrati in Europa. Una commissione di esperti studierà un piano di prevenzione a livello europeo, al quale hanno già dato conferma di adesione oltre cinquanta paesi, europei e non.

Uno dei principali metodi di lotta sarà l'aumento delle vaccinazioni, il cui livello è ancora basso in diversi paesi: in Italia, ad esempio, nove casi su dieci dichiarati di morbillo riguardano persone non vaccinate. La copertura vaccinale resta, infatti, un nodo da sciogliere: in Italia la prima dose vaccinale ha una copertura del 90 %, ma la seconda dose è molto più bassa, anche perché di recente introduzione.

In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. Se dispone di dati aggiornati relativi alla diffusione delle due patologie e alla copertura vaccinale tra i cittadini europei, suddivisi per base nazionale?

2. Se ritiene che un coordinamento minimo, a norma dell'articolo 4, paragrafo 2, lettera k) del TFUE, sia adeguato?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della situazione relativa al morbillo e alla rosolia nell'Unione, monitorata dal Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC).

I dati più recenti in questo settore si riferiscono al periodo novembre 2012-ottobre 2013. Per quanto riguarda il morbillo, nel corso di tale periodo sono stati segnalati 10 678 casi, il 94 % dei quali si è verificato in Germania, Italia, Paesi Bassi, Romania e Regno Unito. Dei 10 129 casi per cui sono disponibili informazioni sullo status di vaccinazione, l'83 % ha colpito soggetti che non erano stati vaccinati.

Per quanto riguarda la rosolia, sono stati segnalati 39 122 casi, il 99 % dei quali si è verificato in Polonia. L'88 % di tali casi è stato diagnosticato in soggetti che non erano stati vaccinati o per i quali non era noto lo status di vaccinazione. La ripartizione dei casi per Stati membri è disponibile sul sito web dell'ECDC ([1]).

L'articolo 168 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea stabilisce che l'azione dell'Unione completa le politiche nazionali e comprende la sorveglianza, l'allarme e la lotta contro gravi minacce per la salute a carattere transfrontaliero.

In tale contesto e sulla base della decisione n. 1082/2013/UE relativa alle gravi minacce per la salute a carattere transfrontaliero ([2]) e delle conclusioni del Consiglio sulla vaccinazione infantile ([3]), la Commissione sostiene gli Stati membri nei loro sforzi volti a contribuire all'impegno dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità (OMS) verso l'eliminazione del morbillo e della rosolia in Europa entro il 2015.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/measles-rubella-surveillance-oct-2013.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013D1082&qid=1400232145480&from=EN
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122391.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003742/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Eradicating rubella and measles in Europe by 2015

The World Health Organisation has set itself the target of totally eradicating measles and rubella in Europe by 2015. Around 8 000 cases of measles have been recorded in Europe in the last two years. A committee of experts is to prepare a Europe-wide prevention plan, to which over 50 European and non-European countries have already signed up.

Increasing the vaccination rate will be one of the main control methods, as rates are still low in several countries. In Italy, for example, nine out of 10 reported cases of measles involve unvaccinated patients. Vaccination take-up in fact remains a thorny problem, since in Italy the take-up rate is 90% for the first dose of vaccine but much lower for the second, not least because it has only recently been introduced.

1. Does the Commission have up-to-date information on the spread of the two diseases and on vaccination levels among Europeans, broken down by country?

2. Does the Commission believe that minimal coordination under Article 4(2)(k) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is sufficient?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the situation regarding measles and rubella in the Union, which is monitored by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

The most recent data in this context covers the period November 2012 to October 2013. As regards measles, 10 678 cases were reported during this period, and Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania and the United Kingdom accounted for 94% of all cases. Of the 10 129 cases on which information on vaccination status is available, 83% were in people who had not been vaccinated.

As regards rubella, 39,122 rubella cases were reported, with Poland accounting for 99% of all reported cases. 88% of these cases were diagnosed in people who either had not been vaccinated or had an unknown vaccination status. A breakdown by Member States is available at the ECDC website ([1]).

Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union stipulates that Union action shall complement national policies, and shall include monitoring, early warning of and combating serious cross-border threats to health.

Against this background and on the basis of the decision No 1082/2013/EU on serious cross-border threats to health ([2]) and the Council conclusions on Childhood immunisation ([3]), the Commission supports the Member States in their efforts to contribute to the World Health Organisation's (WHO) commitment to the elimination of measles and rubella by 2015 in Europe.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/measles-rubella-surveillance-oct-2013.pdf
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([3]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122391.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003743/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Rischio di instabilità della Transnistria

A pochi giorni dall'annessione *de facto* della Crimea alla Russia, è giunta a Mosca la richiesta delle autorità della Transnistria, regione moldava a maggioranza russa, di unirsi alla Russia. Già nel 2006, tramite referendum, il 97 % dei votanti si era espresso a favore del ricongiungimento con Mosca. Anche se la Repubblica di Moldova è ben ancorata all'UE dal «sì» dato lo scorso novembre dalla Commissione europea all'Accordo di associazione, la richiesta potrebbe essere fonte di una nuova crisi, anche in vista delle prossime elezioni politiche in programma a novembre; le forze filo-europee e filo-russe potrebbero esacerbare lo scontro e dare il via a una crisi simile a quella scoppiata alcuni mesi fa in Ucraina. Senza dubbio, gli interessi russi sono minori che non in Ucraina, ma l'UE potrebbe trovarsi a fronteggiare nuovamente una crisi politica particolarmente aspra.

In merito a questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. Intende prendere in considerazione l'adesione della Moldova all'UE come strumento di deterrenza contro la Federazione russa?

2. Ha motivo di credere che in Moldova si possano verificare eventi tragici come quelli accaduti di recente in Ucraina e, in particolare, in Crimea?

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

1. Negli ultimi mesi la Commissione e il SEAE hanno ribadito pubblicamente, anche in consessi internazionali pertinenti come l'OSCE, il loro sostegno alla sovranità e all'integrità territoriale della Repubblica di Moldova. Questo sostegno continuerà ad essere espresso e dimostrato non solo a parole, ma anche con l'intensificazione delle visite ad alto livello, un maggior supporto finanziario e tecnico e misure commerciali specifiche quali la soppressione del contingente UE sui vini moldovi nel dicembre 2013 in risposta al divieto applicato dalla Federazione russa nei confronti dei produttori di vini della Moldova. Va inoltre sottolineato che le autorità della Repubblica di Moldova sono state incoraggiate ad anticipare l'evoluzione degli eventi in vista della firma dell'accordo di associazione con l'UE, programmata per la fine di giugno, e ricevono sostegno a tal fine.

2. Come ribadito nelle conclusioni del Consiglio Affari esteri del 14 aprile, l'UE «sostiene fermamente l'unità, la sovranità, l'indipendenza e l'integrità territoriale dell'Ucraina e esorta la Federazione russa a fare altrettanto. Sollecita la Russia a ritirare le sue truppe dal confine ucraino e a revocare immediatamente il mandato dato dal Consiglio della Federazione a usare la forza sul suolo ucraino. Le minacce o uso della forza contro l'Ucraina o qualsiasi altro paese non sono accettabili e devono cessare immediatamente. Eventuali ulteriori iniziative da parte della Federazione russa per destabilizzare la situazione in Ucraina comporterebbero altre profonde conseguenze per le relazioni tra l'Unione europea e i suoi Stati membri, da un lato, e la Federazione russa, dall'altro, in un ampio numero di settori economici» (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142223.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003743/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Risk of instability in Transnistria

A few days after the de facto annexation of Crimea to Russia, Moscow received a request from the authorities of Transnistria, a region of Moldova whose population is mainly Russian, asking for the region to be united with Russia. In a referendum held as long ago as 2006, some 97% of voters said they were in favour of the region being reunified with Moscow. Although the Republic of Moldova was firmly linked to the EU by the European Commission's go-ahead last November for the Association Agreement, the Transnistrian request could give rise to a new crisis, especially in view of the forthcoming political elections scheduled for November. Conflict between Europhile and Russophile forces could intensify, giving rise to a crisis similar to the one that broke out in Ukraine a few months ago. Certainly, Russian interests are not as strong as they are in Ukraine, but the EU could find itself once again facing a particularly bitter political crisis.

With regard to this situation, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is it planning to consider Moldova's accession to the EU as a means of deterring the Russian Federation?

2. Does the Commission have reason to believe that the tragic events that have recently occurred in Ukraine, and particularly in Crimea, might be replayed in Moldova?

Question for written answer E-003789/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Protecting the sovereignty of Moldova

Senior NATO figures have warned that Russia has amassed an 'incredible force' on its border with Ukraine. This has sparked fears that President Putin may well attempt to follow up his illegal annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine with a similar assault on the Transnistria region, which comprises a large proportion of Russian speakers. Again, the parallels with the Europe of the 1930s are clear. We cannot stand idly by while sovereign states are annexed by Russia.

1. What measures is the Commission taking to reaffirm and protect the sovereignty of Moldova?

2. Has the Commission protested to the Russian Federation regarding their build-up of troops on the Ukrainian border, and made it clear that their flagrant disregard for international borders will not be tolerated?

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

1. Over the last months, the Commission and the EEAS have re-asserted publicly, including in the relevant international fora such as the OSCE, their support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. Such support will continue to be declared and supported, not only in words, but also through the intensification of high-level visits, through increased financial and technical support, and with the help of specific trade measures such as the abrogation of the EU quota on Moldovan wines in December 2013, in reply to the ban introduced by the Russian Federation against Moldovan wine producers. Most importantly, the authorities of the Republic of Moldova have been encouraged to anticipate on the development of events ahead of the signature of the Association Agreement with the EU, scheduled for the end of June, and are being helped in their endeavours.

2. As reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 14 April, the EU strongly supports Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and calls upon Russia to do likewise. It demands Russia to call back its troops from the Ukrainian border and withdraw the mandate of the Federation Council to use force on Ukrainian soil. Any threat or use of force against Ukraine or any other countries is not acceptable and must stop immediately. Any further steps by the Russian Federation to destabilise the situation in Ukraine would lead to additional and far reaching consequences for relations in a broad range of economic areas between the European Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other hand (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142223.pdf).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003744/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Sostegno alle attività di sminamento e bonifica in Vietnam

Il governo vietnamita ha ufficialmente richiesto assistenza alla comunità internazionale al fine di sminare diverse aree territoriali, eredità storica della divisione del paese durante la guerra fredda. Secondo il primo ministro vietnamita, quasi ogni località del paese soffre della presenza di aree minate o della presenza di dispositivi esplosivi risalenti a oltre venticinque anni fa, rendendo alcune aree estremamente pericolose per la popolazione. I numeri parlano chiaro: dalla fine del conflitto e la riunificazione del paese quarantamila sono state le vittime di ordigni inesplosi, mentre altre sessantamila sono rimaste ferite più o meno gravemente.

Per far fronte a questa situazione, il governo ha studiato un programma nazionale 2010-2025 che interesserà circa 6,6 milioni di ettari di terreno (il 22 % della superficie totale del paese). Sfortunatamente, nonostante il Vietnam riceva circa cinque milioni di dollari all'anno da diverse organizzazioni internazionali al fine di porre rimedio a questa situazione, ogni anno la spesa per lo sminamento si attesta intorno ai quindici milioni, lasciando uno scoperto di dieci milioni di dollari.

A tal proposito, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. Se l'UE partecipa già al sostegno internazionale fornito al Vietnam per completare l'opera di sminamento?

2. Nel caso vi partecipi, a quanto ammonta il sostegno finanziario, tecnico o umano fornito?

3. Nel caso non vi partecipi, può spiegare le motivazioni e far sapere se intende in futuro avviare un fondo di sostegno a questa attività?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

La Commissione europea non partecipa alle attività di sminamento in Vietnam e al momento non prevede di fornire un sostegno in futuro, anche perché altri donatori (Stati Uniti) e alcuni Stati membri dell'UE (Germania, Irlanda e Regno Unito) si stanno già impegnando a tal fine.

L'UE (Commissione e Stati membri) è attualmente la principale fonte di sovvenzioni a favore del Vietnam. L'assistenza bilaterale allo sviluppo della Commissione viene discussa e concordata con il paese partner e erogata in funzione delle priorità stabilite da quest'ultimo nella strategia di sviluppo nazionale. L'assistenza fornita nel periodo 2007-2013 era destinata alla riduzione della povertà e alla sanità, mentre i settori prioritari della cooperazione allo sviluppo per il periodo 2014-2020 dovrebbero essere l'energia sostenibile e la governance/lo Stato di diritto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003744/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Support for demining and land reclamation operations in Vietnam

The Vietnamese Government has officially asked the international community to help in clearing several parts of the country of landmines, the legacy of the division of the country during the Cold War. The Prime Minister of Vietnam has said that virtually every village in the country is blighted by minefields or explosive devices dating back more than 25 years, making some areas extremely hazardous for local people. The figures speak for themselves: there have been 40 000 deaths due to unexploded ordnance since the war ended and the country was reunified, and a further 60 000 people have been injured.

To address this situation, the Government has drawn up a national programme for 2010-2025 covering about 6.6 million hectares (22% of the total area of the country). Unfortunately, although Vietnam receives some USD 5 million per year from a number of international organisations to remedy this situation, the cost of demining amounts to around USD 15 million a year, leaving a shortfall of USD 10 million.

1. Can the Commission say whether the EU is already taking part in the international aid effort to enable Vietnam to complete its demining operations?

2. If so, how much financial, technical or humanitarian support is it supplying?

3. If not, can the Commission explain why not and also say whether it intends to set up a support fund for these operations in future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The European Commission is not taking part in activities linked to de-mining in Vietnam and no future support in this area is being considered at this stage not least as other donors (US) and some EU Member States (Germany, Ireland and UK) are active in this area.

The EU (Commission and Member States) is currently Vietnam's largest grant donor. The Commission's bilateral development assistance is discussed and agreed with the partner country and guided by the country's priorities set out in its national development strategy. Consequently an assistance in 2007-2013 targeted poverty reduction and health, while focal areas for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020 are expected to be sustainable energy and governance/rule of law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003745/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Sviluppi della legislazione europea e nazionale in tema di «giacche airbag» per i motociclisti

Gli airbag per i motociclisti rappresentano la nuova frontiera della sicurezza stradale specificatamente destinata ai motociclisti. Si tratta di giacche equipaggiate di un dispositivo di sicurezza gonfiabile che proteggono il busto del motociclista al momento di un eventuale impatto, offrendo una protezione migliore rispetto ai tradizionali paraurti rigidi (come ginocchiere, gomitiere, gusci per la schiena), e più estesa, coprendo anche zone molto delicate. Alcuni modelli del prodotto dispongono altresì di una tecnologia wireless che permette il dialogo continuo tra motocicletta e giacca, grazie a dei sensori inseriti sul veicolo, in modo che, in caso di incidente, la giacca possa attivare le protezioni nell'arco di pochi millisecondi.

In Italia questo prodotto è ancora poco diffuso, in quanto disponibile per lo più sul mercato online e venduto in soli due modelli nei negozi fisici. La scarsa diffusione potrebbe essere legata alla mancanza di una normativa europea di riferimento, che dovrebbe sostituire le norme provvisorie esistenti. Uno dei limiti di queste ultime è che prevedono una valutazione soggettiva di alcune prove: un esempio è il test delle fasi di gonfiaggio, in cui un operatore registra e poi visiona al rallentatore un video ad alta velocità del tempo impiegato dal dispositivo di protezione per gonfiarsi. Questo tipo di test non può garantire un risultato standardizzato.

In merito a questi prodotti, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. esistono problemi analoghi di omologazione del prodotto in altri Stati membri dell'UE?

2. Intende proporre una legislazione a livello europeo che regoli i test di omologazione e i requisiti minimi di sicurezza per questo genere di prodotti?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

Gli indumenti destinati a motociclisti per i quali è prevista una protezione aggiuntiva sono soggetti alla direttiva sui dispositivi di protezione individuale ([1]), categoria di certificazione II. La procedura di valutazione della conformità, volta a garantire il rispetto delle prescrizioni minime di salute e sicurezza della direttiva, comprende un esame CE del tipo svolto da un organismo accreditato al fine di produrre una dichiarazione CE di conformità.

Al fine di conferire una presunzione di conformità di tali prodotti alle prescrizioni presenti nella direttiva il comitato europeo di normalizzazione ([2]) ha stabilito norme europee, le quali sono state armonizzate dalla direttiva DPI.

La norma europea EN 1621-4:2013 «Motorcyclists inflatable protectors — Requirements and test methods» (protezioni gonfiabili per motociclisti — prescrizioni e metodi di verifica) non è stata ancora armonizzata a causa delle discussioni in corso all'interno del gruppo di lavoro sui DPI. Contro tale norma è stata sollevata un'obiezione formale secondo la quale il metodo di verifica è considerato insufficiente, non copre eventuali rischi aggiuntivi e sono necessari ulteriori sviluppi e miglioramenti. La norma è attualmente oggetto di revisione da parte degli esperti di normalizzazione del CEN e la Commissione sta seguendo il loro lavoro attentamente. A settembre 2014, in occasione della prossima riunione del gruppo di lavoro sui DPI, saranno presentate e discusse relazioni sui progressi compiuti.

Quando verrà emanata e armonizzata una nuova norma rivista saranno disponibili prescrizioni e metodi di verifica in merito alle protezioni gonfiabili per motociclisti (airbag), così da garantire i più elevati livelli di sicurezza agli utilizzatori di tali prodotti presenti sul mercato dell'Unione. Ciò contribuirà inoltre a risolvere eventuali problemi in materia di certificazione e approvazione, anche se per il momento la Commissione non è a conoscenza di problemi analoghi in altri Stati membri dell'UE.

([1]) DPI (dispositivi di protezione individuale)- Direttiva del Consiglio, del 21 dicembre 1989, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri relative ai dispositivi di protezione individuale (89/686/CEE). GU L 399 del 30.12.1989, pag. 18.

([2]) CEN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003745/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Developments concerning European and national legislation on 'airbag jackets' for motorcyclists

Airbags for motorcyclists are the new frontier of road safety measures specifically for motorcyclists. Jackets are fitted with an inflatable safety device to protect the motorcyclist's upper body in the event of impact, offering better protection than conventional rigid protective gear such as kneepads, elbowpads and back protectors. They also offer more extensive protection, covering some very delicate areas. Some models are also fitted with wireless technology that allows continuous dialogue between the motorcycle and the jacket via sensors fitted to the vehicle. This means that, in the event of an accident, the jacket can activate the airbags in a matter of a few milliseconds.

This product is still rare in Italy, since it is available mostly online, with only two models being sold in shops. Its limited use and availability could be linked to the lack of any relevant European legislation, which should be replacing existing interim regulations. One of the limitations of these interim regulations is that they make provision for the subjective evaluation of various tests: one example is the inflation test, in which an operator records and then watches a slow-motion playback of a high-speed video of the time it takes for the protective device to inflate. This type of test cannot guarantee a standardised result.

With regard to these products, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Are there similar problems concerning product approval in other EU Member States?

2. Is the Commission planning to propose European legislation governing approval tests and minimum safety requirements for these products?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

Motorcyclists' garments for which additional protection is provided are subject to the Personal Protective Equipment Directive ([1]), Certification Category II. The conformity assessment procedure to ensure compliance with the health and safety requirements of the directive includes an EC-type examination by a Notified Body to produce an EC Declaration of Conformity.

European standards have been produced by the European Standardisation Committee ([2]) and harmonised under the PPE Directive to provide presumption of conformity of these products with the requirements of the directive.

A European standard EN 1621-4:2013 'Motorcyclists inflatable protectors — Requirements and test methods' is not harmonised yet due to on-going discussions in the PPE Working Group. A Formal Objection was raised against the standard, considering the test method inadequate, not covering possible additional risks, and asking for further development and improvement. The standard is currently under revision by CEN standardisation experts; the Commission is closely following-up the work. Specific reports on progress will be provided and discussed at the next meeting of the PPE Working Group in September 2014.

When a new revised standard is issued and harmonised, requirements and test methods for motorcyclists inflatable protectors (airbags) will be available, to guarantee the highest levels of safety for users of these products placed on the European Union market. Moreover, this will contribute to solving possible problems concerning certification and approval, even if, for the time being, the Commission is not aware of the existence of similar problems in other EU Member States.

([1]) PPE — Council Directive of 21 December 1989 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to personal protective equipment (89/686/EEC). OJ L 399, 30.12.1989, p. 18.
([2]) CEN.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003746/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Timori di una correlazione tra vaccinazione trivalente e insorgenza di sindrome autistica

L'ipotesi di un legame tra la vaccinazione trivalente non obbligatoria contro morbillo, parotite e rosolia e l'insorgenza dell'autismo suscita ancora dubbi in Italia, soprattutto alla lettura di una sentenza del 2012 che condannò il ministero della Salute a risarcire una famiglia il cui figlio avrebbe sviluppato la patologia a seguito della immunizzazione. Un caso simile si è verificato in Puglia, dove un tribunale è intervenuto aprendo un'indagine contro ignoti per lesioni colpose gravissime, al fine di accertare la presenza di un nesso causale tra somministrazione del vaccino e autismo con riferimento a due bambini che hanno mostrato sintomi di sindrome autistica dopo il trattamento.

In merito a questo eventuale legame, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. esistono dati epidemiologici a disposizione di agenzie europee o centri di ricerca che possano avvalorare la relazione tra la vaccinazione e l'insorgenza dell'autismo;

2. questo timore è condiviso anche in altri Stati membri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2014)

Nonostante non esistano dati a sostegno di una connessione tra la vaccinazione contro il morbillo, la parotite e la rosolia (TMM) e l'autismo, sono stati condotti diversi studi epidemiologici per rispondere ai timori dei genitori sorti dopo la pubblicazione dell'articolo di Wakefield e aa ([1]).

Studi ecologici condotti in Regno Unito ([2]), Stati Uniti ([3]) e Canada ([4]), studi retrospettivi di osservazione condotti in Regno Unito ([5]), Finlandia ([6]), Danimarca ([7]) e Stati Uniti ([8]) e studi prospettivi di osservazione effettuati in Finlandia ([9]), ([10]) hanno dimostrato che il vaccino TMM non causa autismo.

Questi studi sono in linea con i risultati del riesame globale effettuato dall' *Institute of Medicine of the National Academies* ([11]), giunto alla conclusione che non esiste nessun nesso causale tra determinati tipi di vaccino e l'autismo, esito che è confermato anche dal Centro statunitense di controllo delle malattie ([12]).

([1]) http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/48/4/456.long
([2]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10376617?dopt=Abstract
([3]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11231748
([4]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16818529
([5]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1769253/
([6]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12415036
([7]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12421889
([8]) http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/113/2/259.abstract?ijkey=34a53d7c9f00c4e835f8ddca80d7c559b8503d06&keytype2=tf_ipsecsha
([9]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2804764/
([10]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11144371?dopt=Abstract
([11]) http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=10997
([12]) http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/Autism/antigens.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003746/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Fears of a link between the MMR vaccine and autism

The idea that there may be a link between non-compulsory vaccination with the triple measles-mumps–rubella vaccine and the onset of autism is still an issue in Italy, particularly in view of a 2012 court ruling that required the Ministry of Health to compensate a couple whose child developed the condition after being immunised. A similar case happened in Puglia, where a court ordered an investigation into very serious negligent injury by a person or persons unknown, in order to establish whether there had been a causal link between vaccination and autism in the case of two children who had developed autistic symptoms after being given the vaccine.

With regard to this possible link, can the Commission say whether:

1. any European agencies or research centres hold epidemiological data that could shed light on the relation between this type of vaccination and the onset of autism;

2. this fear is also shared in other Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

Although no data supporting an association between measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine and autism existed; several epidemiologic studies were performed to address parental fears created by the publication by Wakefield et al. ([1])

Ecological studies performed in the United Kingdom ([2]), USA ([3]) and Canada ([4]), retrospective, observational studies performed in the United Kingdom ([5]), Finland ([6]), Denmark ([7]) and USA ([8]), and prospective observational studies from Finland ([9]) ([10]) have shown that MMR vaccine does not cause autism.

This is in line with the results of a comprehensive review by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies ([11]) concluding that there is no causal relationship between certain vaccine types and autism, which is stated also by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([12]).

([1]) http://cid.oxfordjournals.org/content/48/4/456.long
([2]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10376617?dopt=Abstract
([3]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11231748
([4]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16818529
([5]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1769253/
([6]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12415036
([7]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12421889
([8]) http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/113/2/259.abstract?ijkey=34a53d7c9f00c4e835f8ddca80d7c559b8503d06&keytype2=tf_ipsecsha
([9]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2804764/
([10]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11144371?dopt=Abstract
([11]) http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=10997
([12]) http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/Concerns/Autism/antigens.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003747/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Tendenze di crescita positive e aumento del divario coi paesi più poveri

Nonostante la crisi economica e finanziaria scoppiata nel 2008 stia rientrando e la crescita mondiale si stia progressivamente rafforzando, si registra una situazione ancora piuttosto irregolare. Secondo il Fondo monetario internazionale, nel 2014 la crescita globale sarà del 3,6 % e crescerà del 3,9 % nel 2015, trainata dalle economie avanzate come gli Usa (+3 %). Anche i paesi che sono stati colpiti in maniera più dura dalla crisi e dall'austerità torneranno a crescere a tassi più elevati, prima tra tutte la Grecia, che toccherà un +2,9 % nel 2015.

In generale, le economie più avanzate registreranno una crescita media del 2,3 % nel 2014-15, mentre nelle economie emergenti la ripresa sarà solo «modesta» secondo le stime dell'Fmi e ancora peggiore sarà quella dei paesi sottosviluppati, aumentando in tal modo la differenza tra le due fasce di paesi.

In merito a queste tendenze, può la Commissione riferire:

1. se condivide le proiezioni dell'andamento globale della crescita;

2. quali sono le prospettive di crescita dell'eurozona e quali quelle dell'UE-28;

3. come intende promuovere, nel dibattito a livello internazionale, misure per la riduzione del divario economico tra i paesi più poveri e le economie più sviluppate?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(16 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione concorda con le proiezioni dell'FMI per la crescita mondiale, che sono in linea con le previsioni di primavera 2014 della Commissione (cfr. «*Spring Forecast 2014 — EU Economy: Growth becoming broader based*» ([1])).

2. Le prospettive di crescita sia per la zona euro che per l'UE-28 sono positive: nelle sue previsioni di primavera 2014 la Commissione ha previsto per il 2015 una crescita reale del PIL rispettivamente dell'1,7 % e del 2,0 %.

3. La maggior parte dei paesi più poveri del mondo si trova nell'Africa subsahariana. Per questa regione sia l'FMI che la Commissione prevedono per il 2015 una crescita del 5,5 %, una continuazione positiva del percorso di crescita in atto dal 2012. La Commissione sostiene la crescita economica inclusiva nell'Africa subsahariana principalmente attraverso il Fondo europeo di sviluppo (FES) degli Stati membri dell'UE. Le sue misure si basano sul «Programma di cambiamento» ([2]) dell'UE e sono pianificate tramite il processo di programmazione dell'undicesimo FES. Misure che vanno oltre il 2015 sono delineate nella comunicazione della Commissione «Un'esistenza dignitosa per tutti: sconfiggere la povertà e offrire al mondo un futuro sostenibile» ([3]).

([1]) European Economy. 5 maggio 2014. Bruxelles.
([2]) COM(2011) 637.
([3]) COM(2013) 92.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003747/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Positive growth and widening of the gap with the poorest countries

Although we are now coming out of the economic and financial crisis that began in 2008 and growth is gradually becoming stronger around the world, the situation is still somewhat patchy. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the global economy is set to grow by 3.6% in 2014 and 3.9% in 2015, driven by advanced economies such as the United States (+ 3%). Even the countries hardest hit by the crisis and austerity measures will start growing more quickly again, especially Greece, which will reach + 2.9% in 2015.

Overall, the more advanced economies will show an average growth of 2.3% in 2014-15, whereas the IMF forecasts that the recovery will only be 'modest' in emerging economies and worse still in developing countries, thus widening the gap between the two groups of countries.

In view of these trends, can the Commission say:

1. whether it agrees with the projected figures for global growth;

2. what the growth prospects are for the Eurozone and for the EU-28;

3. how it plans to promote measures in the international forum that will narrow the economic gap between the poorest countries and the most highly developed economies?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

1. The Commission agrees with the figures projected by the IMF for global growth, as they are in line with the figures forecasted in the Commission's 'Spring Forecast 2014 — EU Economy: Growth becoming broader based' ([1]).

2. The growth prospects for both Eurozone and EU-28 are positive. The Commission forecasted 1.7% and 2.0% respectively of real GDP growth for 2015 in its Spring Forecast 2014.

3. The majority of the poorest countries of the world lie in Sub-Sahara Africa. For this region, both the IMF and the Commission forecast 5.5% growth for 2015, which is a positive continuation of the growth path since 2012. The Commission supports inclusive economic growth in Sub-Sahara Africa mainly by implementing the European Development Fund (EDF) of EU Member States. Its measures are based on the EU's 'Agenda for Change' ([2]) and planned through the programming process of the 11th EDF. Measures beyond 2015 are outlined in the Commission's communication 'A Decent life for all: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future' ([3]).

([1]) European Economy. 5 May 2014. Brussels.
([2]) COM(2011) 637.
([3]) COM(2013) 92.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003750/14
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Analfabetyzm w krajach rozwijających się

250 mln dzieci na całym świecie nie umie czytać, pisać ani liczyć, choć wiele z nich przez szereg lat uczęszczało do szkoły – informuje opublikowany w Addis Abebie raport UNESCO na temat edukacji w świecie w roku sprawozdawczym 2013/2014. Raport zaznacza, że 57 mln dzieci nie ma w ogóle dostępu do nauczania szkolnego. Za przyczyny przedstawionej w dokumencie sytuacji uznaje się, obok dramatycznego braku nauczycieli w krajach rozwijających się, również niewystarczające wykształcenie kadry pedagogicznej oraz niską jakość nauczania. W niektórych krajach klasy szkolne liczą ponad 100 uczniów.

W Mongolii ogromną korzyść przyniósł program READ (Rural Education and Development), który miał na celu podwyższenie poziomu nauczania w wiejskich szkołach i zwalczenie analfabetyzmu. Zapewniono szkolenia podnoszące kwalifikacje nauczycieli, powstał również projekt „torba książek". Program polega na tym, że dzieci wypożyczały do domu książki, następnie opowiadały swoim rodzinom, czego się z nich nauczyły, i w konsekwencji mogły wypożyczyć kolejny zbiór. Wydaje się prosty w wykonaniu projekt, przyniósł pozytywne skutki dla wielu młodych osób.

Ogromny problem analfabetyzmu istnieje w Etiopii, gdzie aż 35,5 % ludności boryka się z tym problem. Może dobrym rozwiązaniem byłoby wprowadzenie programu READ na tych terenach?

W związku z tym zwracam się z pytaniami:

1. Jakie działania podejmuje KE by zmniejszyć analfabetyzm w Etiopii?

2. Czy KE rozważała wprowadzenie programu podobnego do READ w innych krajach rozwijających się i borykających z problemem niskiego czytelnictwa i analfabetyzmu?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Andrisa Piebalgsa w imieniu Komisji
(21 maja 2014 r.)

1. Rozmowy prowadzone z państwami członkowskimi UE w Etiopii w ramach „podziału pracy" doprowadziły do jednoznacznego wniosku: w nowym okresie programowania działania podejmowane przez UE sektorze zdrowia powinny być bardziej znaczące niż te podejmowane w dziedzinie edukacji.

Niemniej jednak wsparcie dla programu promowania podstawowych usług będzie kontynuowane w ramach 11. Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju. Program ten zapewnia wsparcie na rzecz zdecentralizowanego świadczenia podstawowych usług (w zakresie ochrony zdrowia, edukacji, rolnictwa, gospodarki wodnej, dróg wiejskich), co umożliwiło wzrost współczynnika ukończenia edukacji podstawowej z 34 % do 49 %.

Komisja finansuje również światowe partnerstwo na rzecz edukacji (GPE). Globalne partnerstwo na rzecz edukacji w Etiopii ma na celu poprawę warunków nauczania i uczenia się w szkołach podstawowych i średnich, w tym opracowanie podręczników i prowadzenie szkoleń dla nauczycieli. Od 2006 r. odsetek uczniów uzyskujących wyniki przekraczające 50 % w ramach krajowych ocen kształcenia zwiększa się.

2. Poprawa jakości kształcenia jest głównym elementem strategii UE zmierzającej do udzielenia pomocy krajom zmagającym się z kryzysem edukacyjnym. Komisarz przypomniał w trakcie konferencji wysokiego szczebla UE w sprawie edukacji, że „należy skoncentrować wysiłki na rozwijaniu umiejętności czytania i innych podstawowych umiejętności u dzieci". W ramach niedawnych działań podjętych w odpowiedzi na sprawozdanie Trybunału Obrachunkowego stwierdzono, że przeważająca większość projektów UE zawiera elementy zmierzające do poprawy jakości i wyników nauczania w krajach partnerskich.

Projekt READ ([1]), realizowany przez Bank Światowy w Mongolii, ma na celu poprawę jakości edukacji, podobnie jak wiele projektów finansowanych przez UE. Jednak ze względu na uwarunkowania lokalne w poszczególnych krajach stosowane są różne metody. Komisja jest również gotowa dostosować swoje działania do priorytetów rządowych i strategii sektorowych.

([1]) Projekt kształcenie i rozwój obszarów wiejskich (READ).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003750/14
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Illiteracy in developing countries

A Unesco report (published in Addis Ababa) on education in the world 2013-14 states that some 250 million children throughout the world cannot read, write or do arithmetic despite the fact that many of them have attended school for a number of years. The report stresses that 57 million children have no access whatsoever to schooling. The situation outlined in the report is the result of a serious shortfall in teachers in developing countries, insufficient teacher training and poor-quality teaching. In some countries there are more than 100 pupils per class.

In Mongolia, the Rural Education and Development (READ) scheme — the aim of which is to improve teaching in rural schools and combat illiteracy — has been a great success. As part of the scheme, teachers have received training to enhance their qualifications and a 'book bag' project has also been introduced. This involves children borrowing a set of books to take home, and talking to their families about the books. Their families then learn from the books alongside the children, and the children can then borrow the next set. This scheme seems to have been easy to put into practice and has brought positive results for many young people.

Ethiopia has a major illiteracy problem: up to 35.5% of the population are illiterate. Perhaps the introduction of a scheme like READ would be a good solution for Ethiopia.

1. What steps is the Commission taking to reduce illiteracy rates in Ethiopia?

2. Is the Commission considering introducing a scheme like READ in other developing countries struggling with low reading rates and illiteracy?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(21 May 2014)

1. In Ethiopia, discussions with EU Member States in the framework of 'division of labour' have come to a clear conclusion that EU presence in the health sector would be preferred over education during the new programming period.

Nevertheless, support to the programme for the Promotion of Basic Services will continue under the 11th European Development Fund. This programme provides support to decentralised delivery of basic services (in education, health, agriculture, water and rural roads) that contributed to increase of primary education completion rates from 34% to 49%.

In addition, the Commission is funding the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). In Ethiopia, GPE programme aims at improving teaching and learning conditions in primary and secondary education, including textbook development and teacher training. The percentage of students scoring more than 50% in the national learning assessment has improved since 2006.

2. Improving the quality of education is at the heart of the EU's strategy in order to help the countries which are facing a learning crisis. The Commissioner recalled during the EU high level conference on Education that 'there is a need for more focus on literacy and what basic skills children are learning'. A recent follow-up of a Court of Auditors' report has concluded that a large majority of EU projects include components to improve quality and learning outcomes in our partner countries.

The READ project ([1]), implemented by the World Bank in Mongolia, is focusing on quality of education as many projects financed by the EU. However, the approaches are different from one country to another depending on local needs. The Commission is also committed to align its operations with government's priorities and sector strategies.

([1]) Rural Education and Development (READ) Project.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003751/14
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Bezpieczna żywność

Wielu Europejczyków ma ogromny problem z otyłością. Jest to spowodowane ubogą dietą, złymi nawykami żywieniowymi i niskowartościowymi, sztucznie przetworzonymi produktami.

Wspólna polityka rolna UE przez lata wspierała wiejską produkcję. Jednak problem nisko wartościowej żywności nadal jest aktualny. CAP powinna promować bezpieczną żywność i lepszą politykę dla małych przedsiębiorstw. Dodatkowo konsumenci powinni posiadać informacje o sposobie produkcji ich posiłków. UE powinna promować ekologiczną produkcję dla zdrowszej Europy, a najłatwiejszym rozwiązaniem jest wspieranie pasterstwa oraz promocja lokalnej produkcji.

Dlatego zwracam się z zapytaniem do KE:

1. Czy Komisja wkłada wystarczająco dużo wysiłku we wspieranie małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw umiejscowionych w trudnych lokalizacjach, dzięki czemu mogą wypasać zwierzęta na dogodnych dla nich terenach przez większość roku?

2. Dlaczego UE nie zachęca rolników do produkowania przynajmniej połowy karmy dla zwierząt we własnym zakresie, na swoich farmach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Daciana Cioloşa w imieniu Komisji
(16 maja 2014 r.)

Problemy poruszone przez Szanownego Pana Posła są uwzględnione w różnych działaniach w ramach WPR. Wśród priorytetów nowej polityki rozwoju obszarów wiejskich po 2013 r. ([1]) Komisja wyraźnie wymieniła rozwój krótkich łańcuchów dostaw i rynków lokalnych.

Ponadto celem nowych ram dla programów „Owoce i warzywa w szkole" i „Mleko w szkole" jest skuteczniejsze rozwiązanie kwestii związanych z odżywianiem, wzmocnienie elementów edukacyjnych tych programów oraz walka z otyłością.

Ścisłe europejskie normy mają również na celu uregulowanie praktyk zarządzania w ramach gospodarki rolnej, zapewnienie bezpiecznych produktów oraz zachęcenie do wytwarzania produktów wysokiej jakości.

1. Płatności bezpośrednie odgrywają istotną rolę w zapewnieniu długoterminowej rentowności gospodarstw rolnych poprzez dostarczenie pewnego źródła dochodu producentom. W ten sposób płatności bezpośrednie przyczyniają się do utrzymania rolnictwa na obszarach wiejskich w całej Europie. Mogą zostać przyznane dodatkowe płatności dla rolników na obszarach o ograniczeniach przyrodniczych (w tym na obszarach górskich). Poza tym ukierunkowane działania rolno-środowiskowo-klimatyczne, jak również inne działania związane z rozwojem obszarów wiejskich takie jak rolnictwo ekologiczne, powinny w znacznej mierze przyczynić się do poprawy jakości środowiska i gleby.

2. Oddzielenie płatności od produkcji, jeśli chodzi o dopłaty rolne, zwiększyło elastyczność podejmowania decyzji w gospodarstwie, pozostawiając rolnikom wybór uprawy roślin. Ponadto istniejąca różnorodność gospodarstw rolnych nie pozwala wymagać od rolników produkowania części paszy potrzebnej dla zwierząt w ich własnych gospodarstwach. Mimo to wielu hodowców produkuje znaczną część paszy dla własnych zwierząt.

([1]) Rozporządzenie (UE) nr 1305/2013, Dz.U. L 347.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003751/14
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Food standards

For many Europeans obesity is a huge problem. It is the result of a poor diet, bad eating habits and low-quality, artificially-processed products.

The EU's common agricultural policy (CAP) has supported natural food production for many years, yet the problem of low-quality food is still with us. The CAP should promote food standards and improve conditions for small producers. In addition, consumers should be given information on how the food they eat is produced. The EU should promote environmentally-friendly production for a healthier Europe, and the best way to do this is to support pastoralism and promote local production.

1. Is the Commission doing enough to promote agricultural SMEs located in difficult areas so that they will be able to graze their animals on good-quality land for most of the year?

2. Why does the EU not encourage farmers to produce at least half the feed needed by their animals themselves, on their own farms?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The problems raised by the Honourable Member are addressed through various means in the CAP. In the new post-2013 rural development policy ([1]), the Commission has explicitly identified the development of short supply chains and local markets among the priorities for that policy.

Further, the new framework for school fruit and vegetable scheme and school milk scheme aims to address nutrition more effectively, to reinforce the educational elements of the programmes and to contribute to the fight against obesity.

Strict European standards are also in place to regulate agricultural management practices and ensure safe products, and incentives are provided for high quality products.

1. Direct payments have an important role in ensuring the long-term viability of farms by providing a reliable source of income for producers. In doing so, direct payments contribute to keeping farming in place throughout Europe's rural areas. Additional payment may be granted to farmers in areas with natural constrains (including mountain areas). Besides, targeted agri-environmental-climate measures as well as other Rural Development measures, such as organic farming, should contribute significantly to environmental and soil quality.

2. The decoupling of agricultural subsidies has increased the flexibility of farm decision making, leaving choice of cultivation of crops to farmers. Besides, the existing diversity of farm typologies does not allow requiring farmers to produce part of the feed needed by their animals on their own farms. However, many livestock breeders do produce a large part of the feed for their animals.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, OJ L 347.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003752/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Epidemia di Ebola in Africa

Il ministero della Sanità della Guinea lancia un allarme in quanto dal 9 febbraio ad oggi l'epidemia di Ebola ha già provocato la morte di 29 persone. Casi avvenuti in altri paesi come Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal e Costa d'Avorio sono oggetto di analisi da parte dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti;

2. come intende agire per tutelare la salute delle persone vittime o comunque esposte al rischio di trasmissione di tale virus;

3. se ritiene che attraverso l'immigrazione massiccia verso l'Europa esistano rischi di epidemia e contagio per i cittadini UE?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del focolaio di Ebola in Africa occidentale e sta monitorando gli sviluppi in collaborazione con le delegazioni UE dei paesi colpiti, con il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (CEPCM) e con l'organizzazione mondiale della sanità.

L'Unione europea sta aiutando i paesi colpiti a contenere la diffusione del focolaio. Sin dagli inizi, la Commissione sostiene le operazioni sanitarie sul terreno mediante esperti e valutazioni dei rischi, contribuendo inoltre con attrezzature mediche destinate ad accelerare la diagnosi e ad attuare misure sanitarie di risposta.

La valutazione del rischio CEPCM, che la Commissione ha esaminato nell'ambito del comitato per la sicurezza sanitaria, indica che per i turisti, i visitatori o i residenti nelle aree colpite il rischio di infezione è considerato molto basso se si ha l'accortezza di seguire alcune precauzioni: evitare il contatto con pazienti che presentano i sintomi e/o i loro fluidi corporei o con i cadaveri e/o i fluidi corporei dei pazienti deceduti.

Anche le precauzioni generiche consigliate per coloro che viaggiano nei paesi dell'Africa occidentale contribuiscono a prevenire l'infezione da virus Ebola (ad esempio, evitare contatti diretti con animali selvatici, evitare di consumare selvaggina e lavare regolarmente le mani). Gli operatori del settore sanitario che assistono i pazienti colpiti da Ebola nell'area interessata sono invitati ad utilizzare indumenti protettivi, come maschere, guanti, camici e dispositive di protezione oculare, oltre che ad adottare adeguate misure di prevenzione e controllo dell'infezione ([1]).

Sono stati preparati e messi on line ([2]) vari consigli destinati ai lavoratori che si recano o provengono dalle aree colpite.

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Ebola-RRA-West-Africa-8April2014.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003752/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Ebola epidemic in Africa

The Guinean Health Ministry has sounded an alarm because the Ebola epidemic has already caused 29 deaths since 9 February. The World Health Organisation is currently examining cases that have occurred in other countries, such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire.

1. Is the Commission keeping abreast of the developments described above?

2. How does it intend to protect the health of people who have contracted the disease or have been exposed to possible transmission of the Ebola virus?

3. Does it believe that EU citizens may be at risk of an epidemic and contagion due to mass immigration into Europe?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the Ebola outbreak in Western Africa and is monitoring the developments in collaboration with the EU Delegations in the affected countries, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation.

The European Union is supporting the affected countries to contain the spread of the outbreak. Since the beginning of the outbreak, the Commission is supporting health operations on the ground with experts and risk assessments and is contributing with medical equipment to help accelerate diagnosis and the putting in place of health measures to respond to the outbreak.

The ECDC Risk Assessment, which the Commission shared within the Health Security Committee, estimates that, for tourists, visitors or residents in affected areas, the risk of infection is considered very low if some precautions are followed such as avoiding contact with symptomatic patients and/or their bodily fluids or with corpses and/or bodily fluids from deceased patients.

Generic precautions for travelling in West African countries also contribute to preventing infection with Ebola virus (e.g. avoiding close contacts with wild animals, consumption of 'bush meat', and regular hand-washing. The healthcare workers who are providing medical care to Ebola patients in the outbreak area are advised to wear protective clothing, including masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection and practice proper infection prevention and control measures ([1]).

Advice to travellers to and from affected areas has also been prepared and is available on the web ([2]).

([1]) http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Ebola-RRA-West-Africa-8April2014.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/risk_management/ebola/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-003753/14
do Komisji
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja związana z gazociągiem OPAL

W ostatnim roku UE i Rosja doszły do porozumienia w sprawie korzystania z połączenia niemieckiego gazociągu OPAL z gazociągiem Nord Stream Gazpromu. W ramach trzeciego pakietu energetycznego UE Gazprom ma obowiązek dostarczenia do 50 % potencjału OPAL niezależnym dostawcom. Jednak Rosja i Niemcy zwróciły się do Komisji o udzielenie gazociągowi OPAL wyłączenia z zakresu stosowania postanowień trzeciego pakietu energetycznego.

1. Czy Komisja zamierza udzielić takiego wyłączenia?

2. Kiedy możemy się spodziewać decyzji Komisji w tej sprawie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(12 maja 2014 r.)

1. W 2009 r. niemiecka agencja federalna ds. sieci (Bundesnetzagentur, BNetzA) przyznała w odniesieniu do gazociągu OPAL, w zakresie objętym dyrektywą w sprawie gazu, zwolnienie z przepisów dotyczących dostępu stron trzecich – pod określonymi warunkami – oraz z regulacji taryf w odniesieniu do 100 % zdolności przesyłowej tego gazociągu. W listopadzie 2013 r. BNetzA powiadomiła Komisję o zamiarze wprowadzenia zmian do decyzji o wyżej wymienionym zwolnieniu. Komisja dokonuje obecnie oceny tego powiadomienia.

2. Decydując w sprawie decyzji dotyczących zwolnienia będących przedmiotem powiadomienia, Komisja jest zobowiązana dotrzymać terminów przewidzianych w prawie, wynoszących dwa miesiące, z możliwością przedłużenia.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003753/14
to the Commission
Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Status of the OPAL pipeline

Last year, the EU and Russia agreed a deal on the use of Germany's OPAL link to Gazprom's Nord Stream gas pipeline. Under the EU's third energy package, Gazprom is under an obligation to provide up to 50% of OPAL's capacity to independent suppliers. However, Russia and Germany have asked the Commission to grant the OPAL gas pipeline an exemption from third energy package rules.

1. Is the Commission willing to grant such an exemption?

2. When can we expect a decision by the Commission regarding this matter?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

1. In 2009, OPAL received, within the scope of the Gas Directive, an exemption from the Bundesnetzagentur (BNetzA), from third party access provisions, subject to certain conditions, and from tariff regulation for 100% of the pipeline capacity. In November 2013, BNetzA notified to the Commission intended changes to this exemption decision. The Commission is currently assessing the notification.

2. In deciding on notified exemption decisions, the Commission is subject to legal deadlines of initially two months, with the possibility of extension.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003754/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Παράταση φορολογικών μέτρων για το 2015

Σύμφωνα με την κοινή δήλωση των εκπροσώπων της Τρόικα (Κομισιόν, ΕΚΤ, ΔΝΤ) στην Ελλάδα, μετά το πέρας των διαπραγματεύσεων με την ελληνική κυβέρνηση το Μάρτιο του 2014, οι ελληνικές αρχές «επανεπιβεβαίωσαν τη δέσμευσή τους όσον αφορά την υλοποίηση των πολιτικών που απαιτούνται για να επιτευχθεί ο στόχος του 2015 για πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα στο 3% του ΑΕΠ, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και της παράτασης των φορολογικών μέτρων κατά περίπτωση, όπως της εισφοράς αλληλεγγύης».

Κατόπιν των παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Ποια είναι τα φορολογικά μέτρα, που «κατά περίπτωση» θα μπορούσαν να παραταθούν, ούτως ώστε να επιτευχθεί ο στόχος για πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα 3% για το 2015;

Υπάρχουν σκέψεις και για άλλα μέτρα, εκτός από φορολογικά, που θα μπορούσαν να υλοποιηθούν για την επίτευξη των δημοσιονομικών στόχων για το 2015;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2014)

Το ζήτημα των μέτρων που απαιτούνται για την επίτευξη του δημοσιονομικού στόχου για το 2015 θα αποτελέσει αντικείμενο συζητήσεων με τις αρχές στο πλαίσιο της κατάρτισης του προϋπολογισμού για το 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003754/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Extending expiring fiscal measures for 2015

According to the joint statement by the representatives of the Troika (the Commission, the ECB, and the IMF) in Greece following the conclusion of negotiations with the Greek Government in March 2014, the Greek authorities 'reconfirmed their commitment to implement policies needed to achieve the 2015 primary surplus target of 3% of GDP, including as needed by extending expiring fiscal measures, such as the solidarity surcharge.'

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

What are the fiscal measures which could be extended 'as needed' to achieve the primary surplus target of 3% of GDP for 2015?

Are any other measures being envisaged, apart from fiscal measures, which could be implemented to achieve the primary surplus target of 3% of GDP for 2015?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

This issue of measures needed to achieve the 2015 fiscal target will be discussed with the authorities in the context of the preparation of the 2015 budget.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003755/14
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EC law and the right to participate in referendums

On 12 March 2013, the Scottish Parliament adopted the Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill which limits the franchise for the upcoming referendum on independence to voters living in Scotland, thereby excluding the large population of expatriate Scots living and working elsewhere in the European Union. The Commission has already intimated in previous responses to parliamentary questions that newly independent states would become third countries as regards membership of the EU.

Can the Commission clarify how independence would affect the rights presently enjoyed by expatriate Scots living elsewhere in the Union? Furthermore, if these rights could be affected negatively, does the Commission believe it to be legal under EC law to exclude those parties affected from the franchise of the referendum?

Answer given by Mr Barroso on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003756/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Allarme UE sui prodotti pericolosi «made in China»

Dal rapporto RAPEX 2013, pubblicato il 25 marzo dalla Commissione, sui prodotti di consumo pericolosi notificati dalle autorità nazionali degli Stati membri emerge un dato eclatante: il 64 % delle segnalazioni di prodotti che rappresentano un rischio grave riguarda prodotti cinesi:

— si tratta, principalmente, di danni fisici alle persone, di rischi causati da prodotti chimici o di rischi di strangolamento, di shock elettrico e di soffocamento delle persone. Inoltre il dato numerico rappresenta una cifra record su base annuale, che conferma la tendenza all'aumento costante delle notifiche registrata negli ultimi anni;

— è da rilevare inoltre che i dati delle denunce concernono un arco molto ampio di settori, dal vestiario ai giocattoli, dagli apparecchi elettrici alle auto ed ai prodotti di cosmetica. Ma è ancora più preoccupante il fatto che, per quanto riguarda la Cina, per metà dei casi si è nell'impossibilità di identificare il fabbricante.

1. Quali urgenti iniziative intende attuare la Commissione per indurre la Cina a effettuare controlli preventivi sulla pericolosità dei prodotti che esporta nell'UE?

2. Non ritiene la Commissione che sia giunta l'ora di promuovere una campagna massiccia di informazione e denuncia della pericolosità della grande maggioranza dei prodotti «made in China» che vengono commercializzati nell'Unione europea?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

La Commissione presta particolare attenzione ai rischi derivanti da prodotti originari della Cina. Dal 2006 collabora infatti con le autorità cinesi nell'ambito delle «*Guideline for action on co-operation for strengthening EU-China toys safety*» (linee guida per l'azione riguardante la cooperazione UE-Cina volta al rafforzamento della sicurezza dei giocattoli) e del «memorandum d'intesa» sulla sicurezza dei prodotti, concluso con la China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) ([1]) (Amministrazione generale per il controllo della qualità, l'ispezione e la quarantena della Repubblica Popolare Cinese). Tramite il sistema «RAPEX Cina» le autorità cinesi ricevono dalla Commissione informazioni su prodotti di origine cinese identificati come pericolosi e riferiscono in merito alle azioni correttive adottate in Cina. Tale sistema consente alle autorità cinesi di agire in modo più efficace contro i prodotti non sicuri originari della Cina. Le autorità cinesi effettuano già ispezioni per alcune categorie di prodotti di consumo, come i giocattoli, destinati all'esportazione.

Il numero di notifiche di prodotti pericolosi non alimentari nel sistema RAPEX va visto in riferimento alla significativa quota di mercato dei prodotti cinesi e alla luce di una migliore vigilanza del mercato da parte delle autorità nazionali dell'UE nonché delle azioni intraprese dagli operatori economici. Tali dati non permettono di concludere che i prodotti importati dalla Cina siano per la maggior parte pericolosi. Ciononostante la Commissione e le autorità degli Stati membri continuano a cooperare con la Cina al fine di rendere più sicuri i prodotti immessi sul mercato dell'UE. A tale proposito vengono poste in essere azioni di comunicazione incisive per aiutare progettisti, produttori, esportatori, importatori e distributori a soddisfare meglio le norme europee in materia di sicurezza. Nell'ambito di dette azioni la Commissione ha prodotto quattro video sulla sicurezza dei prodotti relativi a passeggini, prodotti che imitano gli alimenti, accendini nonché cordoncini e lacci negli indumenti per bambini ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/int_coop/bilateral_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/videos_ca_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003756/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EU alarm at dangerous products made in China

On 25 March the Commission published its memo 'RAPEX in 2013'. The report, on dangerous consumer products notified by the national authorities of the Member States, contains a shocking figure: 64% of products reportedly posing a serious hazard are Chinese.

The main risks are: physical injury; chemical hazards; strangulation; electric shock; and suffocation. The annual figure quoted is a record, confirming the upward trend apparent from notifications recorded in recent years.

Significantly, the reported figures span a very wide range of sectors, from clothing to toys, electrical goods, cars and cosmetics. More worrying still, in half the cases concerning China, the manufacturers are untraceable.

1. What urgent initiatives does the Commission intend to take to persuade China to inspect its products for hazards before exporting them to the EU?

2. Does the Commission think the time has come to promote a large-scale information campaign, to underline that the vast majority of products made in China and marketed in the European Union are dangerous?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission is paying close attention to the risks of products originating in China. It is working together with the Chinese authorities since 2006, under a 'Guideline for action on cooperation for strengthening EU-China toys safety' and a 'Memorandum of Understanding' on product safety, concluded with China's General Administration of Quality, Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) ([1]). Through the 'RAPEX China' system, Chinese authorities receive information from the Commission on identified dangerous products of Chinese origin and report back on corrective actions taken in China. This shall enable Chinese authorities to act more effectively against unsafe products originating in China. Chinese authorities already carry out export inspections for some consumer product categories such as toys.

The number of notifications of dangerous non-food products in RAPEX needs to be seen in relation to the significant market share of Chinese products and in the light of improved market surveillance activities by EU national authorities and of actions taken by economic operators. Those figures do not allow the conclusion that the majority of products imported from China are dangerous. Nevertheless, the Commission and Member States' authorities continue cooperating with China in order to make products placed on the EU market safer. This includes intensive communication actions to help designers, manufacturers, exporters, importers and distributors to better meet European safety requirements. As part of these actions, the Commission has produced four product safety videos on pushchairs, food imitating products, lighters and cords and drawstrings in children's clothes ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/int_coop/bilateral_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/videos_ca_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003757/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Inviato speciale UE per il Tibet

Premesso che:

1. i vertici dell'Unione europea incontreranno il 31 marzo 2014 a Bruxelles il presidente cinese Xi Jinping e che da molte parti, ivi compreso il presidente del CESE, si chiede che in tale occasione venga affrontato con decisione il tema della situazione del Tibet;

2. finora l'Unione europea ha affrontato in termini eccessivamente delicati la gravissima situazione dei diritti umani in Tibet e il pericolo che la politica perseguita dalla Cina annienti totalmente le residue forme di libertà politica e di espressione, oltre la stessa sopravvivenza dell'identità culturale di questo coraggioso popolo;

può la Commissione far sapere che cosa attende a superare ogni residuo tentennamento della sua politica di fronte alla realtà, nota a tutto il mondo, dell'oppressione del popolo tibetano da parte della Cina, nominando ad hoc un inviato speciale UE per il Tibet?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

In numerose occasioni l'UE ha affrontato pubblicamente con le autorità cinesi il problema dei diritti delle minoranze, compresa quella tibetana. Il Tibet figura regolarmente nelle dichiarazioni dell'UE presso il Consiglio per i diritti umani e l'Assemblea generale dell'ONU. Il 1° febbraio 2014 l'AR/VP ha rilasciato una dichiarazione sul trattamento riservato dalla Cina ai difensori dei diritti umani e ai loro familiari, in particolare coloro che promuovono i diritti umani delle minoranze.

Il 25 giugno 2013, in occasione del dialogo UE-Cina sui diritti umani tenutosi a Guiyang (nella provincia di Guizhou), la questione tibetana è stata ampiamente discussa, come in passato, con vari ministeri cinesi.

In occasione delle riunioni bilaterali con il presidente Xi Jinping tenutesi il 31 marzo, l'UE ha sottolineato la centralità dei diritti umani nelle relazioni UE-Cina e ha ricordato l'importanza che ascrive alla tutela della libertà di espressione pacifica.

L'Unione non prevede di nominare un inviato speciale ad hoc per il Tibet. A settembre 2013 il rappresentante speciale dell'UE per i diritti umani Lambrinidis, in visita in Cina e nella regione del Tibet, ha ampiamente discusso con le autorità nazionali, regionali e locali la questione dei diritti umani del popolo tibetano. L'UE continuerà a monitorare la situazione dei diritti umani del popolo tibetano in Cina e a riproporre il problema con il governo cinese.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003757/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: EU special envoy for Tibet

1. The leaders of several European institutions are meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping in Brussels on 31 March 2014. Many, including the Chairman of the EESC, are wondering whether to grasp the nettle and raise the situation in Tibet on this occasion.

2. The European Union has previously pussyfooted around the very serious human rights situation in Tibet and the danger that the policy pursued by China will totally annihilate the remaining forms of political liberty and freedom of expression. The very survival of the cultural identity of this brave people is at risk.

What is the Commission waiting for? Can it not set aside the residual vacillations of its policy and engage with the reality, known to the whole world, of Chinese oppression of the Tibetan people? Will it appoint an EU ad hoc special envoy for Tibet?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The EU has publicly raised the rights of persons belonging to minorities, including that of Tibetans, on many occasions with the Chinese authorities. Tibet features regularly in EU statements at the UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly. On 1 February 2014, the HR/VP Ashton issued a statement regarding the treatment of human rights defenders and their relatives in China, including those who promote the human rights of persons belonging to minorities.

On 25 June 2013, during the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue, which was held in Guiyang (Guizhou province), the situation in Tibet was discussed extensively with various Chinese ministries, as has been the case in the past.

During the bilateral meetings held with President Xi Jinping on 31 March, the EU underlined the importance of Human Rights in EU-China relations and recalled the EU's attachment to protecting the freedom of peaceful expression.

There are no plans to appoint an EU ad hoc special envoy for Tibet. During his visit to China, including to the Tibetan region, in September 2013, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Lambrinidis, had in-depth discussions with the Chinese authorities, at national, regional and local levels, about the human rights of Tibetans. The EU will continue to monitor the human rights of Tibetans in China and to raise its concerns with the Chinese Government.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003758/14
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Difformità tra il piano regionale per la gestione dei rifiuti in Sicilia e i contenuti della VAS

Con decreto dell'11 luglio 2012, il ministero dell'Ambiente e della tutela del territorio e del mare (MATTM) ha approvato il «piano regionale per la gestione dei rifiuti in Sicilia», che prevede l'allestimento di 23 impianti per lo smaltimento dei rifiuti. Nessuno di questi impianti è indicato nel suddetto piano come capace di interferire in alcun modo con siti appartenenti alla rete Natura 2000 o aree protette di qualunque genere.

Il decreto di approvazione ha prescritto anche che venga effettuata la valutazione ambientale prevista dalla direttiva 42/2001/CE (indicata come «valutazione ambientale strategica», VAS, nella normativa italiana).

Da un raffronto del piano con la valutazione ambientale strategica, avviata dalla Regione Sicilia il 30 dicembre 2013, emerge invece che ben 8 impianti su 23 avrebbero interferenze dirette o indirette con aree protette, siano esse siti di importanza comunitaria (SIC), zone di protezione speciale (ZPS), «Important Bird Areas» (IBA), riserve naturali o parchi.

Per la precisione, di questi 8 impianti 3 ricadono nella ZPS/IBA dove è collocata la discarica di Bellolampo (Palermo), che presenta già gravi problemi anche e soprattutto sanitari; uno ricade in una ZPS, sotto una vecchia discarica mai bonificata, senza valutazione di incidenza ma semplice screening (Pace, Messina); uno ricade in una IBA che diventerà a breve ZPS (Timpazzo, Gela) e presenta una valutazione di incidenza difforme da quanto richiesto dall'allegato G della direttiva 92/43/CE e dalle norme italiane di recepimento; uno interferisce con IBA, ZPS, SIC e parco (Castelbuono, Palermo); uno interferisce con una riserva e IBA (Sciacca, Agrigento); l'ultimo, l'impianto di compostaggio a Messina, in una ZPS, non sarà sottoposto a valutazione di incidenza.

Di questi, ben 2 (Messina e Gela) sono andati a gara, con fondi comunitari, lo stesso giorno dell'avvio della procedura preliminare di VAS, in violazione anche delle norme di tutela dello Stato italiano. Si ravvisa che il ministero dell'Ambiente abbia approvato il piano perché non era stato informato che vi erano tali interferenze, rivelate solo una volta avviata la procedura preliminare VAS contemporaneamente alle gare per la realizzazione degli impianti, in contrasto con le norme vigenti.

Alla luce di quanto sopra esposto, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è a conoscenza del coinvolgimento di aree rientranti nella rete Natura 2000 nel piano regionale per la gestione dei rifiuti in Sicilia, la cui procedura VAS è stata avviata il giorno stesso del bando di gara per ben due impianti che interferiscono con la rete Natura 2000, con fondi comunitari e senza il rispetto delle norme comunitarie e nazionali;

2. se sì, quali informazioni sono state fornite dallo Stato italiano;

3. in ogni caso, quali azioni intende adottare per la tutela delle suddette aree?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

La Commissione chiederà alle autorità italiane di fornire chiarimenti in merito all'applicazione della direttiva VAS ([1]) nel piano regionale per la gestione dei rifiuti in Sicilia approvato nel 2012 e circa l'eventualità che gli impianti previsti di gestione dei rifiuti siano stati sottoposti a un'adeguata valutazione delle interferenze di questi ultimi con i siti appartenenti alla rete Natura 2000 citati dall'onorevole deputato, come previsto dalla direttiva Habitat ([2]). Sulla base di queste informazioni, la Commissione deciderà se saranno necessarie ulteriori misure per garantire la corretta applicazione del diritto dell'UE.

Gli impianti nelle città di Messina e Gela, secondo le informazioni fornite dall'autorità di gestione del programma 2007-2013 della Sicilia, sono stati finanziati esclusivamente con fondi nazionali senza il sostegno del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale.

([1]) Direttiva 2001/42/CE, del 27 giugno 2001, concernente la valutazione degli effetti di determinati piani e programmi sull'ambiente (GU L 197 del 21.7.2001).
([2]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE relativa alla conservazione degli habitat naturali e seminaturali e della flora e della fauna selvatiche (GU L 206 del 22.7.1992).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003758/14
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Clashes between Regional Waste Management Plan for Sicily and SEA content

By decree dated 11 July 2012, the Italian Environment and Conservation Ministry approved the regional waste management plan for Sicily. The plan provides for 23 waste disposal facilities to be set up, though it lists none of them as impinging in any way on conservation sites belonging to the Natura 2000 network.

The same decree orders an environmental assessment to be carried out under Directive 42/2001/EC (designated as a strategic environmental assessment — SEA — in the Italian regulations).

A comparison of the plan with the SEA launched by the Region of Sicily on 30 December 2013 reveals that as many as 8 of the 23 plants directly or indirectly impinge on conservation areas classed as Sites of Community Importance (SCI), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Important Bird Areas (IBA), nature reserves or parks.

Specifically, three of the eight facilities are located in the SPA/IBA at the Bellolampo landfill site near Palermo, which has serious and widely acknowledged problems, especially of public health. Another facility is in an SPA below an old dump, never rehabilitated, at Pace, near Messina, where simple screening has taken place, but no environmental impact assessment. Another is in an IBA shortly to be reclassified as an SPA at Timpazzo, near Gela, and has an impact assessment not conforming to the requirements of Annex G of Directive 92/43/EC and of the Italian implementing regulations. Another impinges on an IBA, SPA, SCI and park (Castelbuono, Palermo); another on a nature reserve and IBA (Sciacca, Agrigento); and the last, the Messina composting plant, is in an SPA, where no environmental impact assessment will be carried out.

As many as two of these (Messina and Gela) were put out to tender, using Community funds, on the opening day of the preliminary SEA procedure. This placed both tenders in breach of Italian national conservation standards. The Environment Ministry approved the plan because it has not been informed of the clashes, which only emerged after the launch of the preliminary SEA procedure.

1. Is the Commission aware of the Natura 2000 network areas affected by the Regional Waste Management Plan for Sicily? Does it realise that the relevant SEA procedure was launched on the same day as the invitations to tender for two facilities which impinge on the Natura 2000 network? And is it aware that Community funds were used for both facilities, in breach of Community and national rules?

2. If it is aware of these facts, what information has the Italian Government supplied to it?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take, in any case, to protect the affected areas?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The Commission will ask the Italian authorities to provide clarifications on the application of the SEA Directive ([1]) to the Sicily waste management plan approved in 2012, as well as on whether the foreseen waste management facilities have been subjected to an appropriate assessment of their implications for the Natura 2000 sites mentioned by the Honourable Member as required by the Habitats Directive ([2]). On the basis of this information it will decide whether further steps should be undertaken in order to ensure the correct application of EU-law.

As for the projects in Messina and Gela, according to the information provided by the managing authority of the Sicily 2007-2013 programme, they were financed exclusively by national funds with no support from the European Regional Development Fund.

([1]) Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (OJ L 197, 21.7.2001).
([2]) Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003759/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuove risorse dalla BEI destinate alle piccole e medie imprese

In queste ore la BEI, la Banca Europea per gli Investimenti, ha approvato un nuovo pacchetto di prestiti per le PMI per un ammontare di 5,6 miliardi di euro.

Si prenda atto di quanto accaduto in Italia pochi mesi fa quando la BCE, per rispondere alla mancanza di liquidità del nostro tessuto economico, ha prestato agli istituti di credito italiani un totale di 255 miliardi di euro ad un tasso dell'1 % che invece di essere distribuiti alle imprese sono stati investititi dagli istituti di credito in BOT e altri titoli convogliando questo denaro nelle casse statali, piuttosto che rischiare riaprendo i rubinetti del credito alle PMI.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione dire quali misure intende implementare per assicurarsi che questo denaro arrivi davvero nelle casse delle PMI e non resti invece in quelle delle banche come già successo nel nostro Paese?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2014)

Nel 2013 la Banca europea per gli investimenti ha firmato in Italia nuovi contratti di finanziamento per un importo di 10,4 miliardi di EUR (+50 % rispetto all'anno precedente). Gli investimenti correlati, che ammontavano complessivamente a 30 miliardi di EUR (+50 % rispetto al 2012), hanno prodotto un effetto leva significativo.

Il finanziamento delle piccole imprese è attualmente una delle principali priorità della BEI e più di 8 400 PMI hanno ottenuto prestiti per 3,3 miliardi di EUR (+30 % rispetto al 2012). Su base aggregata, per il periodo 2008-2013 la BEI ha finanziato più di 70 000 progetti di PMI.

Le banche intermediarie soddisfano dettagliate prescrizioni contrattuali, tra cui l'impegno a indicare in modo trasparente la partecipazione della BEI e il trasferimento del vantaggio finanziario (sotto forma di abbuono di interessi). È altresì obbligatoria la conformità alla pertinente legislazione nazionale e dell'UE in materia di ambiente e di appalti pubblici. La BEI verifica periodicamente il rispetto degli obblighi contrattuali. Nel caso in cui i fondi non siano assegnati durante il periodo concordato a progetti promossi dalle PMI, le banche intermediarie devono restituire l'esposizione creditizia in essere.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003759/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: New EIB resources for small and medium-sized enterprises

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has just given the go-ahead for a new SME loan package worth EUR 5.6 billion.

A few months ago the EIB responded to the lack of liquidity in the Italian economy by lending Italian banks a total of EUR 255 billion at a 1% interest rate. The banks did not distribute these funds to businesses, instead investing them in Italian treasury bills and other securities. The money thus flowed into the coffers of the state, for the sole reason that this was a less risky option than offering fresh loans to SMEs.

What steps does the Commission intend to take to satisfy itself that this latest cash injection really does reach SMEs and is not simply used by banks to line their pockets, as has happened in Italy in the past?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

In 2013, the European Investment Bank (EIB) signed new finance contracts for EUR 10.4 billion (+50% compared to the previous year) in Italy. Total related investments reached EUR 30 billion (+50% compared to 2012), implying a significant leverage effect.

Loans for SMEs amounted to EUR 3.3 billion — financing of small businesses being nowadays one of the main priorities of the EIB (+30% compared to 2012) — to more than 8 400 SMEs. On an aggregate basis in the period 2008-2013, the EIB financed more than 70 000 SME projects.

The intermediary banks comply with detailed contractual requirements, including the commitment on the transparency of the EIB participation, and the transfer of the financial advantage (in the form of interest rebate). Compliance with relevant domestic and EU legislation on environment and public procurement is also compulsory. The EIB regularly monitors compliance with contractual obligations. In case of non-allocation of funds to projects promoted by SMEs within the agreed period, the intermediary banks need to reimburse the outstanding credit exposure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003760/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Sicurezza alimentare e minestroni al botulino

Nella provincia di Padova un uomo di 33 anni è stato recentemente ricoverato per una grave intossicazione da botulino, contratta mangiando un minestrone surgelato, prodotto da una ditta di Alessandria che è stata immediatamente contattata dall'USL locale. Il minestrone, contenuto in una ciotola di plastica, sarebbe stato contaminato: gli inquirenti non hanno ancora stabilito in quale ambito sia avvenuta la contaminazione, se in quello produttivo o in quello domestico. Questo caso è solo l'ultimo di una lunga serie di intossicazioni alimentari che costituiscono quasi la normalità in numerosi Stati membri, e riguardano spesso prodotti provenienti da paesi terzi importati all'interno dell'UE.

Può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quale legislazione adotta nell'ambito del contrasto alle frodi e alle contraffazioni alimentari e in quello della sicurezza alimentare?

2. Come favorisce controlli rigorosi alle frontiere per valutare la qualità e la sicurezza degli alimenti provenienti da paesi terzi?

3. Non ritiene che una regolamentazione sulla denominazione di origine dei prodotti possa costituire un elemento in più per garantire la sicurezza e l'informazione dei cittadini?

4. Non crede di dover sollecitare il Consiglio e il Parlamento affinché venga approvato quanto prima il nuovo regolamento per la Sicurezza dei Prodotti al Consumo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 maggio 2014)

1.-4. Un intero corpus legislativo ha lo scopo di garantire la sicurezza degli alimenti commercializzati nell'Unione europea. Il regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([1]) e il regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([2]) costituiscono i due principali strumenti per raggiungere questo obiettivo.

Il 6 maggio 2013 la Commissione ha adottato una proposta di revisione delle attuali norme che disciplinano i controlli ufficiali lungo la catena agro-alimentare, allo scopo di mettere a disposizione delle autorità nazionali un quadro legale più efficiente e strumenti più forti per garantire il rispetto delle norme e per lo svolgimento delle loro responsabilità di controllo. Questa proposta è attualmente presa in considerazione dal colegislatore. La Commissione spera che possano essere compiuti progressi rapidi in direzione di un accordo quanto prima possibile.

2. Nell'ambito del corpus legislativo sopra descritto, la Commissione ha elaborato nel 2010 un elenco di alimenti e mangimi di origine non animale che, in base alle conoscenze relative ai rischi, richiedono un livello di controlli rafforzato prima di essere introdotti nell'UE. Tale elenco appare nell'allegato I del regolamento (CE) n. 669/2009 ([3]) ed è regolarmente sottoposto a revisione.

Ove necessario, vengono imposte condizioni di importazione più rigide, ad esempio la presentazione obbligatoria dei risultati del campionamento e delle analisi e di un certificato sanitario verificato dai rappresentanti autorizzati del paese d'origine. Possono inoltre essere imposte condizioni speciali, come la sospensione delle importazioni.

Una serie di norme specifiche sono inoltre vigenti per gli alimenti di origine animale ([4]).

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 28 gennaio 2002, che stabilisce i principi e i requisiti generali della legislazione alimentare, istituisce l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare e fissa procedure nel campo della sicurezza alimentare, GU L 31 dell'1.2.2002, pag. 1.

([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 2004, relativo ai controlli ufficiali intesi a verificare la conformità alla normative in materia di mangimi e di alimenti e alle norme sulla salute e sul benessere degli animali, GU L 165 del 30.4.2004, pag. 1.

([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 669/2009 della Commissione, del 24 luglio 2009, recante modalità di applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativo al livello accresciuto di controlli ufficiali sulle importazioni di alcuni mangimi e alimenti di origine non animale e che modifica la decisione 2006/504/CE, GU L 194 del 25.7.2009, pagg. 11-21.

([4]) Direttiva del Consiglio 97/78/CE, del 18 dicembre 1997, che fissa i principi relativi all'organizzazione dei controlli veterinari per i prodotti che provengono dai paesi terzi e che sono introdotti nella Comunità, GU L 24 del 30/01/1998, pagg. 9-30.

3. Nel settore degli alimenti, l'etichettatura di origine non è considerata uno strumento in grado di garantire la sicurezza, dal momento che vi sono altri meccanismi utili al perseguimento di questo obiettivo. Secondo le norme vigenti ([5]) l'etichettatura degli alimenti non deve indurre in errore il consumatore; per questo motivo l'indicazione del paese d'origine è obbligatoria se la sua assenza può indurre in errore i consumatori sulla reale provenienza di tale prodotto.

([5]) Direttiva 2000/13/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 20 marzo 2000, relativa al ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri concernenti l'etichettatura e la presentazione dei prodotti alimentari, nonché la relativa pubblicità, GU L 109 del 6.5.2000, pag. 29.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003760/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Food safety and soups containing Botulinum

In the province of Padua a 33-year-old man was recently hospitalised with serious botulism after eating frozen soup manufactured by a company in Alessandria. The local healthcare trust contacted the manufacturer immediately and it emerged that the minestrone, in a plastic tub, had become contaminated. The investigators have not yet established whether this happened in the production environment or in the consumer's home. This is the latest in a long line of food poisoning cases, which have become almost the norm in many Member States. Often the foods have been imported into the EU from third countries.

1. What legislation is the Commission adopting against food faking and fraud and to promote food safety?

2. How is the Commission encouraging strict border checks of the quality and safety of foods originating from third countries?

3. Does it consider that regulations on product designations of origin could offer an additional means of guaranteeing public safety and information?

4. Does it not believe it should pursue the matter with the Council and Parliament to secure the earliest possible approval of the new consumer product safety regulation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

1 and 4. There is a comprehensive body of legislation to ensure the safety of food placed on the market in the European Union. Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]) are the two main tools in order to achieve this objective.

The Commission on 6 May 2013 adopted a proposal to review the current rules on official controls along the agri-food chain, which aims to provide national enforcers with a more efficient legal framework and stronger enforcement tools to deliver on their control duties. This proposal is currently under consideration by the co-legislator. The Commission hopes that rapid progress can be made towards an agreement at the earliest opportunity.

2. As part of the body of legislation described above, the Commission established in 2010 a list of food and feed of non-animal origin which on the basis of known or emerging risk require an increased level of controls prior to their introduction into the EU. The list appears in Annex I to Regulation (EC) 669/2009 ([3]) and is regularly reviewed.

When required, more stringent import conditions e.g. the compulsory presentation of results of sampling and analysis and of a health certificate verified by authorised representatives of the country of origin are adopted. Special conditions such as the suspension of imports can also be imposed if needed. Specific rules are also in place for food of animal origin ([4]).

3. In the area of food, origin labelling is not considered as a tool to ensure safety as there are other mechanisms in place to achieve this objective. Under existing rules ([5]), food labelling must not mislead the consumer and for this reason the indication of the country of origin is mandatory whenever its absence is likely to mislead consumers as to the true provenance of that product.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety, OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p.1.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules, OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1.

([3]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 669/2009 of 24 July 2009 implementing Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the increased level of official controls on imports of certain feed and food of non-animal origin and amending Decision 2006/504/EC, OJ L 194, 25.7.2009, p. 11-21.

([4]) Council Directive 97/78/EC of 18 December 1997 laying down the principles governing the organisation of veterinary checks on products entering the Community from third countries, OJ L 24, 30/01/1998, p. 9-30.

([5]) Directive 2000/13/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 March 2000 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs, OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p. 29.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003761/14
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Niebezpieczny wirus ebola

W dniu 9 lutego 2014 r. w Gwinei odnotowano pierwszy od dłuższego czasu przypadek ofiary wirusa ebola. Od tego czasu zmarło od 34 do 59 osób.

Laboratorium w Lyonie potwierdziło tę informację. Istnieją obawy, że choroba może rozprzestrzenić się na sąsiednie Sierra Leone. Wirus ebola charakteryzuje bardzo wysoka śmiertelność, większość zarażonych nim ludzi umiera.

W związku z tym zwracam się z zapytaniami:

1. Czy Komisja opracowała ewentualny plan działania na wypadek, gdyby wirus przedostał się do Europy?

2. Czy Komisja ma w planach wspomaganie pracy nad stworzeniem szczepionki przeciwko wirusowi?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(4 czerwca 2014 r.)

Komisja jest w pełni świadoma wystąpienia choroby wywołanej wirusem Ebola w Afryce Zachodniej i monitoruje sytuację w ścisłym kontakcie z delegaturami UE w krajach dotkniętych tą chorobą, z Europejskim Centrum ds. Zapobiegania i Kontroli Chorób (ECDC) i ze Światową Organizacją Zdrowia. Na obecnym etapie ocenia się, że ryzyko zakażenia wirusem Ebola na terenie UE jest bardzo małe.

Jeżeli jednak miałoby nastąpić rozprzestrzenienie się tego wirusa, spójną reakcję na poziomie UE umożliwią przepisy decyzji Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady nr 1082/2013/UE ([1]) w sprawie poważnych transgranicznych zagrożeń zdrowia.

Reakcja taka obejmowałaby następujące działania: wczesne ostrzeganie na poziomie UE i przeprowadzanie szybkiej oceny ryzyka przez ECDC, telekonferencje w sytuacjach wyjątkowych z Komitetem ds. Bezpieczeństwa Zdrowia w sprawie porad i konsultacji dotyczących środków zdrowotnych, koordynacja środków zdrowotnych, ustalanie kontaktów zakaźnych w celu identyfikacji potencjalnie zakażonych osób, a także zacieśnienie współpracy z międzynarodowymi partnerami, takimi jak Światowa Organizacja Zdrowia.

Komisja odsyła Szanownego Pana Posła do odpowiedzi udzielonej na pytanie wymagającego odpowiedzi na piśmie E-004550/2014 ([2]) w sprawie „inwestycji w badania medyczne – Ebola".

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:PL:PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003761/14
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Ebola virus

On 9 February 2014, the first fatality from the Ebola virus in a long time was recorded in Guinea. Since then, estimates of the number of people to have died range from 34 to 59.

The disease has been confirmed by a laboratory in Lyon. There are fears that it may spread to neighbouring Sierra Leone. Ebola has a very high mortality rate; most people who contract the virus will die from it.

1. Has the Commission drawn up an action plan in case the virus reaches Europe?

2. Does the Commission intend to help with the work on creating a vaccine to combat the virus?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission is fully aware of the Ebola outbreak in Western Africa and monitors the situation in close contact with the EU Delegations in the affected countries, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation. The risk of the Ebola virus causing a cross-border health threat within the EU is considered, as this stage, as very low.

Should such as spread nevertheless occur, then the provisions under Decision 1082/2013/EU ([1]) of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross border threats to health allow a consistent response at EU level.

Such EU response would include the following action: rapid alert at EU level and a rapid risk assessment by the ECDC, emergency teleconference(s) with the Health Security Committee for advice and consultation on health measures, coordination of health measures, the triggering of contact tracing of potential infected persons, and the strengthening of collaboration with international partners such as the World Health Organisation.

The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to Written Question E-004550/2014 ([2]) on 'Investment in medical research — Ebola'.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003762/14
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(26 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Pomoc dla polskiego rynku wieprzowiny

Wskutek ograniczeń importowych nałożonych przez państwa trzecie, w tym przez Federację Rosyjską, na polską wieprzowinę, a także w wyniku braku regionalizacji skutkującej ustanowieniem obszaru zakażenia w całej Polsce oraz decyzji Komisji Europejskiej nr 2014/100/UE z dnia 18 lutego 2014 r. wprowadzającej obszar zakażony wirusem afrykańskiego pomoru świń (ASF) w kilkudziesięciu gminach trzech województw: podlaskiego, mazowieckiego i lubelskiego, kondycja polskiego rynku wieprzowiny radykalnie się pogorszyła, a cena skupu żywca spadła aż o 18 % w ciągu miesiąca. Powyższe obostrzenia spowodowane są wykryciem w Polsce, tuż przy granicy z Białorusią, 2 przypadków zakażenia dzików wirusem ASF.

Głęboki kryzys na polskim rynku trzody chlewnej spowodowany gwałtownym spadkiem cen i de facto blokadą eksportu zagraża większości zakładów mięsnych i grozi bankructwem tysięcy hodowców trzody w Polsce.

W związku z powyższym chciałbym zapytać:

1. Na jakiej podstawie KE uznała tak rozległy obszar za obszar zakażony, za zakazaną strefę buforową?

2. Kiedy dokładnie KE opublikuje rozporządzenie w sprawie nadzwyczajnego wsparcia rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce i kiedy w związku tym uruchomiona zostanie nadzwyczajna pomoc finansowa dla hodowców świń ze stref objętych restrykcjami?

3. Czy w myśl rozporządzenia PE i Rady (UE) nr 1308/2013 oprócz monitoringu Komisja zamierza zastosować na rynku wieprzowiny mechanizmy mające na celu skuteczne reagowanie na jego zakłócenia?

4. Jeśli tak, to jakie dokładnie będą to mechanizmy?

5. Czy w związku z zaktualizowaną i realną oceną zagrożenia KE zamierza w najbliższym terminie zmodyfikować zasięg obszaru zakażonego/strefy buforowej w Polsce?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(20 maja 2014 r.)

1. W wyniku wykrycia dwóch przypadków afrykańskiego pomoru świń u dzików Komisja ustanowiła szczególne ograniczenia w odniesieniu do wysyłki towarów pochodzenia wieprzowego z niektórych obszarów Polski ([1]), uwzględniając fakt, że zgodnie z dostępnymi informacjami naukowymi ([2]) dziki mogą przemieszczać się na odległość do 100 km od swojego siedliska.

2. W dniu 29 marca 2014 r. opublikowano rozporządzenie wykonawcze Komisji z dnia 28 marca 2014 r. przyjmujące nadzwyczajne środki wspierania rynku wieprzowiny w Polsce.

3.+4. Po krótkim okresie zakłóceń na rynku w lutym, już w marcu ceny zaczęły wracać do zwykłego poziomu i kontynuowały sezonowy wzrost. Rynek ten charakteryzuje się wysokimi cenami i sztywną podażą świń gotowych do uboju. W obecnej sytuacji rynkowej ogólna interwencja wykraczająca poza szczególne środki wymienione w pkt 2 nie wydaje się zatem stosowna.

5. Komisja będzie stale monitorować stan rzeczy w związku z afrykańskim pomorem świń i dostosuje środki w zależności od rozwoju sytuacji w odniesieniu do tej choroby.

([1]) 2014/178/UE: decyzja wykonawcza Komisji z dnia 27 marca 2014 r. w sprawie środków kontroli w zakresie zdrowia zwierząt w odniesieniu do afrykańskiego pomoru świń w niektórych państwach członkowskich (Dz.U. L 95 z 29.3.2014, s. 47).

([2]) Opinia naukowa EFSA dotycząca afrykańskiego pomoru świń: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1556.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003762/14
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Help for the Polish pork market

As a result of import restrictions on Polish pork imposed by third countries, including Russia, and also because of the lack of regionalisation, resulting in the whole of Poland being declared an infected area, and Commission Decision No 2014/100/EU establishing an African swine fever (ASF) infected area in several dozen municipalities in the three provinces of Podlaskie, Mazowieckie and Lubelskie, the situation in the Polish pork market has deteriorated dramatically, with the purchase price of pigmeat falling by as much as 18% in a month. These restrictions stem from two cases of wild boar being infected with ASF in Poland, very close to the border with Belarus.

The sharp fall in prices and the de facto blockade of exports has sparked a major crisis in the Polish pig market, with most meat plants under threat and thousands of pig farmers in Poland facing bankruptcy.

1. On what basis did the Commission declare such an extensive area as an 'infected area', or buffer zone?

2. When exactly will the Commission publish a regulation on exceptional support for the pork market in Poland and when will exceptional financial assistance for pig farmers in the restriction areas be allocated?

3. In addition to monitoring, does the Commission intend, under Regulation (EU) 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, to apply mechanisms to effectively counter the disturbances in the pork market?

4. If so, precisely what sort of mechanisms will they be?

5. On the basis of an updated and realistic assessment of the risk, does the Commission intend to modify the extent of the infected area/buffer zone in Poland as soon as possible?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

1. Following the detection of two cases of African swine fever in wild boars, the Commission has established specific restrictions to the dispatch of pig commodities from certain areas of Poland ([1]), taking into account that in accordance with the scientific information available ([2]), a wild boar may move up to 100 Km from its usual habitat.

2. Commission Implementing Regulation of 28 March 2014 adopting exceptional support measures for the pigmeat market in Poland was published on 29.3.2014.

3 and 4. After a short period of market turbulences in February pig prices started to recover already in March and continued their seasonal upswing. The market is characterised by high prices and tight supply of pigs mature for slaughter. Therefore, a general intervention, in addition to the specific measures taken under point 2, does not seem appropriate under the current market situation.

5. The Commission will keep the African swine fever situation under continuous review and will adapt the measures according to the evolution in the disease situation.

([1]) 2014/178/EU: Commission Implementing Decision of 27 March 2014 concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States (OJ L 95, 29.3.2014, p. 47).
([2]) EFSA Scientific Opinion on African Swine Fever: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1556.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003763/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Evaluarea progreselor înregistrate și măsura în care obținerea de către Uniune a unui consum maxim de energie primară de 1 474 Mtep este realizabilă

Uniunea se confruntă cu provocări fără precedent cauzate de dependența din ce în ce mai mare față de importurile de energie și de cantitatea redusă de resurse energetice, precum și de necesitatea de a limita schimbările climatice și de a depăși criza economică. Eficiența energetică reprezintă o modalitate importantă de abordare a provocărilor în cauză. Aceasta îmbunătățește securitatea aprovizionării cu energie a Uniunii prin reducerea consumului de energie primară și a importurilor de energie.

Conform Directivei 2012/27/UE privind eficiența energetică, până la 30 iunie 2014, Comisia evaluează progresele înregistrate și măsura în care obținerea de către Uniune a unui consum maxim de energie primară de 1 474 Mtep și/sau a unui consum maxim de energie finală de 1 078 Mtep în 2020 este realizabilă. De asemenea, până la 30 iunie 2014, Comisia prezintă Parlamentului European și Consiliului această evaluare însoțită, dacă este necesar, de propuneri de măsuri suplimentare.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul acestei evaluări.

Va ține cont Comisia în cadrul acestei evaluări de necesitatea de dezvoltare a Uniunii, în special a țărilor mai slab dezvoltate, și de nevoia de reindustrializare și de asigurare a unui trai decent pentru cetățenii europeni?

De asemenea, aș dori să întreb Comisia când preconizează să prezinte Parlamentului European evaluarea menționată mai sus?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(11 iunie 2014)

Revizuirea Directivei privind eficiența energetică este în curs de desfășurare. Statele membre au avut ca termen ziua de 30 aprilie pentru a raporta obiectivele naționale orientative pentru 2020 în ceea ce privește eficiența energetică și pentru a transmite planurile naționale de acțiune referitoare la eficiența energetică. Comisia intenționează să transmită revizuirea, necesară în temeiul articolului 3 din Directiva privind eficiența energetică, Parlamentului European și Consiliului, în cursul lunilor care urmează. Revizuirea va evalua dacă UE este în măsură să-și atingă în 2020 obiectivul privind eficiența energetică și dacă sunt necesare măsuri suplimentare. De asemenea, revizuirea va conține considerații cu privire la cât de ambițioasă ar trebui să fie politica privind eficiența energetică după 2020 și la rolul eficienței energetice în cadrul politicilor privind clima și energia pentru perioada 2020-2030, propuse de Comisie în ianuarie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003763/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Assessing the progress made and the extent to which the EU is likely to achieve energy consumption of no more than 1 474 Mtoe of primary energy

The European Union is facing unprecedented challenges arising from its growing dependence on energy imports and low level of energy resources, as well as the need to curb climate change and overcome the economic crisis. Energy efficiency represents a significant means of tackling these challenges. Energy efficiency improves the EU's energy security by reducing both primary energy consumption and energy imports.

Under Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, by 30 June 2014 the Commission is to assess the progress made and the extent to which the Union is likely to achieve energy consumption of no more than 1 474 Mtoe of primary energy and/or no more than 1 078 Mtoe of final energy in 2020. Also by 30 June 2014, the Commission is to submit this assessment to the European Parliament and to the Council, accompanied, if necessary, by proposals for further measures.

What stage has been reached on this assessment?

Will the Commission take account in this assessment of the EU's need for development, particularly in the less developed countries, the need for reindustrialisation and the need to guarantee a decent standard of living for European citizens?

When is the Commission expecting to be able to submit the above assessment to Parliament?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The review of the Energy Efficiency Directive is on-going. Member States had until 30 April to report national indicative energy efficiency targets for 2020 and submit National Energy Efficiency Action Plans. The Commission intends to submit the review required under Article 3 of the Energy Efficiency Directive to the European Parliament and the Council in the coming months. The review will assess whether the EU is on track to meet the 2020 energy efficiency target and consider whether additional measures are necessary. The review will also consider what should be the policy ambition for energy efficiency beyond 2020 and energy efficiency's role in the policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030 proposed by the Commission in January.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003764/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Mobilizarea investițiilor în renovarea stocului de clădiri pentru creșterea eficienței energetice

Uniunea se confruntă cu provocări fără precedent cauzate de dependența crescândă față de importurile de energie și de cantitatea redusă de resurse energetice, precum și de necesitatea de a limita schimbările climatice și de a depăși criza economică. Eficiența energetică reprezintă o modalitate importantă prin care pot fi abordate provocările în cauză. Aceasta îmbunătățește securitatea aprovizionării cu energie a Uniunii prin reducerea consumului de energie primară și a importurilor de energie.

Conform Directivei 2012/27/UE privind eficiența energetică, statele membre stabilesc o strategie pe termen lung pentru mobilizarea investițiilor în renovarea stocului de clădiri rezidențiale și comerciale, atât publice, cât și private, existente la nivel național. Această strategie cuprinde:

a. o imagine de ansamblu a parcului imobiliar existent la nivel național, bazată, după caz, pe eșantioane statistice;

b. identificarea soluțiilor de renovare eficiente din punct de vedere al costurilor și relevante pentru tipul de clădiri și zona climatică;

c. politici și măsuri de stimulare a renovărilor de clădiri, aprofundate și eficiente din punct de vedere al costurilor, inclusiv a renovărilor aprofundate efectuate în etape;

d. o perspectivă previzională, în vederea ghidării deciziilor de investiții ale diferitelor persoane, ale întreprinderilor de construcții și ale instituțiilor financiare;

e. o estimare bazată pe date concrete a economiilor de energie preconizate și a altor beneficii mai mari.

O primă versiune a strategiei se publică până la 30 aprilie 2014, este actualizată ulterior o dată la trei ani și este transmisă Comisiei ca parte a Planurilor de acțiune naționale privind eficiența energetică.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul realizării de către statele membre a strategiei de mobilizare a investițiilor în renovarea stocului de clădiri?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(16 mai 2014)

1. Articolul 4 din Directiva privind eficiența energetică (2012/27/UE) prevede într-adevăr că statele membre trebuie să stabilească o strategie pe termen lung pentru mobilizarea investițiilor în renovarea stocului de clădiri rezidențiale și comerciale, atât publice, cât și private, existente la nivel național. Termenul pentru prima versiune a acestor strategii a fost 30 aprilie 2014.

Comisia a primit recent planurile naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică din partea statelor membre și va fi în măsură să ofere precizări cu privire la stadiul strategiilor statelor membre în vederea mobilizării acestor investiții numai după finalizarea evaluării lor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003764/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Mobilising investment in the renovation of the building stock to improve energy efficiency

The European Union is facing unprecedented challenges arising from its growing dependence on energy imports and low level of energy resources, as well as the need to curb climate change and overcome the economic crisis. Energy efficiency represents a significant means of tackling these challenges. Energy efficiency improves the EU's energy security by reducing both primary energy consumption and energy imports.

Under Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, the Member States are to draw up a long-term strategy for mobilising investment in the renovation of the national stock of residential and commercial buildings, both public and private. This strategy will comprise:

(a) an overview of the national building stock based, as appropriate, on statistical sampling;

(b) identification of cost-effective approaches to renovations relevant to the building type andclimatic zone;

(c) policies and measures to stimulate cost-effective deep renovations of buildings, includingstaged deep renovations;

(d) a forward-looking perspective to guide investment decisions of individuals, theconstruction industry and financial institutions;

(e) an evidence-based estimate of expected energy savings and wider benefits.

A first version of the strategy is to be published by 30 April 2014 and updated every three years thereafter; it will be submitted to the Commission as part of the national energy efficiency action plans.

What stage have the Member States reached on the strategy to mobilise investment in the renovation of the building stock?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

1. Article 4 of the Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU) indeed requires Member States to establish a long-term strategy for mobilising investment in the renovation of the national stock of residential and commercial buildings, both public and private. The deadline for the first version of these strategies was 30 April 2014.

The Commission has just received the National Energy Efficiency Action Plans from the Member States and will be able to answer on the stage that Member States have reached on their strategies to mobilise these investments only after having completed their assessment.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003765/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Planuri naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică

Uniunea se confruntă cu provocări fără precedent cauzate de dependența crescândă față de importurile de energie și de cantitatea redusă de resurse energetice, precum și de necesitatea de a limita schimbările climatice și de a depăși criza economică. Eficiența energetică reprezintă o modalitate importantă prin care pot fi abordate provocările în cauză. Aceasta îmbunătățește securitatea aprovizionării cu energie a Uniunii prin reducerea consumului de energie primară și a importurilor de energie.

Conform Directivei 2012/27/UE privind eficiența energetică, până la 30 aprilie 2014, statele membre prezintă planuri naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică. Planurile naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică acoperă măsurile semnificative de îmbunătățire a eficienței energetice și economiile de energie preconizate și/sau înregistrate, inclusiv cele privind aprovizionarea, transportul și distribuția de energie, precum și consumul final de energie, în vederea atingerii obiectivelor naționale în materie de eficiență energetică prevăzute la articolul 3 alineatul (1). Comisia analizează planurile naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică și evaluează măsura în care statele membre au progresat în ceea ce privește obiectivele naționale în materie de eficiență energetică solicitate în temeiul articolului 3 alineatul (1) și în ceea ce privește punerea în aplicare a prezentei directive. Comisia transmite evaluarea Parlamentului European și Consiliului. Pe baza evaluării rapoartelor și a planurilor naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică, Comisia poate emite recomandări către statele membre.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care este stadiul realizării de către statele membre a planurilor naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică și când preconizează Comisia să transmită raportul mai sus menționat Parlamentului European?

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(2 mai 2014)

Comisia este la curent cu faptul că, în prezent, statele membre pregătesc în mod activ planurile naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică, pentru a fi în măsură să se conformeze până la termenul prevăzut, 30 aprilie 2014. Cu toate acestea, dat fiind că termenul nu a trecut încă, în acest moment nu sunt disponibile informații mai precise.

Comisia elaborează în prezent o evaluare, care urmează să fie inclusă într-un raport către Parlamentul European și Consiliu, privind măsura în care statele membre au progresat în ceea ce privește obiectivele naționale în materie de eficiență energetică prevăzute la articolul 3 alineatul (1) din Directiva privind eficiența energetică ca parte a revizuirii din 2014 a Directivei privind eficiența energetică, care va defini cadrul de eficiență energetică pentru următoarele decenii, astfel cum s-a solicitat în cadrul Consiliului European din martie 2014.

Această evaluare se va baza, pe cât posibil, pe planurile naționale de acțiune pentru eficiență energetică transmise Comisiei.

În urma finalizării raportului menționat anterior, Comisia va decide dacă este necesară o evaluare suplimentară a acestor planuri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003765/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: National energy efficiency action plans

The European Union is facing unprecedented challenges arising from its growing dependence on energy imports and low level of energy resources, as well as the need to curb climate change and overcome the economic crisis. Energy efficiency represents a significant means of tackling these challenges. Energy efficiency improves the EU's energy security by reducing both primary energy consumption and energy imports.

Under Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency, the Member States are to submit national energy efficiency action plans by 30 April 2014. These national energy efficiency action plans are to cover significant energy efficiency improvement measures and expected and/ or achieved energy savings, including those in the supply, transmission and distribution of energy as well as energy end-use, with a view to achieving the national energy efficiency targets referred to in Article 3(1). The Commission will evaluate the national energy efficiency action plans and assess the extent to which Member States have made progress towards the achievement of the national energy efficiency targets required by Article 3(1) and towards the implementation of the directive. The Commission will send its assessment to the European Parliament and the Council. Based on its assessment of the reports and the national energy efficiency action plans, the Commission may issue recommendations to Member States.

What stage have the Member States reached on the national energy efficiency action plans, and when is the Commission expecting to be able to send its assessment to Parliament?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2014)

The Commission is aware that Member States are currently actively working on the preparation of their National Energy Efficiency Action Plans so as to be able to comply by the deadline of 30 April 2014. However, as the deadline has not yet passed, there is no more precise information available at this stage.

The Commission is currently working on an assessment, to be contained in a report to the European Parliament and the Council, of whether Member States have made progress towards the achievement of the national energy efficiency targets required by Article 3(1) of the Energy Effiicency Directive as part of the 2014 review of the Energy Efficiency Directive, which will shape the energy efficiency framework for the next decades as requested by the March 2014 European Council.

This assessment will draw, to the extent possible, on the submitted National Energy Efficiency Action Plans.

Following the finalisation of this report, the Commission will evaluate whether or not there is a need for any additional assessment of these plans.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003766/14
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(27 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Estrategia europea sobre endeudamiento privado

La crisis financiera va ligada a una expansión desmesurada del crédito. Los esfuerzos para limitar y abordar los problemas derivados del endeudamiento público, en un contexto de invierno demográfico, no han ido a la par con el tratamiento del endeudamiento privado y su impacto en la sostenibilidad económica.

En Estados Unidos la disminución de la deuda total, basada en una importante reducción del endeudamiento privado, ha sido fundamental para cimentar la recuperación económica, que se ha traducido en crecimiento y creación de empleo. En la Unión Europea, por contra, ha aumentado la deuda total y el endeudamiento privado ha llegado a crecer en el periodo 2009-2012 en algunos Estados miembros, con un impacto negativo sobre la actividad económica y el empleo.

Un estudio del Fondo Monetario Internacional, del que se han hecho eco distintos medios de comunicación, señala que un alto nivel de endeudamiento privado tiene un efecto más perjudicial para el crecimiento económico que el endeudamiento público.

La Junta Europea de Riesgo Sistémico incluye entre sus indicadores alguna que otra referencia al endeudamiento privado. El Banco Central Europeo está llevando a cabo una «evaluación comprehensiva del sistema bancario europeo» clave para generar confianza en la economía europea.

Iniciativas puntuales no serán suficientes para atajar el problema del elevado endeudamiento privado, asegurar el uso del crédito para la economía productiva y restablecer un equilibrio entre tomar financiación a corto plazo y conceder préstamos a largo plazo. El sistema de incentivos que ha llevado a esta situación debe modificarse. En el ámbito fiscal, por ejemplo, se ha estimulado el endeudamiento en detrimento de la capitalización empresarial. Es preciso abordar el sobreendeudamiento de empresas y, muy especialmente, de las familias. En definitiva, diseñar una estrategia europea sobre endeudamiento privado.

¿Va a diseñar la Comisión una estrategia europea sobre endeudamiento privado que ofrezca un tratamiento completo de sus problemas? ¿Qué medidas va a promover la Comisión para una fiscalidad neutral de los diferentes modelos de financiación que no incentive el sobreendeudamiento?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(16 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión está al corriente de la existencia de un importante exceso de deuda privada en algunos países, lo que afecta negativamente a las perspectivas de crecimiento. Se va a estudiar este extremo, que será naturalmente uno para los que la nueva Comisión tendrá que examinar posibles medidas, en colaboración con el resto de los organismos europeos interesados.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003766/14
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: European strategy on private debt

Linked to the financial crisis is an enormous increase in debt. Efforts to limit and deal with the problems caused by public indebtedness, in the context of a demographic winter, have not been commensurate with the treatment of private debt and its impact on economic sustainability.

In the United States the reduction of total debt, based on a significant decrease in private debt, has been crucial in laying the foundations for economic recovery, which has led to growth and job creation. In the European Union, however, total debt has risen and the level of private debt has increased in some Member States during the period 2009-2012, with a negative impact on economic activity and employment.

Research by the International Monetary Fund, which has been reported widely in the media, shows that high levels of private debt produce more damaging consequences for economic growth than public debt.

The European Systemic Risk Board includes some references to private debt among its indicators. The European Central Bank is carrying out a 'comprehensive evaluation of the European banking system', which will be vital for generating confidence in the European economy.

One-off initiatives will not be enough to tackle the problem of high private debt, guarantee credit for the productive economy and restore a balance between short-term borrowing and long-term loans. The system of incentives that has brought about this situation must be modified. In the ambit of taxation, for example, debt has been encouraged at the expense of business capitalisation. There is a need to deal with the over-indebtedness of companies and, especially, families. In short, a European strategy on private debt must be drawn up.

Will the Commission draw up a European strategy on private debt to deal with the problem as a whole? What measures does the Commission plan to promote in order to achieve neutral taxation with respect to the various different finance models, such that over-indebtedness is not encouraged?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the existence of a significant private debt overhang in some countries, which affects negatively growth prospects. This issue will be assessed and will naturally be among those for which the new Commisison will have to evaluate possible policy actions, in liaison with the other European bodies concerned.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003767/14
an die Kommission
Heinz K. Becker (PPE)
(27. März 2014)

Betrifft: Standardisierte Prüfungen zur beruflichen Qualifikation von Asylwerbern

Unter den Asylbewerbern in Europa gibt es zahlreiche hoch qualifizierte und gut ausgebildete Leute. Diese Personen sind auch für den europäischen Arbeitsmarkt, der teilweise um entsprechende Fachkräfte wirbt, ein mögliches Potenzial, das bisher noch nicht beachtet wurde.

Menschen, die auf der Flucht sind, haben oft nur wenige Habseligkeiten bei sich — Zeugnisse und Ausbildungsnachweise sind sicher nicht im Handgepäck dieser Menschen.

Sofern nach dem jeweils geltenden nationalen Recht Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt besteht, sollte es Asylwerbern daher ermöglicht werden, behauptete Ausbildungen durch eine entsprechende Prüfung im europäischen Aufnahmeland festzustellen bzw. zu dokumentieren.

1. Gedenkt die Kommission einheitliche Standards für die Verfahren sowie den Umfang und die Art solcher Qualifikationsprüfungen für Asylwerber festzusetzen, so dass diese in jedem EU-Staat gültig sind und die europaweite Anerkennung der Berufsqualifikation von Asylwerbern erleichtert wird?

2. Wenn ja, wann und in welcher Form soll das passieren?

3. Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2014)

In den derzeit bestehenden Rechtsvorschriften sind die Verfahren für die Anerkennung der Qualifikationen lediglich für Personen mit Anspruch auf internationalen Schutz explizit festgelegt. Gemäß Artikel 28 der Anerkennungsrichtlinie ([1]) stellen die Mitgliedstaaten sicher, „dass Personen, denen internationaler Schutz zuerkannt worden ist, und eigene Staatsangehörige im Rahmen der bestehenden Verfahren zur Anerkennung von ausländischen Diplomen, Prüfungszeugnissen und sonstigen Befähigungsnachweisen gleich behandelt werden". Ferner sind die Mitgliedstaaten „bestrebt, den uneingeschränkten Zugang von Personen, denen internationaler Schutz zuerkannt worden ist, die keine Nachweise für ihre Qualifikationen beibringen können, zu geeigneten Programmen für die Beurteilung, Validierung und Bestätigung früher erworbener Kenntnisse zu erleichtern".

Für Asylbewerber sind keine expliziten Vorschriften festgelegt. Die anwendbaren Vorschriften dürfen jedoch den in Artikel 15 der in der Neufassung der Richtlinie über Aufnahmebedingungen ([2]) garantierten effektiven Arbeitsmarktzugang nicht beeinträchtigen. Das Fehlen spezifischer Vorschriften zur Erleichterung der Anerkennung von Dokumenten bezieht sich auf die Tatsache, dass es nicht klar ist, ob einem bestimmten Asylbewerber schließlich ein Anspruch auf internationalen Schutz zuerkannt wird und ihm daher die mit diesem Status verbundenen besonderen Erleichterungen zustehen.

([1]) Richtlinie 2011/95/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 13. Dezember 2011 über Normen für die Anerkennung von Drittstaatsangehörigen oder Staatenlosen als Personen mit Anspruch auf internationalen Schutz, für einen einheitlichen Status für Flüchtlinge oder für Personen mit Anrecht auf subsidiären Schutz und für den Inhalt des zu gewährenden Schutzes, ABl. L 337 vom 20.12.2011, S. 9-26.

([2]) Richtlinie 2013/33/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 26. Juni 2013 zur Festlegung von Normen für die Aufnahme von Personen, die internationalen Schutz beantragen, ABl. L 180 vom 29.6.2013, S. 96-116.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003767/14
to the Commission
Heinz K. Becker (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Standardised assessments for the professional qualifications of asylum-seekers

There are a large number of highly qualified and well trained people among the asylum-seekers in Europe. These people could also be of — previously overlooked — potential for the European labour market, which is recruiting these types of skilled workers to some extent.

People who are fleeing from somewhere often only have a few possessions with them; certificates and evidence of formal qualifications are certainly not to be found in the hand luggage of these people.

In so far as there is access to the labour market in accordance with the national law applicable in each case, asylum-seekers should therefore be given the opportunity to establish or document claimed qualifications by means of a corresponding assessment in the European host country.

1. Does the Commission intend to set uniform standards for the procedures, scope and nature of such qualification assessments for asylum-seekers so that they are applicable in every EU state and so that it becomes easier to recognise the professional qualifications of asylum-seekers throughout Europe?

2. If so, when and in what form is this supposed to take place?

3. If not, why not?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The current *acquis* explicitly regulates the procedures for recognition of qualifications only for beneficiaries of international protection. According to Article 28 of the Qualification Directive ([1]) Member States 'shall ensure equal treatment with nationals in the context of existing recognition procedures for foreign diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications'. Furthermore, Member States 'shall endeavour to facilitate full access for beneficiaries of international protection who cannot provide documentary evidence of either qualifications to appropriate schemes for the assessment, validation and accreditation of their prior learning'.

No explicit rules are laid down for asylum-seekers. However, the applicable procedures must not compromise the effectiveness of access to the labour market guaranteed in Article 15 of the recast Reception Conditions Directive ([2]). The absence of any special rules facilitating recognition of documents relates to the fact that it is not clear whether a particular asylum-seeker will ultimately be recognised as a beneficiary of international protection and thus be entitled to the special facilitations attached to that status.

([1]) Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted; OJ L 337, 20.12.2011, p. 9-26.

([2]) Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection; OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p. 96-116.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003768/14
an die Kommission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(27. März 2014)

Betrifft: Zukünftige Gestaltung von OLAF und Zusammenarbeit mit Europäischer Staatsanwaltschaft

Die Europäische Kommission hat am 17. Juli 2013 einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates betreffend die Agentur der Europäischen Union für justizielle Zusammenarbeit in Strafsachen (Eurojust) (KOM(2013)0535) sowie einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung des Rates über die Errichtung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft (KOM(2013)0534) vorgelegt und mit einer Mitteilung näher erläutert (MEMO/13/693). In dieser Mitteilung führt die Europäische Kommission auf, dass sie Vorschläge für die Änderung der OLAF-Verordnung ausarbeiten wird.

Die Kommission wird um folgende Auskünfte ersucht:

1. Beabsichtigt die Kommission nach wie vor, einen Verordnungsvorschlag für eine Reform von OLAF vorzulegen? Wenn ja, kann die Europäische Kommission Auskunft über den genauen Zeitplan geben?

2. Kann die Kommission erläutern, inwiefern sich die Rolle von OLAF mit der Errichtung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft ändern wird?

3. Welche Auswirkungen sind für OLAF zu erwarten, falls die Errichtung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft auf eine verstärkte Zusammenarbeit hinausläuft?

Antwort von Herrn Šemeta im Namen der Kommission
(20. Mai 2014)

Die Kommission beabsichtigt, im Juni 2014 einen Vorschlag für eine Verordnung zur Reform des OLAF vorzulegen. Ziel dieser Reform ist die Stärkung der Verfahrensgarantien der von den Untersuchungen des OLAF betroffenen Personen. In diesem Zusammenhang soll ein unabhängiger Prüfer der Verfahrensgarantien eingesetzt werden, der die Beschwerden der von den Untersuchungen des OLAF betroffenen Personen und die Anträge des OLAF auf Vorabgenehmigung der Durchführung bestimmter Untersuchungshandlungen gegen Mitglieder der EU-Organe prüft. Nach der Errichtung der Europäischen Staatsanwaltschaft (EStA) werden das OLAF und die EStA unter Berücksichtigung ihrer jeweiligen Mandate eng zusammenarbeiten. Das OLAF wird für die Durchführung der Untersuchungen, die nicht in die Zuständigkeit der EStA fallen werden, insbesondere administrative Untersuchungen, weiterhin zuständig sein.

Die Kommission verweist den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antwort auf die parlamentarische Anfrage E-9690/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003768/14
to the Commission
Axel Voss (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Future organisation of OLAF and cooperation with the European Public Prosecutor's Office

On 17 July 2013, the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) (COM(2013)0535) and a proposal for a Council regulation on the establishment of a European Public Prosecutor's Office (COM(2013)0534), accompanied by a memorandum (MEMO/13/693) indicating the Commission's intention of submitting amendments to the OLAF regulation.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission still intend to submit a proposal for a regulation on the reform of OLAF? If so, can the Commission indicate exactly when it intends to do so?

2. Can the Commission indicate to what extent OLAF's function will change following the creation of a European Public Prosecutor's Office?

3. What are the likely consequences for OLAF if the creation of a European Public Prosecutor's Office leads to closer cooperation?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

The Commission intends to submit a proposal for a regulation on the reform of OLAF in June 2014, aimed at the further strengthening of procedural guarantees of persons concerned by OLAF's investigations. An external independent Controller of procedural guarantees would be established to examine complaints by all individuals concerned by OLAF's investigations and OLAF requests for prior authorisation to conduct certain investigative measures concerning Members of EU institutions. After the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), OLAF and the EPPO will cooperate closely while respecting their respective mandates. OLAF will remain competent to conduct those investigations which will not fall under the competence of the EPPO, in particular administrative investigations.

The Commission would also invite the Honourable Member to consult its reply to the Parliamentary Question E-9690/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003770/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Support for increasing the bee population across Europe

What support has the Commission made available to beekeepers on a practical level, paying particular attention to knowledge transfer and funding to increase the bee population across Europe? In addition, what research has been carried out, and what practical support has been made available, to protect against the devastating impact of the Varroa mite on bees?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The Commission would refer to its answer to written questions E-000934/2012, E-004248/2012, E-008017/2013, P-012225/2013, E-000835/2014 and E-001536/2014 ([1]) on Commission actions for honeybees.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003772/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Coupled support for beef

Under the current Common Agriculture Policy, which Member States use coupled support for the beef industry, making reference to the number of animals supported and the amount of money allocated? Has the amount of beef produced increased as a result?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

6 Member States are granting coupled support to suckler cows breeding: Belgium, Spain, Croatia, France, Austria, and Portugal.

The maximum number of animals eligible to that support is fixed as follows by Regulation (EC) No 73/2009 ([1]) :

— Belgium: 394 253

— Spain: 1 441 539

— France: 3 779 866

— Croatia: 105 270

— Austria: 375 000

— Portugal: 458 941.

The budgetary ceilings for the suckler cow premium and the additional suckler cow premium referred to in Article 53 of that regulation are established for the calendar year 2013 in Annex 1 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 914/2013 ([2]) as modified by Commission Regulation (EU) No 934/2013 ([3]) as follows:

— Belgium: EUR 96 954 000

— Spain: EUR 287 153 000

— France: EUR 525 622 000

— Croatia: EUR 2 948 000

— Austria: EUR 70 677 000

— Portugal: EUR 88 157 000

The overall beef meat production in the European Union is an aggregate calculated on the basis of the slaughtering of all bovine animals in each Member State, not only suckler cows and including animals subject to intra Union trade. Thus, it is not possible to establish any link between the abovementioned coupled support and that overall quantity that also includes cows not eligible for the EU coupled payments.

([1]) OJ L 30 of 31.1.2009.
([2]) OJ L 252 of 24.9.2013.
([3]) OJ L 257 of 28.9.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003773/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: EU self-sufficiency in food production

Would the Commission indicate how self-sufficient the EU is in terms of food production, and how many days' worth of food the EU has in stock before we would run out?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Honourable Member may refer to the food self-sufficiency statistics available in the Annual Agriculture Statistical Report (tables 3.8.3) that can be consulted in http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/statistics/agricultural/2012/index_en.htm

The stock availability depends on the food kind and its cycle of production. Animal products can be produced adapting to the market needs in a relatively fast way (from weeks to months) while arable crops need to go through their yearly cycle to achieve harvest. In general for cereals (where we are net exporters) EU has a capacity of estimated stocks representing about 10%-12% of its own production, it means from 6 to 8 weeks to face average demand (including the use for animal feed). This is considered sufficient to guarantee at the end of the marketing year the continuity of the supply waiting for the coming harvest.

See the latest food balance sheets published by the Commission (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/markets-and-prices/short-term-outlook/pdf/2014-03_en.pdf).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003774/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Commission's view of dual claims in context of CAP reform

What is the Commission's view on 'dual' claims within the context of the reform of the common agricultural policy?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1307/2013 ([1]) allows that a hectare eligible for the basic payment is subject of an application for any other direct payment as well as for any other aid therefore also Pillar II support save as explicitly provided otherwise.

As regards any situation in which two claimants claim the same parcel for different schemes (Pillar I and Pillar II), for example the farmer renting the parcel claims the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and the owner of the parcel claims a Pillar II payment (such as agri-environment support), these need to be analysed on a case by case basis in view of eligibility conditions and requirements applicable to each scheme.

([1]) OJ L 347 of 20.12.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003775/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Il benessere animale nello zoo di Copenhagen

Dopo l'uccisione e l'autopsia di fronte ad un pubblico di bambini della giraffa Marius, lo zoo di Copenhagen si rende nuovamente noto alle cronache per l'uccisione di quattro leoni suoi ospiti, eliminati per fare spazio ad un nuovo esemplare più giovane che «avrebbe potuto ucciderli» e «per evitare l'endogamia» a detta dei responsabili del centro. Questa brutale rottamazione avviene evidentemente senza una vera programmazione da parte dello zoo, né una seria ricerca di strutture che possano ospitare gli animali per evitare che siano macellati (tra i 20 e i 30, ogni anno).

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Non ritiene che le uccisioni di animali compiute dallo zoo di Copenhagen vadano contro la legislazione europea sul benessere animale?

2. Come suggerisce di evitare l'endogamia nei centri di cattività degli animali?

3. Non crede che sia necessario pensare ad una seria legislazione sugli zoo in Europa, visto che gli animali sono esseri senzienti e non fenomeni da baraccone?

4. Può chiarire quali sono le normative europee che regolano il controllo della popolazione degli zoo?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003864/14
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Animali in cattività

Nelle ultime settimane hanno suscitato molto scalpore alcune soppressioni di animali avvenute allo zoo di Copenaghen. Il caso più impressionante ha riguardato la brutale uccisione, con dissezione pubblica, di una giraffa, mentre nei giorni scorsi sono stati eliminati quattro leoni, probabilmente a causa di una carenza di spazi e nell'impossibilità di una loro diversa collocazione.

Secondo quanto riportato dal direttore dell'Associazione europea degli zoo e degli acquari (EAZA), ogni anno negli zoo europei vengono uccisi fra i tremila e i cinquemila animali, e le cause di queste eliminazioni non sono sempre chiare.

Può la Commissione indicare se esistano delle norme dell'Unione a tutela degli animali in cattività ospitati in diverse strutture aperte al pubblico?

Vi sono motivi, che non siano di carattere veterinario o sanitario, per i quali questi animali possono essere eliminati?

Può infine confermare i dati riportati circa il numero di uccisioni degli esemplari in cattività negli zoo europei?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 maggio 2014)

La Commissione rinvia gli onorevoli parlamentari alla risposta congiunta data alle interrogazioni scritte E-001351/2014 e E-001471/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003775/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Animal welfare in Copenhagen zoo

After slaughtering and conducting an autopsy on the giraffe Marius in front of an audience of children, Copenhagen zoo is again in the headlines for slaughtering four of its lions to make room for a new, younger male that 'could have killed them' and 'to prevent inbreeding', according to the zoo's management. This cruel annihilation is clearly taking place in the absence of any real planning by the zoo or any serious search for places that could take the animals so that they do not have to be slaughtered (20-30 animals are destroyed every year).

1. Does the Commission believe that the animal slaughter carried out by Copenhagen zoo goes against European legislation on animal welfare?

2. How does it suggest that inbreeding can be avoided in centres that keep animals in captivity?

3. Does it not believe that we need to consider introducing strict legislation on zoos in Europe, given that animals are sentient beings and not exhibits in a freak show?

4. Can it explain what European regulations govern population control in zoos?

Question for written answer E-003864/14
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(28 March 2014)

Subject: Animals held in captivity

Copenhagen Zoo has attracted fierce public criticism over the past few weeks for destroying several of its animals. The most shocking case concerned the brutal killing and public dissection of a giraffe, while four lions have also been destroyed in the last few days, probably because of a lack of space and an inability to house them elsewhere.

According to a report produced by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), between three and five thousand animals are killed every year in European zoos, with the reasons for these culls not always being clear.

Can the Commission state whether there are any European Union regulations in place that protect animals in captivity held in various establishments open to the public?

Are there any reasons, other than veterinary or health grounds, permitting the culling of these animals?

Lastly, can it confirm the data concerning how many animals held in captivity are culled in European zoos?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Members to its joint answer to Written Questions E-001351/2014 and E-001471/2014 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003776/14
alla Commissione
Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Valutazione d'impatto ambientale della SS 106, SS 534

Nella prima decade di febbraio 2014 è stata redatta e consegnata la progettazione definitiva da parte dell'ANAS S.p.A. per intraprendere i lavori della «SS 106 Jonica con la SS 534 a Roseto Capo Spulico Megalotto 3», che interesserebbero in un primo tratto la piana di Sibari e in un secondo tratto il territorio che si estende da Trebisacce a Roseto Capo Spulico (provincia di Cosenza).

Tale progetto definitivo si discosta da quello preliminare che era stato approvato dal CIPE e dalla Commissione speciale VIA. In particolare, il progetto definitivo presenta un'evidente discrasia dal punto di vista dell'impatto ambientale rispetto al precedente, che dava particolare importanza alle ripercussioni che il tracciato avrebbe avuto sul paesaggio, privilegiando la scelta di gallerie naturali e lasciando i pianori intatti.

Inoltre, è evidente che le scelte del progetto definitivo non rispettano l'impostazione di base del preliminare e lo stesso parere favorevole sul preliminare della Commissione speciale VIA del Ministero dell'Ambiente e Tutela del Territorio.

Sulla base di quanto detto, può la Commissione accertare se la progettazione in questione è conforme alle direttive 85/337/CEE del 27 giugno 1985 e 2001/42/CE in materia ambientale previste dall'UE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 maggio 2014)

In base alla direttiva VIA ([1]), le compenti autorità nazionali devono procedere ad una valutazione d'impatto ambientale di taluni progetti che potrebbero ripercuotersi in modo significativo sull'ambiente, prima che detti progetti siano autorizzati.

A quanto risulta alla Commissione, la versione definitiva della proposta di progetto «Megalotto 3» per la costruzione di una strada in Calabria è stata presentata nel mese di febbraio 2014 ma non è stata ancora autorizzata ([2]).

La direttiva VAS ([3]) si applica a piani e programmi e non a progetti come questo.

([1]) Direttiva 2011/92/UE, concernente la valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di determinati progetti pubblici e privati (GU L 26 del 28.1.2012), cha ha codificato la direttiva 85/337/CEE citata dall'onorevole parlamentare.
([2]) http://www.stradeanas.it/index.php?/content/index/arg/106_ionica
([3]) Direttiva 2001/42/CE concernente la valutazione degli effetti di determinati piani e programmi sull'ambiente (GU L 197 del 21.7.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003776/14
to the Commission
Gianni Pittella (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Assessment of the environmental impact of the SS 106 and SS 534 roads

During the first ten days of February 2014 ANAS SpA. drew up and submitted the final version of the 'Megalotto 3' project (works on the SS 106 Jonica and SS 534 roads in Roseto Capo Spulico), which will initially affect the Sibari Plain and at the second stage an area stretching from Trebisacce to Roseto Capo Spulico (province of Cosenza).

The final project is different from the preliminary project approved by the CIPE (Interministerial Economic Planning Committee) and the EIA Special Committee. The discrepancy is especially marked in terms of environmental impact; the earlier version paid particular attention to the potential landscape effects of the road design and accordingly favoured the options of using natural tunnels and leaving upland plains untouched.

Furthermore, the options selected for the final project are manifestly at odds with the approach underlying the preliminary project and with the favourable opinion on it delivered by the EIA Special Committee set up within the Ministry for the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea.

In the light of the foregoing, can the Commission ascertain whether the project planning concerned is in accordance with EU environmental directives, namely Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 and Directive 2001/42/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

Under the EIA Directive ([1]), competent national authorities must carry out an environmental impact assessment of certain projects likely to have significant impacts on the environment, before such projects can be authorised.

The Commission understands that the final version of the 'Megalotto 3' project proposal for a road in Calabria was submitted in February 2014 but that it has not yet been authorised ([2]).

The SEA Directive ([3]) applies to plans and programmes and not to projects such as this one.

([1]) Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 26, 28.1.2012), which has codified Directive 85/337/EEC mentioned by the Honourable Member.
([2]) http://www.stradeanas.it/index.php?/content/index/arg/106_ionica
([3]) Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (OJ L 197, 21.7.2000).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita P-003777/14
à Comissão
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(27 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Programa Europa para os Cidadãos (2014-2020)

O Tratado de Lisboa comporta mecanismos para aproximar a União dos seus cidadãos, nomeadamente através da introdução de uma nova dimensão de democracia participativa e procurando fomentar o debate transfronteiras sobre as políticas da UE.

Num momento em que a crise económica, financeira e social acentua uma crise de confiança, importa mais do que nunca sensibilizar os cidadãos sobre o papel e as realizações da União, procurando reforçar o sentimento de pertença à União.

O Programa Europa para os Cidadãos insere-se no âmbito de um conjunto de medidas que visam reforçar a capacidade de participação cívica, tentando mobilizar os cidadãos a nível local para o debate sobre questões concretas de interesse europeu, procurando sensibilizá-los para o impacto das políticas da União no seu dia a dia e dando-lhes a possibilidade de poderem influenciar o rumo da Europa.

O programa para o período de 2014-2020 prevê o apoio, por um lado, a organizações de interesse geral europeu e a parcerias e redes transnacionais e, por outro, a organizações que promovam debates e atividades sobre os valores europeus e a História da Europa.

Dada a relevância que este programa deverá ter na promoção da cidadania europeia e em aproximar a Europa dos cidadãos, gostaria que a Comissão esclarecesse:

1. Qual é o atual ponto de situação e se existe efetivamente um atraso na entrada em funcionamento deste programa?

2. Confirma que esse atraso resulta do facto de o Reino Unido ainda não ter completado o respetivo procedimento nacional (como exigido nos termos do artigo 352.° do TFUE), o que impede que o programa possa ser adotado pelo Conselho?

3. Como pensa a Comissão dar execução a tão importante programa de promoção da cidadania europeia, executando os recursos que para esse fim foram aprovados pela autoridade orçamental?

Resposta dada por Viviane Reding em nome da Comissão
(22 de abril de 2014)

1. O programa «Europa para os cidadãos» não entrou em vigor em 1 de janeiro de 2014, como previsto, porque o Parlamento do Reino Unido não pode concluir a sua aprovação até finais de 2013, tal como exigido pela legislação nacional para que o representante do Reino Unido no Conselho vote a favor da adoção de um ato jurídico com base no artigo 352.° do TFUE.

2. Logo que o Parlamento do Reino Unido tenha dado a sua aprovação, o programa pode ser adotado pelo Conselho e entrar em vigor no dia da sua publicação no Jornal Oficial.

3. Se o programa for adotado, o primeiro prazo para a apresentação de projetos será publicado no sítio Web da Comissão pouco depois. A Comissão tenciona avançar com a seleção dos projetos e com as convenções de subvenção correspondentes até ao final do ano civil em curso, a fim de executar na íntegra os recursos atribuídos pela autoridade orçamental para 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003777/14
to the Commission
Carlos Coelho (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020

The Lisbon Treaty contains mechanisms to bring the Union closer to its citizens, particularly by adding a new dimension to participative democracy and seeking to encourage cross-border debate on EU policies.

At a time when the economic, financial and social crisis is exacerbating a crisis of trust, it is more important than ever to foster citizen's awareness of the Union's role and achievements, to try to strengthen their feeling of belonging to Europe.

The Europe for Citizens programme forms part of a package of measures aimed at building civic participation capacities by trying to mobilise citizens at local level to join the debate around specific issues of European interest, boost their awareness of the impact Union policies have on their daily life and give them the chance to influence Europe's future.

The programme for the 2014-2020 period provides for support to organisations of general European interest and to transnational partnerships and networks, on the one hand, and to organisations which promote debate and activities centred on European values and history, on the other.

Given the important role which should be played by this programme in promoting European citizenship and bringing Europe closer to its citizens, could the Commission clarify the following:

1. What is the current state of play, and has there in fact been a delay in the start of this programme?

2. Can it confirm that this delay is due to the fact that the United Kingdom has not yet completed its national procedure (pursuant to Article 352 TFEU), which is preventing the programme from being adopted by the Council?

3. How does the Commission intend to carry out this important programme to promote European citizenship, implementing the resources allocated to it by the budgetary authority?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

1. The Europe for Citizens Programme has not entered into force on 1 January 2014 as foreseen because the approval by the national Parliament of the United Kingdom which is required by national legislation for the UK representative in Council voting in favour of the adoption of a legal act based on Article 352 TFEU, could not be achieved before the end of 2013.

2. As soon as the national Parliament of the United Kingdom has given its approval, the programme can be adopted by Council and will enter into force the day of its publication in the Official Journal.

3. If the programme is adopted the first application deadline for projects will be published on the Commission's website shortly afterwards. The Commission intends to proceed with the project selection and associated grant agreements before the end of the current calendar year, so that the resources which the Budgetary Authority allocated for 2014 will be fully implemented.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003778/14
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(27. März 2014)

Betrifft: Mautflucht in der Grenzregion Deutschland — Österreich/Mautabschnitte im Grenzbereich zweier Staaten

Seit kurzem wird in der Grenzregion Deutschland-Österreich von österreichischer Seite aus auch der Abschnitt von der Grenze bis zur ersten Autobahnabfahrt mauttechnisch kontrolliert. Dies führt zu einem massiven Anstieg des Ausweichverkehrs auf Landstraßen im Grenzbereich, insbesondere in der Gemeinde Kiefersfelden.

Daher bitte ich um die Beantwortung der folgenden Fragen:

1. Ist die Kommission über die Mautflucht aufgrund der zum 1.12.2013 eingeführten Kontrollen im Abschnitt zwischen Kiefersfelden und Kufstein-Süd informiert?

2. Welche Maßnahmen plant die Kommission, um die Verkehrssituation in der Gemeinde Kiefersfelden zu entlasten?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(12. Mai 2014)

Die EU-Rechtsvorschriften über Straßenbenutzungsgebühren betreffen ausschließlich schwere Nutzfahrzeuge (> 3,5 Tonnen) ([1]). Den Mitgliedstaaten steht es frei, auch für Personenkraftwagen Mautsysteme einzuführen, solange dadurch das Verbot der Diskriminierung aus Gründen der Staatsangehörigkeit, das in Artikel 18 AEUV festgelegt ist, nicht verletzt wird.

1. Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass auf dem Abschnitt zwischen Kufstein-Süd und der deutschen Grenze seit dem 1. Dezember 2013 Vignettenkontrollen an Pkw (< 3,5 Tonnen) durchgeführt werden. Nach Kenntnis der Kommission hatte die ASFINAG bisher keine solchen Kontrollen, die in die nationale Zuständigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten fallen, auf diesem Abschnitt durchgeführt, obwohl in Österreich grundsätzlich auf allen Autobahnen Vignettenpflicht besteht.

2. Die Kommission ist der Ansicht, dass im Einklang mit dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip auf den unteren Verwaltungsebenen wirksame Maßnahmen ergriffen werden können, um den mit den Mautsystemen verbundenen möglichen Nachteilen für grenznahe Städte und Gemeinden entgegenzuwirken. Dazu zählen beispielsweise örtliche Fahrverbote und Mautregelungen für Landstraßen, allerdings unter der Bedingung, dass solche Maßnahmen diskriminierungsfrei angewendet werden.

([1]) Richtlinie 1999/62/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Juni 1999 über die Erhebung von Gebühren für die Benutzung bestimmter Verkehrswege durch schwere Nutzfahrzeuge, ABl. L 187 vom 20.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003778/14
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Toll evasion in the German-Austrian border region/toll charges on sections of motorway near the border

Austrian toll charging has recently been extended to include a section of motorway between the border with Germany and the first junction on the Austrian side. This is causing a huge increase in the volume of traffic on secondary roads in the border area, particularly in the municipality of Kiefersfelden, as drivers seek to evade the toll.

1. Has the Commission been briefed about the toll evasion that has resulted from the introduction, on 1 December 2013, of charging on the section of motorway between Kiefersfelden and Kufstein South?

2. What steps does the Commission plan to take to ease the traffic situation in Kiefersfelden?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

EU legislation on road charging only applies to heavy goods vehicles (> 3.5 tonnes) ([1]). Member States are as such free to introduce road charging schemes for passenger cars while respecting the fundamental principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality enshrined in Article 18 TFUE.

1. The Commission is aware of the introduction of controls of vignettes of passenger cars (< 3.5 tonnes) on the segment between the German border and Kufstein-Süd as of 1 December 2013. It is the understanding of the Commission that such controls, which fall under the national competence of the Member States, had not been carried out by Asfinag before on the segment although vignettes in principle are applicable to all Austrian motorways.

2. The Commission believes that, in line with the subsidiarity principle, effective measures can be taken at lower administrative levels to address possible negative side effects of road charging schemes for towns and villages in border areas. Such measures may include local traffic bans and local road pricing schemes, provided that they are applied in a non-discriminatory way.

([1]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003779/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(27. März 2014)

Betrifft: Aussetzung der Befreiung von der Pkw-Maut im deutsch/österreichischen Grenzgebiet

Die österreichische Autobahngesellschaft Asfinag hat entschieden, die seit dem Jahr 1996 ausgesetzten Vignettenkontrollen für das Autobahnstück zwischen der deutsch/österreichischen Grenze und der Autobahnabfahrt Kufstein-Süd am 1. Dezember 2013 aufzuheben und erneut Mautkontrollen durchzuführen.

Diese Wiedereinführung der Mautkontrollen hat zur Folge, dass täglich eine Vielzahl an Autofahrern, die aus Deutschland in Richtung Österreich in die nah gelegenen Ski- und Erholungsgebiete fahren, bereits vor der deutsch/österreichischen Grenze die Autobahn verlassen und die Ortsdurchfahrt Kiefersfelden benutzen.

Seitdem leiden die Einwohner von Kiefersfelden unter einem erhöhten Unfallrisiko verbunden mit zusätzlichem Lärm und Abgasen.

Kürzlich hat daher die Gemeinde Kiefersfelden eine Eingabe an die Europäische Kommission und an das Europäische Parlament verabschiedet, in der sie dazu auffordert, eine europäische Lösung für dieses nicht selten auftretende Problem der „Mautflucht" zu finden.

1. Ist der Kommission diese Eingabe bekannt?

2. Wie wird die Kommission diese Eingabe weiter behandeln?

3. Was hält die Kommission von einer Initiative zur Erleichterung des kleinen Grenzverkehrs?

4. Teilt die Kommission die Auffassung, dass derartige Vorhaben dem europäischen Gedanken zuwider laufen, insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund, dass Europaregionen (Euregios) geschaffen worden sind, um die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit in den grenznahen Regionen zu fördern?

5. Welche weiteren Möglichkeiten zieht die Kommission in Betracht, um grenznahe Städte und deren Bewohner vor Mautflüchtlingen, unnötigen Lärm- und Abgasbelästigungen zu schützen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2014)

1. Ja.

2. Schon 2011 hat die Kommission in ihrem Weißbuch zum Verkehr ([1]) die Auffassung vertreten, dass Straßennutzer für die mit der Nutzung der Straße verbundenen Kosten und für externe Kosten aufkommen sollten. In Fragen der Straßennutzungsgebühren orientiert sich die Kommission am Verursacherprinzip. Damit unterstützt die Kommission Regelungen zur Erhebung von Straßennutzungsgebühren, sofern sie mit dem EU-Recht ([2]) und dem Verbot der Diskriminierung aus Gründen der Staatszugehörigkeit ([3]) vereinbar sind. Das österreichische Mautsystem wurde mit dem EU-Recht für vereinbar befunden, nachdem infolge des von der Kommission 1997 eingeleiteten Vertragsverletzungsverfahrens Kurzzeit-Vignetten zu angemessenen Preisen eingeführt wurden. Die Anwendung dieses Systems auf das gesamte Autobahn- und Schnellstraßennetz in Österreich, einschließlich der Grenzabschnitte, erscheint vereinbar mit dem einschlägigen EU-Recht. Das Problem der Mautvermeidung ist eine Frage der Umsetzung von nationalem Recht, das nicht unbedingt eine Lösung auf EU-Ebene erfordert.

3. Die Erleichterung des kleinen Grenzverkehrs steht im Einklang mit den verkehrspolitischen Zielen der EU. Initiativen, die dies unterstützen, müssen anhand ihrer jeweiligen Vorzüge beurteilt werden und den entsprechenden EU-Vorschriften genügen.

4. Die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass Straßennutzungsgebühren die europäische Integration nicht behindern, solange die einschlägigen EU-Vorschriften, vor allem das Nichtdiskriminierungsgebot, eingehalten werden.

([1]) Weißbuch „Fahrplan zu einem einheitlichen europäischen Verkehrsraum — Hin zu einem wettbewerbsorientierten und ressourcenschonenden Verkehrssystem" (KOM(2011)144).

([2]) Richtlinie 1999/62/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Juni 1999 über die Erhebung von Gebühren für die Benutzung bestimmter Verkehrswege durch schwere Nutzfahrzeuge, ABl. L 187 vom 20.7.1999, S. 42-50, in ihrer geänderten Fassung, und Richtlinie 2004/52/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 29. April 2004 über die Interoperabilität elektronischer Mautsysteme in der Gemeinschaft, ABl. L 166 vom 30.4.2004, S. 124-143.

([3]) Artikel 18 AEUV.

5. Im Einklang mit dem Subsidiaritätsprinzip können auf den unteren Verwaltungsebenen wirksame Maßnahmen ergriffen werden, um den mit den Mautsystemen verbundenen möglichen Nachteilen für grenznahe Städte und Gemeinden entgegenzuwirken. Dazu zählen beispielsweise örtliche Fahrverbote und Mautregelungen für Landstraßen, allerdings unter der Bedingung, dass solche Maßnahmen diskriminierungsfrei angewendet werden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003779/14
to the Commission
Angelika Niebler (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: End of toll charge exemption in German-Austrian border area

The Austrian motorway-operating company Asfinag decided, as of 1 December 2013, to reinstate its toll sticker system on the stretch of motorway between the German-Austrian border and the Kufstein South junction, which had been toll free since 1996.

As a result, every day, large numbers of drivers heading from Germany to the nearby ski and leisure resorts in Austria are leaving the motorway before the border and taking the secondary road through the municipality of Kiefersfelden.

For the people of Kiefersfelden, this has heightened the risk of road accidents and has increased levels of traffic noise and pollution from exhaust fumes.

For these reasons, the Kiefersfelden municipal authority recently made a submission to the Commission and the European Parliament, calling for a European solution to the problem of toll avoidance to be found, given that such situations are not uncommon.

1. Is the Commission aware of the submission?

2. If so, what further action does it intend to take in response to it?

3. Would the Commission be amenable to an initiative to facilitate light cross-border traffic?

4. Does the Commission agree that the type of situation seen in this case is at odds with the concept of European integration, especially given the creation of European regions (Euregios) as a means of fostering cooperation between areas on either side of national borders?

5. What other steps is the Commission considering to protect towns and villages in border areas, and the people who live there, from the impact of toll evasion with the associated nuisance of noise and fumes?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. Yes.

2. As indicated in the 2011 transport White Paper ([1]), the Commission's view is that road users should pay for the costs related to the use of the road and for the external damage caused. The application of the user-pays and of the polluter-pays principles guides the Commission's road charging policy. The Commission hence supports road user charging schemes as long as they respect the relevant EU rules ([2]), including the non-discrimination principle on grounds of nationality ([3]). The Austrian vignette scheme has been found to be compatible with EU legislation following an infringement case launched by the Commission in 1997 after which proportionately-priced short-term vignettes were introduced. Its application to the total motorway and expressway network of Austria including the border sections appears to be in line with the relevant EU rules. The issue of toll avoidance is a question of implementation of national legislation which does not necessarily require a solution at Union level.

3. Facilitating light cross-border traffic is in line with EU transport policy objectives. Initiatives which help in this respect must be judged in light of their individual merits and have to respect relevant EU rules.

4. The Commission is of the opinion that road pricing does not cause an obstacle to European integration as long as the relevant EU rules are respected, in particular the non-discrimination principle.

([1]) White Paper Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, COM(2011) 144 final.
([2]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, p. 42-50 as amended and Directive 2004/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems in the Community, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004, p. 124-143.
([3]) Article 18 TFEU.

5. In line with the subsidiarity principle, effective measures can be taken at lower administrative levels to address possible negative side effects of road charging schemes for towns and villages in border areas. Such measures may include local traffic bans and local road pricing schemes, provided that they are applied in a non-discriminatory way.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003780/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Safety of household furnishings

Could the Commission state what requirements for beds and other household furnishings exist under EC law that are intended to curb any risk to human health from chemicals used in the products or from fires arising from them?

Is the Commission able to provide an assessment of the degree to which these standards are met both by products manufactured within the EU and by those imported from outside?

What additional measures can be taken to ensure that products available on the EU market are in compliance with the requirements?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

No specific EU requirements exist as regards flammability characteristics of household furnishing ([1]). However, general obligations on the safety of products marketed in the Union are set out in the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD) ([2]).

Where necessary, the Commission can take measures against specific chemicals. As an example, the Commission adopted in 2009 a temporary ban on dimethylfumarate (DMF) in consumer products ([3]), a chemical that was widely used in leather furniture such as sofas and can provoke strong allergic reactions. This ban was followed by a permanent measure adopted under REACH ([4]). Statistics of the EU rapid alert system RAPEX show that enforcement measures against products containing DMF have significantly decreased since 2009 which prove that the ban on DMF is effectively met by domestic and imported products.

In February 2013, the Commission presented proposals to revise the Product Safety and Market Surveillance legislation. They aim, among others, at strengthening the enforcement of product safety rules by Member States' authorities within the internal market and at the external borders ([5]). The two legislative proposals are subject to the ordinary legislative procedure and the European Parliament adopted its legislative resolution on 15 April 2014.

([1]) As regards furniture fire safety, the voluntary standards EN 1021-1 and 2: 2006 (assessment of the ignitability of upholstered furniture) and EN 597-1 and 2:1994 (testing of ignitability for upholstered beds and mattresses) exist.
([2]) Directive 2001/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 December 2001 on General Product Safety.
([3]) Commission Decision 2009/251/EC requiring Member States to ensure that products containing the biocide dimethylfumarate are not placed or made available on the market.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 412/2012 of 15 May 2012 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/archive/safety/psmsp/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003781/14
to the Commission
Kay Swinburne (ECR)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Food programme in Sankwia, the Gambia

I have recently been contacted by a charity in my constituency which supports the village of Sankwia in the lowest region of the Gambia, focusing, in particular, on facilitating access to education for children.

The charity has raised concerns with me that a food programme to feed school children (designed to take the place of the World Food Programme, under which children are provided with a meal in school) has not yet started and may have been prevented from starting.

Is the Commission aware of the food programme referred to by my constituents?

Is this food programme supported by the EU, or has EU support for this food programme been provided for at any point?

Can the Commission also confirm whether there are any other EU initiatives — ongoing or planned — dedicated to the provision of food and education for children in the Gambia?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(7 May 2014)

The EU has been supporting school feeding initiatives in the Gambia for some years. In 2009 the World food Programme (WFP) received a European Development Fund (EDF) grant of around EUR 2.1 million ([1]), which ended in 2011. In 2013 The Gambia secured a further EUR 7.6 million grant from the EU Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Initiative (10th EDF) to tackle MDG 1c — Food Security. The new programme is being implemented with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and WFP. FAO is working towards increasing agricultural production with a view to eventually making it available for school feeding, *inter alia*. WFP is implementing a school feeding programme which provides daily school meals to targeted pre and primary school children. The programme is on-going and is planned to be completed in 2016.

Sankwia is outside the regions funded by the EU programme. In Sankwia there is an Early Child Development (ECD) school and no Lower Basic School (LBS). As per agreement with the Ministry of Education, WFP supplies food commodities only to LBSs, although ECDs in the same premises as the LBSs also benefit from the programme. As this is not the case in Sankwia, there is no Government or WFP school feeding programme. At times private collections are used to feed children at the Sankwia EDC.

The EU is contributing to acute malnutrition management in the Gambia through a EUR 15 million regional grant to Unicef (out of which EUR 268 275 was allocated to The Gambia in 2013).

The Commission plans to continue placing a focus on agriculture for food security and nutrition in the draft Gambia National Indicative Programme under the 11th EDF. Moreover, the ECHO regional food security expert has undertaken a mission to assess the food security situation in Gambia.

([1]) Vulnerability Identification and Targeted Urban Food for Education programme.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003782/14
do Komisji
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Rosnąca liczba imigrantów w Unii Europejskiej

Liczba ludności świata wzrasta, szczególnie w Afryce oraz Azji i, według szwedzkich naukowców, wzrośnie do 8 miliardów. Według tych badań, liczba ludności Europy osiągnie nie więcej niż około jednego miliarda. Rezultatem tego braku równowagi będzie prawdopodobnie większa liczba imigrantów w Unii Europejskiej. Jak Unia przygotowuje się na ten napływ ludności?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarz Cecilię Malmström w imieniu Komisji
(12 maja 2014 r.)

Wprowadzono już liczne inicjatywy w celu zapewnienia, że migracja do UE jest dobrze zarządzana i osiągnięto postępy w dziedzinie legalnej migracji, azylu, zarządzania granicami, zapobiegania nielegalnej imigracji, zwalczania handlu ludźmi oraz zaspokajania potrzeb grup szczególnie wrażliwych, a także integracji obywateli państw trzecich. Szczegółowe informacje na temat ostatnich wydarzeń w dziedzinie imigracji i azylu można znaleźć w sprawozdaniu rocznym na temat imigracji i azylu, które jest przyjmowane co roku w drugim kwartale ([1]).

Wizja Komisji dotycząca przyszłego planu działań w dziedzinie spraw wewnętrznych została przedstawiona w komunikacie „Otwarta i bezpieczna Europa: realizacja założeń" ([2]) przyjętym przez Komisję w marcu 2014 r. i ustalającym priorytety na przyszłe lata.

([1]) Ostatnie wydanie: COM(2013) 422 final z 17.6.2013.
([2]) COM(2014) 154 final z 11.3.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003782/14
to the Commission
Filip Kaczmarek (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Rising numbers of immigrants in the European Union

World population is growing, especially in Africa and Asia, and, according to studies from Sweden, will rise to 8 billion. According to these studies, the population of Europe will rise to no higher than about 1 billion. This imbalance will probably result in greater numbers of immigrants in the European Union. How is the Union preparing for such an influx of people?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

Several initiatives have already been put in place to ensure that migration to the EU is well managed, and progress has been achieved in the areas of legal migration, asylum, border management, action against irregular immigration, steps addressing trafficking in human beings and the needs of vulnerable groups, as well as integration of third-country nationals. Detailed information regarding the most recent developments in the area of immigration and asylum can be found in the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum, which is adopted every year in the second quarter ([1]).

The Commission's vision on the future agenda of Home Affairs has been presented in the communication 'An open and secure Europe: making it happen' ([2]), adopted by the Commission in March 2014 and setting the priorities for the years to come.

([1]) Most recent edition: COM(2013) 422 final of 17.6.2013.
([2]) COM(2014) 154 final of 11.3.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003783/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Definition of Areas of Natural Constraint

Unfortunately, under the requirements laid down by the Commission defining Areas of Natural Constraint, many areas of Northern Ireland which are quite clearly disadvantaged may be removed from the list, and the consequences for many farmers would mean the end of their businesses. I would ask the Commission to reconsider its position and to visit Northern Ireland to see first-hand the challenges facing less-favoured areas that may lose out under the redesignation of Areas of Natural Constraint.

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The designation of areas facing significant natural constraints is based on biophysical criteria which were originally developed by an independent board of European scientists and adjusted after a detailed scrutiny by experts from all Member States. These criteria and their thresholds should reflect the possible significant natural constraints to which agriculture is exposed in Europe. In the light of the CAP reform, Member States shall carry out the designation of those areas in line with Article 32 of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 ([1]). Furthermore, it is in the nature of biophysical criteria that certain areas, in which significant natural constraints have been documented, the handicap has been overcome. Therefore, a fine-tuning exercise has to be carried out with the purpose to exclude such areas.

As a result of the above process, only farmers in areas facing significant natural constraints who incur income loss and additional costs in their production should receive compensation payments.

For those areas which can no longer be considered as constraints, Member State may grant phasing out payments to farmers over a period of maximum 4 years. Furthermore, there is a range of rural development measures from which areas losing their status of being constraint could benefit e.g. support can be granted for farm modernisation and/or restructuring, knowledge transfer, advisory services and also support for farm and business development.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p.487.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003784/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: UN International Day for the Right to the Truth

Today (24 March 2014) is the UN International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims. As an MEP representing Northern Ireland, it is right that I should today raise the issue of the many victims of terrorist violence at home and of their right to the truth. These victims, who have conducted themselves with the utmost dignity, should not be forgotten for the sake of convenience. They deserve not only to know what happened to their loved ones, whose right to life was denied, but also to see those who waged a decade-long terrorist campaign against the civilian population of Northern Ireland, most notably the IRA, face justice for their crimes.

Can the Commission detail what it is doing for those in Northern Ireland, and those affected by Republican terrorism in the rest of the UK, who were victims of terrorist atrocities and have yet to receive the truth or justice they so deserve?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The Commission is very cognizant of the pain and suffering brought upon the families of victims of terrorism, regardless of who or what inspires it, and recognises the long-term traumatic impact of such tragedies on households and relatives. The Commission aims to support these families in their grieving process, as exemplified by the designation of 11 March as the European Day on Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism.

In addition to the funding of projects, the Commission aims to enhance the representation of victims' interests at European Union level, and raises awareness among European citizens in order to strengthen European solidarity with victims of terrorism. Victims of terrorism have an important place in the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN). The RAN's overall objective is to facilitate preventative cooperation, and to share experience and lessons learned amongst practitioners involved in countering violent extremism. One of the eight subgroups of the RAN is specifically devoted to the 'voices of victims of terrorism' and is mainly composed of associations of victims of terrorism, including from Northern Ireland. Within this group, the RAN offers the opportunity to play an active role in prevention of radicalisation leading to terrorism or violent extremism.

Directive 2012/29/EU establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of all victims of crime, including victims of terrorism. On the basis of individual assessment of victims' needs, a whole range of special measures will be put in place to protect and support vulnerable victims. The Commission is taking all necessary steps to ensure that this directive is properly implemented by Member States within the deadline set by 16 November 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003785/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Impact of tensions in Ukraine on cereal prices

What impact may the current tensions in Ukraine have on cereal prices and on EU landowners in the country, and how does the Commission intend to protect farmers against such risks?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

Ukraine is an important exporter of cereals and an increase of around 10 — 15 EUR/t of the world prices for wheat and maize was noted when the tensions in Ukraine increased. The current price level is for a large share also deemed to be sustained by climatic conditions.

According to public authorities and traders, Ukraine has continued their exports and the port activity in the Black Sea region is continuing as normal.

Ukraine risks having a lower grain harvest in 2014 due to a lack of credits and rising fuel and fertiliser costs. The grains most concerned are maize and soybeans as they are exclusively planted in spring and need more imported inputs.

In order to help stabilise Ukraine's economy, the Union has granted autonomous trade measures in favour of Ukraine. These trade preferences are identical to those foreseen in the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. As far as the agri-food sector is concerned, these measures imply full liberalisation of over 80% of EU agri-food tariff lines, and specific treatment, notably tariff rate quotas, for the remaining sensitive products, such as cereals including quotas at zero duty of 950 000 tonnes for soft wheat, 250 000 tonnes for barley and 400 000 tonnes for maize.

The Common Agricultural Policy includes various instruments such as market measures and direct payments which could help the EU farmers deal with possible price volatility due to the Ukraine crisis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003786/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: EU definition of standard output

Can the Commission explain what its definition of standard output is and how it is calculated for agriculture production under the redesignation of the Areas of Natural Constraint? What other economic factors could be taken into account instead of standard output?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

1. At the latest from 2018, Member States will have to provide a new delimitation for areas receiving payments due to the fact that they are facing significant natural constraints. According to Article 33 of the regulation (EU) 1305/2013 ([1]), the delimitation will be based on eight biophysical criteria. For areas, in which significant natural constraints have been documented, but have been overcome, a fine-tuning exercise has to be carried out with the purpose to exclude such areas.

The Standard output is used as one of the criteria for fine- tuning. It is defined as the average monetary value of the agricultural output at farm-gate price, in euro per hectare or per head of livestock. There is a regional Standard Output coefficient for each product, as an average value over a reference period (5 years). Standard Output coefficients are available in the Eurostat database.

2. Another criterion linked to the result of production to be used could be Gross Value Added (GVA) — the value of output minus the value of the goods and services consumed as inputs by the production process (excluding fixed assets).

Other criteria for fine-tuning are yields and livestock density. The Member States have to identify those fine-tuning criteria which correspond to their production; however, the criteria must be relevant, transparent and based on statistical evidence.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003787/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Support for low-paid workers

In my constituency, Northern Ireland, a recent study published by the Nevin Economic Research Institute found that one in six workers in our region of the UK are low-paid.

Can the Commission detail what steps it has taken and will take to support Member States in tackling poverty and securing better wages for EU citizens, given the economic downturn?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission monitors the Member States' performance in meeting the Europe 2020 targets including for reducing the number of people in or at risk of poverty by at least 20 million by 2020. It offers policy guidance, including through 212 Employment package and the 2013 Social Investment Package. For the third year running, it has issued recommendations relating to poverty and social exclusion and in-work poverty in the framework of the European Semester. Setting minimum wages at appropriate levels -in respect of country specific situations and national practices of wage setting- and ensuring that all contractual arrangements give access to the same set of social rights are important policy measures to prevent poverty among workers ([1]). Reducing the taxation and social contributions for low-wage earners are also very important to achieve this objective.

The Commission has also proposed that at least 25% of the cohesion budget for 2014-20 be allocated to investments in people and employment and social policy reform through the European Social Fund, and that at least 20% of that amount be earmarked for social inclusion in each Member State.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003788/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: EU approach to air pollution

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 7 million people died in 2012 from causes linked to air pollution. The WHO findings also identified a link between air pollution and heart disease, respiratory problems and cancer. Whilst most of these deaths were in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific region, it would be remiss of us in Europe not to take note.

In this context, can the Commission respond to the following queries:

1. What success has the Commission had in reducing air pollution in Europe?

2. What further measures are being undertaken by the Commission to ensure that European air remains clear and safe?

3. Is the Commission doing anything to assist or encourage work towards cleaner air in those regions where pollution is proving most fatal?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The European Environment Agency has recently assessed the effects of EU air pollution policy ([1]). It found that emissions from most key pollutants have been significantly reduced and that some improvements have been recorded in air quality. Nevertheless, the impact assessment for the 2013 Clean Air Policy Package ([2]) showed that there are still major challenges to human health from poor air quality in the EU and in particular due to high exposure to airborne particles.

The Clean Air Policy Package includes proposals for new legislation on national emissions ceilings and on medium scale plants, as well as measures to improve the effectiveness of existing legislation such as the Ambient Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EU. On the same day the Commission also presented the 2013 'Urban Mobility Package ([3])' which calls on Member States to provide more support to cities to improve urban mobility — a major source of urban air pollution.

The Commission encourages work towards improved air quality in many regions with severe air pollution. For key countries in the vicinity of the EU, support is provided for awareness raising and capacity building through the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument ([4]), and for China through the specific Policy Dialogue Support Instrument. In addition, there is active engagement within multilateral and international organisations, such as UNEP and its Climate and Clean Coalition and the UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

([1]) EEA Report 9 2013, http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2013
([2]) Commission Clean Air Policy Package http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm
([3]) Commission Urban Mobility Package http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/urban/ump_en.htm
([4]) EU Regulation 232/2014 http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0027:0043:EN:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003790/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Raising awareness of breast cancer

This week I, like many in the UK, became aware through the media of the inspiring story of Kris Hallenga. Kris is a vibrant young woman aged 28, diagnosed with terminal breast cancer at the age of 23. Since then she has set up her own charity, CoppaFeel!, to raise awareness of the illness, encourage women to self-check and make sure that young women are aware that it is not only older women who are affected, as the stereotype may suggest. Ultimately, she hopes that through this other women will spot cancer early on and have it treated before it becomes terminal.

In this context, what is the Commission doing on a European level to raise awareness of breast cancer in two areas:

1. the signs and symptoms to look out for, encouraging self-checking?

2. helping younger women understand that it can affect them?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

Addressing cancer is a priority of EU health policy.

The 2003 Council Recommendation on cancer screening sets out the principles of best practice in the early detection of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer. Mammography screening for breast cancer in women aged 50 to 69, in accordance with European guidelines on quality assurance in mammography, is among the screening tests which fulfil the requirements of the recommendation. The Commission will be reporting later this year on progress made by the Member States in implementing cancer screening programmes according to the abovementioned Council Recommendation.

The Commission has undertaken initiatives to raise awareness on cancer, specifically targeted at young people. For example, the European Code against Cancer is promoted on all relevant occasions, such as the European Week Against Cancer, held annually in May.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003791/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Maps of proposed Areas of Natural Constraint

Which Member States have submitted maps of the proposed Areas of Natural Constraint, in line with the requirements laid down by the Commission?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that all the Member States have submitted their new delimitation maps of areas facing significant natural constraints. However, the delimitation maps of areas facing significant natural constraints provided by some Member States were still reflecting the Commission's initial proposal for a new rural development regulation post 2013. Therefore, those maps have a preliminary character.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003792/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Violations of fundamental freedoms in Ethiopia

It emerged recently that the Ethiopian Government has used imported technology and systems to hack into the computers and telephones of political opponents. It is thought that the motivation for this activity was to silence critics and dissent.

In this context, can the Commission detail what efforts are being made at EU level to ensure that the fundamental freedoms of speech, association and the press are upheld in Ethiopia in light of recent events?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

The EU is aware of the recent report from Human Rights Watch accusing the Ethiopian Government of using its monopolistic control over Internet and mobile technologies to censor criticism and stifle dissent.

In general, the EU is concerned by the constrained political space in Ethiopia and by restrictions on freedoms of speech, association and the press. The recent arrests of nine bloggers and journalists, on 25 and 26 April, add to this concern.

The EU repeatedly shares its concerns on human rights and fundamental freedoms with the Government, including at the highest levels, notably during Article 8 political dialogue meetings. The EU Delegation is also systematically monitoring trials of journalists and opposition members.

The EU also attempts to improve the human rights situation in the country through targeted development assistance, including through the European Instrument for Decomcracy and Human Rights and the European Development Fund. The latter has been used to support key governance institutions such as the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman, and the Justice Organs Professionals Training Centre.

The EU will continue to closely follow the human and political rights situation in Ethiopia and to raise its concerns with the Ethiopian Government at the appropriate level.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003793/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Lift of export ban on diamonds from Côte d'Ivoire

Next month, Côte d'Ivoire is expected to lobby the UN to lift an export ban on diamonds from the country. It was one of the countries from which infamous 'blood diamonds' used to fund conflicts originated, and the only one where a UN ban is still active.

Whilst noting that it is no doubt very positive that conditions have improved there and conflict has ceased, as supported by the approval received from the Kimberley Process in November 2013, can the Commission reassure us by outlining what checks the EU has in place to guard against diamonds from conflict areas, or other natural resources used to fund conflicts such as those in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, entering our markets in future?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

The final report of the Group of Experts appointed by the Sanctions Committee of the UN to monitor restrictive measures on Côte d'Ivoire, which was released on April 14th 2014, states that the diamonds embargo has never been effective in preventing diamonds to be smuggled out of Côte d'Ivoire and that this illegal trade continues to finance the military capacity of former zone commanders of the ex rebellion.

Given that Côte d'Ivoire has fulfilled the Kimberly Process minimum requirements, the best way to reduce the smuggling of rough diamonds and its exploitation by former warlords is lifting the UN embargo to allow Côte d'Ivoire to bring those involved into the legal chain of custody and thereby introduce transparency in the sector and re-join the legitimate rough diamond trade.

As the chair of the working group on monitoring, the EU plays an active role in the Kimberley Process and will help ensuring that the full return of Côte d'Ivoire into the KP Certification Scheme (KPSC) will contain mechanisms to avoid that this trade continues to benefit former combatants and eventually fuel future conflicts.

Furthermore, the EU: i) finances a project to increase the number of alluvial diamonds entering the formal chain of custody, while improving the benefits accruing to diamond mining communities; ii) supports cross-border cooperation in the region to tackle smuggling, foster law enforcement and safeguard government revenues.

The lifting of the diamonds embargo was eventually decided by the UN Security Council Resolution 2153 of April 29th 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003794/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Murders by al-Qaeda in Yemen

It has recently been reported that 20 soldiers of the Yemeni Army were killed in an attack by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in the province of Hadramaut in eastern Yemen.

In light of these murders, can the Commission detail what efforts are being made to combat the threat of Islamic extremists in this part of the world, and to protect young people from the overtures of such terrorist groups?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

The EU co-sponsored the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and is an active partner of Yemen in its political transition. Recognising that security remains one of the biggest challenges for the Yemen's transition, the EU has initiated cooperation with the Ministry of Interior with a view to its reform and the creation of a legitimate, service-oriented civil security apparatus. Additionally, EU support to regional approaches to enhance law enforcement and combat terrorism and piracy continue to include Yemeni authorities as key partners.

These measures have been accompanied by work with civil society and international organisations to understand the roots of local conflicts, to support traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, to train community mediators and facilitators and to combat violent extremism.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003795/14
au Conseil
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(27 mars 2014)

Objet: Renforcement de la sûreté nucléaire

Les États membres discutent actuellement au Conseil de la révision du cadre communautaire pour la sûreté nucléaire des installations nucléaires (modification de la directive 2009/71/Euratom du 25 juin 2009). Le Parlement européen, simplement consulté, adoptera son rapport sur la proposition de directive le 2 avril 2014 en session plénière.

Parallèlement, le Conseil a adopté, le 10 mars, une décision adressant à la Commission des directives en vue de la négociation des modifications de la convention AIEA sur la sûreté nucléaire lors de la sixième réunion d'examen de la convention, qui se tient du 24 mars au 4 avril à Vienne.

Le Conseil pourrait-il expliquer comment ces deux processus de négociation au niveau européen (directive «sûreté») et au niveau international (convention AIEA) sont coordonnés afin d'assurer cohérence et efficacité?

Réponse
(19 mai 2014)

Lorsqu'il a adopté la décision du Conseil adressant à la Commission des directives en vue de la négociation des modifications de la convention sur la sûreté nucléaire dans le cadre de la sixième réunion d'examen des parties contractantes à ladite convention, le Conseil s'est assuré que les directives de négociation étaient conformes à l'acquis Euratom.

En outre, la décision du Conseil prévoit que la Communauté, pleinement représentée dans le processus de négociation destiné à modifier la convention, devrait faire en sorte que les modifications éventuelles soient compatibles avec les objectifs des dispositions du traité et avec le droit dérivé.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003795/14
to the Council
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Strengthening of nuclear safety

In the Council, the Member States are currently discussing the revision of the Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations (amendment of Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2009). The European Parliament, which is simply being consulted, will adopt its report on the draft directive in a plenary session on 2 April 2014.

In parallel, on 10 March the Council adopted a decision issuing directives to the Commission for the negotiation of amendments to the IAEA Convention on Nuclear Safety at the Sixth Review Meeting for the Convention, which is being held from 24 March to 4 April in Vienna.

Could the Council explain how these two processes of negotiation at European level ('safety' directive) and at international level (IAEA Convention) are being coordinated so as to ensure that they are consistent with one another and effective?

Reply
(19 May 2014)

When adopting the Council Decision issuing directives to the Commission for the negotiation of amendments to the IAEA Convention on Nuclear Safety at the Sixth Review Meeting for the Convention, the Council ensured that the negotiation directives were consistent with the Euratom *aquis*.

Moreover, the Council Decision stipulates that the Community, fully represented in the negotiating process for the amendment of the Convention, should ensure that any amendments are compatible with the objectives of the provisions of the Treaty and with secondary legislation.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003796/14
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(27 mars 2014)

Objet: Négociation commune de l'Union européenne pour les achats du gaz

Les répercussions de l'actuelle crise russo-ukrainienne et la question de la dépendance énergétique de l'Union vis-à-vis de la Russie ont été au centre des discussions lors du sommet européen des chefs d'État ou de gouvernement de l'Union, les 20 et 21 mars 2014. Le président du Conseil européen, Herman Van Rompuy, a ainsi insisté sur la nécessité d'évoluer vers une «union énergétique» et le premier ministre polonais, Donald Tusk, a souligné l'importance «d'une stratégie de négociation commune pour les achats du gaz» afin de protéger l'Europe de toute «menace de diktat» de la part de la Russie.

L'idée selon laquelle l'Union doit s'organiser et parler d'une seule voix vis-à-vis de ses fournisseurs de gaz n'est pas nouvelle. Rappelons que Nicolas Sarkozy, président de la République française, avait plaidé en mai 2009 pour la création d'une centrale européenne d'achat du gaz dont les objectifs étaient les suivants: accroître la transparence des contrats gaziers; aider à mieux contrôler les livraisons et le transit; assurer la solidarité des consommateurs face aux fournisseurs; obtenir de meilleures conditions de la part des fournisseurs et mieux maîtriser les prix.

1. Quelles sont les conclusions de l'évaluation menée par la Commission sur la création du consortium «*Caspian Development Corporation*» visant à améliorer les conditions d'achat du gaz dans les pays de la mer Caspienne?

2. De quelle manière la Commission compte-t-elle aider les compagnies privées à s'organiser pour conclure les contrats les plus appropriés permettant d'assurer la sécurité d'approvisionnement aux consommateurs européens?

4. La proposition de création d'une centrale européenne d'achat du gaz et celle du lancement d'une stratégie commune de l'Union pour les achats du gaz seront-elles analysées dans le cadre de l'étude approfondie sur la sécurité énergétique et du plan d'action pour réduire la dépendance énergétique de l'Union, que la Commission présentera d'ici fin juin, à la demande du Conseil européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(17 juin 2014)

1. La Commission a mis arrêté définitivement un modèle actualisé pour le consortium «Caspian Development Corporation» et l'a présenté aux parties concernées. Il appartient aux parties concernées dans la région de décider si elles souhaitent procéder avec le modèle proposé, auquel cas la Commission lancerait un appel à manifestation d'intérêt à l'intention des entreprises du secteur. Un résumé du rapport sera bientôt disponible sur le site internet de la Commission.

2. La Commission ne peut pas intervenir sur le contenu des contrats commerciaux. Cependant, en vertu du règlement (UE) nº 994/2010 ([1]), les entreprises ont l'obligation de fournir des informations essentielles sur leurs volumes contractuels afin que la Commission soit en mesure d'évaluer la situation en matière de sécurité d'approvisionnement à tout moment.

4. La Commission a connaissance de diverses propositions de modèles d'achat commun ou coordonné au niveau européen pour renforcer la sécurité d'approvisionnement de l'UE. La Commission analyse actuellement la question de l'achat commun dans le contexte de la préparation du plan global de réduction de la dépendance énergétique de l'UE demandé par le Conseil européen.

([1]) Règlement (UE) nº 994/2010 concernant des mesures visant à garantir la sécurité de l'approvisionnement en gaz naturel et abrogeant la directive 2004/67/CE du Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003796/14
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Joint negotiation of the European Union for gas purchases

During the summit of Heads of State or Government of the European Union, 20 to 21 March 2014, two questions were at the heart of discussions: the current crisis between Russia and Ukraine, and the EU's dependence on Russia for energy. The President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, therefore stressed the need to develop an 'energy union'. Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, underlined the importance of a 'joint negotiation strategy for gas purchases' in order to protect Europe from any 'threats of diktat' from Russia.

The idea that the EU needs to organise and speak with one voice when dealing with its gas suppliers is not new. Let us remember that, in May 2009, French President Nicolas Sarkozy called for the creation of a European gas purchasing centre with the following aims: increased transparency in gas contracts; help for monitoring deliveries and transit more effectively; consumer solidarity in dealing with suppliers; better conditions from suppliers; and greater control of prices.

1. What are the conclusions of the evaluation conducted by the Commission concerning the creation of the 'Caspian Development Corporation' consortium, which is intended to improve gas purchasing conditions in the countries of the Caspian Sea?

2. How does the Commission intend to help private companies ensure that they sign contracts best suited to guaranteeing security of supply to European consumers?

4. Regarding the proposals to create a European gas purchasing centre, and to launch a joint EU gas purchasing strategy, will they be analysed within the framework of the in-depth study on energy security and action plan to reduce EU energy dependence, to be presented by the Commission by the end of June, at the request of the European Council?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. The Commission has finalised an updated model of the Caspian Development Corporation and presented it to the parties concerned. It is up to the parties concerned in the region to decide if they wish to move ahead with the proposed model, in which case the Commission would launch an expression of interest to companies. A summary of the report will soon be available on the website of the Commission.

2. The Commission cannot intervene in the content of commercial contracts. However, under Regulation 994/2010 ([1]), companies have the obligation to provide critical information about their contracted volumes in order for the Commission to be in a position to assess the security of supply situation at any time.

4. The Commission is aware of various ideas concerning joint or EU level purchasing models to strengthen EU's security of supply. The Commission is analysing the issue of joint purchasing in the context of the preparation of the comprehensive plan for the reduction of EU's energy dependence requested by the European Council.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply and repealing Council Directive 2004/67/EC.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003797/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(27 mars 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Projet d'expulsion des populations arabes d'Israël

Le ministre israélien des affaires étrangères, M. Lieberman, a demandé à ses services juridiques d'étudier la possibilité d'un transfert des citoyens arabes israéliens — soit près d'un cinquième de la population totale du pays — des régions du Triangle et de Wadi Ara vers la Palestine.

Ce transfert d'une partie de la population à l'extérieur des frontières de l'État d'Israël, fondé sur des critères ethniques et nationalistes, s'apparente à un nettoyage ethnique. Ce plan, hautement discriminatoire, va à l'encontre du principe de l'égalité de traitement entre les personnes sans distinction de race ou d'origine ethnique, défendu par l'Union européenne et le droit international.

1. La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est-elle au courant de ce nouveau plan?

2. Par quels moyens diplomatiques entend-elle dissuader le ministre Lieberman de faire entrer en vigueur un plan aussi discriminatoire?

3. Si un tel plan devait être appliqué, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante serait-elle prête à envisager de mettre un terme à l'accord d'association entre l'Union européenne et Israël sur la base de l'article 2 des accords d'association qui établit que «les relations entre les parties, de même que toutes les dispositions du présent accord, se fondent sur le respect des Droits de l'homme et des principes démocratiques qui inspire leurs politiques internes et internationales et qui constitue un élément essentiel du présent accord»?

4. Le principe de l'égalité de traitement entre les personnes sans distinction de race ou d'origine ethnique est-il applicable dans les accords signés entre l'Union et les pays tiers? Qu'en est-il avec l'État d'Israël? La violation de ce principe constitue-t-elle une raison suffisante pour revoir les accords signés avec cet État?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(16 mai 2014)

L'UE a connaissance de la proposition formulée par le ministre israélien des affaires étrangères, M. Lieberman, et de l'avis juridique qu'il a demandé à ses services. Lors d'une récente réunion avec les ambassadeurs européens, M. Lieberman a précisé qu'il s'agissait là d'une opinion personnelle et non d'une mesure politique envisagée par son gouvernement.

Dans le cadre de la coopération établie avec Israël dans les domaines des Droits de l'homme et du droit humanitaire international, et plus particulièrement sur la question de l'égalité de traitement des minorités arabes, l'UE a invité à plusieurs reprises les autorités de ce pays à s'abstenir de toute forme de discrimination et/ou à prendre des mesures à cet égard conformément aux obligations qui lui incombent en vertu du droit international.

L'UE continuera à suivre de près l'évolution de la situation et, le cas échéant, demandera aux autorités israéliennes, dans le cadre qui convient, de mettre leurs pratiques en conformité avec les normes internationalement reconnues.

L'UE est bien consciente des multiples problèmes qui doivent être résolus dans le contexte des négociations de paix actuelles, qui ne pourront aboutir sans la volonté constante des deux parties de négocier de bonne foi.

L'UE n'encourage pas le recours aux sanctions commerciales dans ses relations bilatérales avec Israël. Le commerce est perçu comme un facteur de croissance; par conséquent, des restrictions commerciales ne pourraient être envisagées que si tout autre instrument fait défaut, ce qui n'est pas le cas dans le cadre des relations bilatérales de l'UE avec Israël. L'accord d'association UE-Israël constitue la base juridique du dialogue que nous entretenons avec les autorités israéliennes, notamment sur les dossiers politiques et internationaux, ainsi que sur le respect des Droits de l'homme. L'engagement à l'égard d'Israël constitue le moyen le plus efficace de faire comprendre à nos homologues les préoccupations de l'UE sur les questions de Droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales évoquées par l'Honorable Parlementaire.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003797/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Proposed expulsion of Arab populations from Israel

Arab Israeli citizens represent around a fifth of the country's total population. The Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr Lieberman, has asked his legal services to study the possibility of transferring the aforesaid citizens from the Triangle and Wadi Ara regions to Palestine.

This transfer of part of the population beyond the borders of the State of Israel, on the basis of ethnic and nationalist criteria, resembles an act of ethnic cleansing. This profoundly discriminatory idea runs counter to the principle of equal treatment of persons regardless of race or ethnic origin, a principle protected by the European Union and by international law.

1. Is the High Representative aware of this new plan?

2. What diplomatic means does she intend to deploy to persuade Foreign Minister Lieberman not to implement such a discriminatory plan?

3. If the implementation of such a plan could not be prevented, would the High Representative be prepared to consider ending the association agreement between the European Union and Israel, on the basis of Article 2 of the association agreements that stipulates 'Relations between the parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement'?

4. Is the principle of equal treatment of persons regardless of race or ethnic origin applicable to the agreements signed between the European Union and third countries? Is this the case with the State of Israel? Does violation of this principle constitute sufficient reason to review the agreements signed with the aforementioned state?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The EU is aware of the proposal voiced by FM Lieberman and his request for legal opinion of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Minister Lieberman in a recent meeting with European Ambassadors clarified that this was his personal opinion and not government policy.

In the context of the cooperation with Israel in areas of human rights and international humanitarian law, and more specifically on the issue of equal treatment of Arab minorities, the EU has repeatedly called on Israel to address and/or to refrain from any form of discrimination in accordance with its obligation under international law.

The EU will continue monitoring closely the developments and will call upon Israeli authorities, if and when relevant and in the appropriate format, to bring its practices in line with established international standards.

The EU is well aware of the many difficult issues which need to be solved in the context of the ongoing peace negotiations for which the sustained willingness of both sides to negotiate in good faith will be crucial to its success.

The EU does not promote the use of trade sanctions in the context of bilateral EU-Israel relations. Trade is seen as an element of growth creation and therefore trade and economic bans could only be considered when there is no other instrument at reach, which is not the case on bilateral EU-Israeli relations. The EU-Israel Association Agreement is the legal basis of our ongoing dialogue with the Israeli authorities, including on political and international issues, as well as on respect of human rights. Engagement with Israel is the most effective way to convey to our counterpart the European Union's concerns on matters of human rights and fundamental freedoms referred to by the Honourable Member.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003798/14
alla Commissione
Gianni Pittella (S&D), Mario Pirillo (S&D) e Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Legislazione europea sugli alimenti per sportivi

La direttiva 2009/39/CE, relativa ai prodotti destinati a un'alimentazione particolare, sottoponeva a un apposito regime gli alimenti per gli sportivi di cui al suo allegato I. Il regolamento (UE) n. 609/2013, nell'abrogare la predetta direttiva, ha invece previsto che entro il 20 luglio 2015 la Commissione presenti al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio, previa consultazione dell'EFSA, una relazione sull'eventuale necessità di disposizioni per gli alimenti destinati agli sportivi, accompagnata ove del caso da una proposta legislativa.

Considerata la necessità di informare adeguatamente i consumatori circa la composizione e le modalità di utilizzo di alimenti specificamente formulati per riequilibrare uno sforzo fisico intenso;

preso atto della diffusione nel mercato interno di alimenti rivolti agli sportivi, ma spesso privi dei requisiti previsti dalla previgente normativa tuttora in essere, talora contenenti principi attivi che qualificano tali prodotti come medicinali o «sostanze dopanti»;

tenuto conto dell'esigenza di garantire anzitutto la sicurezza, ma anche l'equilibrio nutrizionale di alimenti destinati all'utilizzo da parte di consumatori che praticano, sia pure sporadicamente, attività sportive;

tenuto conto dell'esigenza di informare in maniera esaustiva i consumatori, anche al fine di prevenire eventuali abusi di consumo e sovradosaggi, nonché di favorire il corretto apporto di nutrienti e micronutrienti nella dieta;

considerato che le disposizioni contenute nei regolamenti (CE) n. 1924/2006 e 1925/2006 risultano carenti rispetto agli obiettivi di cui sopra;

si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se abbia pianificato le consultazioni degli esperti di settore, delle parti sociali interessate e dell'EFSA, al fine di predisporre la relazione da presentare al Parlamento e al Consiglio nei termini previsti;

2. come intenda tutelare i consumatori, in termini di garanzia della sicurezza delle produzioni e di equilibrio nutrizionale degli alimenti per sportivi nel contesto della dieta complessiva;

3. come intenda garantire una corretta informazione del consumatore in merito alle modalità di impiego di alimenti specificamente formulati per coadiuvare la risposta dell'organismo a sforzi fisici intensi, con avvertenze volte a prevenire il loro utilizzo non corretto o eventuali sovradosaggi.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 maggio 2014)

L'articolo 13 del regolamento (UE) n. 609/2013 relativo agli alimenti destinati ai lattanti e ai bambini nella prima infanzia, agli alimenti a fini medici speciali e ai sostituti dell'intera razione alimentare giornaliera per il controllo del peso ([1]) stabilisce che la Commissione, dopo aver consultato l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), presenti al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio una relazione sulla eventuale necessità di disposizioni relative agli alimenti destinati agli sportivi entro il 20 luglio 2015. Tale relazione può essere accompagnata, se necessario, da una adeguata proposta legislativa.

In preparazione della relazione, la Commissione intende incaricare un contraente esterno di effettuare nei prossimi mesi uno studio al fine di raccogliere informazioni relative agli alimenti destinati agli sportivi. Questo esercizio comprenderà l'adeguata consultazione delle parti interessate e delle autorità. Non è possibile al momento prevedere l'esito della relazione.

([1]) GU L 181 del 29.06.2013, pag. 35.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003798/14
to the Commission
Gianni Pittella (S&D), Mario Pirillo (S&D) and Vittorio Prodi (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: European legislation on foods for sportspeople

Directive No 2009/39/EC on foodstuffs intended for particular nutritional uses stated in Annex I that specific provisions would be laid down for foods for sportspeople. In repealing this directive, Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 states instead that, by 20 July 2015, the Commission shall, after consulting the EFSA, present to the European Parliament and to the Council a report on the necessity, if any, of provisions for food intended for sportspeople, accompanied if necessary by an appropriate legislative proposal.

Considering the need to provide consumers with adequate information on the composition and use of foods specifically formulated to meet the expenditure of intense muscular effort;

given the widespread availability on the internal market of foods that are aimed at sportspeople but which often fail to meet the requirements laid down by earlier regulations that are still in force, sometimes containing active ingredients that qualify them as medicinal or 'doping substances';

in view of the need to guarantee the safety primarily but also the nutritional balance of foods intended to be used by consumers who take part, even only occasionally, in sporting activities;

in view of the need to provide consumers with full information, both to prevent incorrect use and overdosing and to encourage the correct balance of nutrients and micronutrients in the diet;

considering that the provisions contained in Regulations (EC) Nos 1924/2006 and 1925/2006 are inadequate in terms of the aforementioned objectives;

we ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Will it be consulting industry experts, the social partners concerned and the EFSA for the purpose of drawing up the report to be presented to the European Parliament and to the Council by the specified date?

2. How does it mean to protect consumers, in terms of guaranteeing the safety of products and the nutritional balance of foods for sportspeople as part of their overall diet?

3. How does it mean to guarantee that consumers are provided with correct information on how to use foods specifically formulated to help the body respond to the expenditure of intense muscular effort, with warnings to prevent their incorrect use or potential overdoses?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 609/2013 on food intended for infants and young children, food for special medical purposes and total diet replacement for weight control ([1]) requires the Commission, after consulting the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), to present to the European Parliament and to the Council a report on the necessity, if any, of provisions for food intended for sportspeople by 20 July 2015. Such a report may, if necessary, be accompanied by an appropriate legislative proposal.

In preparation of the report, the Commission intends to request in the coming months a study to be carried out by an external contractor, in order to gather information related to food intended for sportspeople. This exercise will include appropriate consultation of relevant stakeholders and authorities. The outcome of the report cannot at the moment be anticipated.

([1]) OJ L 181, 29.6.2013, p. 35.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003799/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Accuse di scarsa trasparenza nei negoziati per il Partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti (TTIP)

In concomitanza con il quarto ciclo di negoziati relativi al TTIP si sono tenuti diversi incontri e manifestazioni di protesta a cui hanno partecipato rappresentanti di varie confederazioni sindacali, ONG e centri di ricerca. La mobilitazione della società riguardo ai negoziati in oggetto scaturisce innanzitutto dal desiderio di una maggiore trasparenza, dal momento che le informazioni sul merito delle negoziazioni sono scarse. Una situazione simile si era già verificata in passato per il trattato di libero scambio con il Canada, riguardo al quale, almeno a detta di esponenti della società civile, ancora oggi circola scarsa informazione nonostante sia stato raggiunto un accordo in proposito lo scorso ottobre.

Il TTIP include settori in cui le tariffe commerciali tra Stati Uniti e UE sono già piuttosto basse e dunque si discute soprattutto di una convergenza delle barriere non tariffarie; tuttavia, la scarsa informazione rischia di tenere all'oscuro gran parte dei soggetti che verranno influenzati in prima persona dall'esito dell'accordo. Basti pensare al settore agro-alimentare, in cui gli interessi americani sono ben noti e diversi gruppi ritengono eccessivamente rigide la legislazione europea in materia di protezione dei consumatori e altre misure di tutela.

Concorda la Commissione con l'opinione secondo cui vi sarebbe scarsa trasparenza relativamente ai negoziati? Ritiene che con una maggiore apertura verso la società civile si rischierebbe di esporre informazioni riservate e quindi di compromettere gli accordi?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

Nell'ambito dei negoziati per un partenariato transatlantico su commercio e investimenti (TTIP) con gli Stati Uniti la Commissione si impegna ad essere il più aperta possibile e incoraggia una maggiore apertura nei confronti della società civile. Come in tutti i negoziati, tuttavia, la Commissione ha anche bisogno di costruire un rapporto di fiducia con i propri partner. A tal fine è necessario poter garantire un certo grado di riservatezza. Ciò non ha tuttavia impedito alla Commissione di compiere sforzi senza precedenti per garantire la trasparenza e il coinvolgimento della società civile, consultando e aggiornando direttamente il pubblico di tutta Europa, coinvolgendo membri del Parlamento e governi nazionali in ogni fase, consultando esperti esterni che rappresentino un'ampia gamma di interessi e condividendo con il pubblico il maggior numero di documenti possibile, inclusi quelli relativi alla propria posizione iniziale. Ciò rappresenta un passo senza precedenti nell'ambito dei negoziati commerciali.

Una recente scheda informativa sulla trasparenza nel TTIP contenente maggiori dettagli è disponibile al seguente indirizzo:
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/march/tradoc_152276.pdf

Per quanto riguarda l'accordo di libero scambio con il Canada, a partire dall'importante conquista politica dell'ottobre 2013 la Commissione ha regolarmente aggiornato il comitato della politica commerciale del Consiglio UE, così come la commissione per il commercio internazionale del Parlamento europeo, sui progressi ottenuti relativamente alle questioni legali e tecniche rimaste in sospeso, nonché sul recepimento degli aspetti di tale conquista politica nel testo legislativo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003799/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Accusations of lack of transparency in Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations

The fourth round of TTIP negotiations has been accompanied by various meetings and demonstrations attended by representatives of several trade union organisations, NGOs and research centres. This mobilisation of civil society around the negotiations has been triggered mainly by a desire for greater transparency, since little information has been made available. A similar situation arose around the free trade agreement with Canada, with civil society representatives claiming that little information is available even now, even though a provisional agreement was reached last October.

The TTIP includes industries in which trade tariffs between the US and the EU are already relatively low, which means the discussions concern mainly a convergence of non-tariff barriers. However, the lack of information being divulged means there is a risk that many people who will be directly affected by the outcome of the agreement are being kept in the dark. A prime example is the agrifood industry, in which America's interests are well known, and several groups are claiming that European legislation to protect consumers and other protection measures are too stringent.

Does the Commission agree that there has been a lack of transparency concerning the negotiations? Does the Commission think that greater openness with civil society would involve a risk of revealing confidential information and therefore compromising agreements?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission is committed to be as open as possible and supports greater openness towards civil society, as it negotiates a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the US. However, as in any negotiation, the Commission also needs to build trust with its partners. To do so, it needs to ensure a certain degree of confidentiality. This does not however prevent the Commission from making unprecedented transparency and outreach efforts, by consulting and updating the public across Europe directly; involving MEPs and national governments at every stage; hearing from outside experts representing a wide range of interests; and sharing as many documents as it can with the public, including its initial position papers, which represent an unprecedented step in trade negotiations.

A recent factsheet on transparency in TTIP provides more detail and is available at:
http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/march/tradoc_152276.pdf

As regards the Free Trade Agreement with Canada, since the political breakthrough reached in October 2013, the Commission has regularly updated the EU Council's Trade Policy Committee, as well as the International Trade Committee of the European Parliament on the progress achieved on the remaining open technical and legal issues and on transposing the elements of the political breakthrough into legal text.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003800/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Dati Eurobarometro sulla pratica dell'esercizio fisico da parte dei cittadini europei

Eurobarometro ha di recente rilevato che il 59 % dei cittadini dell'UE non fa mai o quasi mai esercizio fisico, rispetto a un 41 % che fa sport almeno una volta a settimana. L'indagine è stata condotta in tutti i 28 paesi UE tra il 23 novembre e il 2 dicembre 2013 ed ha segnalato un grave livello di inattività nell'Unione, soprattutto nei paesi dell'Europa meridionale e orientale, dove si fa in media meno sport rispetto ai paesi dell'area settentrionale. Il paese più attivo risulta essere la Svezia, con il 70 % degli intervistati che ha affermato di fare ginnastica o sport almeno una volta a settimana, seguita poi da Danimarca (68 %), Finlandia (66 %), Paesi Bassi (58 %) e Lussemburgo (54 %). Record negativo è quello della Bulgaria, dove il 78 % dei cittadini non fa mai esercizio fisico. A salire troviamo Malta (75 %), Portogallo (64 %), Romania (60 %) e Italia (60 %).

L'inattività fisica è un problema da tenere in seria considerazione: l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità la considera come il quarto fattore di rischio di mortalità al mondo e tra i principali fattori di rischio per l'insorgere di malattie cardiovascolari.

Si tratta di dati senza dubbio preoccupanti, che possono avere conseguenze negative sia a livello sociale che economico in diversi Stati membri e nell'UE in generale. In merito a questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire quali siano le principali azioni avviate dall'Unione in materia di promozione dello sport e di uno stile vita attivo?

Risposta di Androulla Vassiliou a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2014)

La Commissione concorda sul fatto che l'inattività fisica sia un problema da prendere seriamente in considerazione e che dai risultati dell'inchiesta Eurobarometro del 2014 emerge un quadro piuttosto inquietante soprattutto se confrontato con le cifre riportate nella precedente indagine del 2010 ([1]).

Su tali questioni, l'attività della Commissione avviene a stretto contatto con l'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità. In una sua raccomandazione del 26 novembre 2013 dedicata alla promozione dell'attività fisica a vantaggio della salute (*health-enhancing physical activity* — HEPA) in tutti i settori, ([2]) il Consiglio invitava gli Stati membri a prendere un'ampia gamma di iniziative e assegnava alla Commissione una serie di compiti di supporto: assistere gli Stati membri nell'adozione di strategie nazionali; promuovere l'avvio di un quadro di verifica dell'attività HEPA; sostenere la formazione e l'addestramento di centri che sviluppino l'HEPA; raccogliere dati e collaborare con l'OMS; redigere ogni tre anni una relazione sui progressi registrati dagli Stati membri.

L'attività sportiva e fisica sarà anche sostenuta attraverso il Programma Erasmus+ (2014-20). «Sostenere l'attuazione degli orientamenti UE in materia di attività fisica, incoraggiare la partecipazione all'attività sportiva e fisica» sarà uno degli obiettivi del programma per il 2015. Il 2015 sarà anche l'anno della prima settimana europea dello sport.

([1]) TNS Opinion & Social (2010): Special Eurobarometer 334 / Wave 72.3: Sport and Physical Activity; TNS Opinion & Social (2014): Special Eurobarometer 412 / Wave EB80: Sport and Physical Activity.
([2]) GU C 354 del 4.12.2013, pagg. 1-5.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003800/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Eurobarometer data on the amount of physical exercise carried out by European citizens

According to a recent Eurobarometer survey, 59% of EU citizens never or hardly ever engage in physical exercise, compared to 41% who play sport at least once a week. The survey was conducted in all 28 countries of the EU between 23 November and 2 December 2013, and highlighted a serious level of inactivity in the Union, especially in southern and eastern Europe, where on average less sport is played than in northern European countries. Sweden turned out to be the most active country, with 70% of those interviewed saying that they exercise or play sport at least once a week, followed by Denmark (68%), Finland (66%), the Netherlands (58%) and Luxembourg (54%). Bulgaria finished bottom of the pile, with 78% of its citizens never engaging in physical activity, a figure only marginally bettered by Malta (75%), Portugal (64%), Romania (60%) and Italy (60%).

Physical inactivity is a problem that needs to be taken seriously: the World Health Organisation considers it to be the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality and among the main risk factors linked to the onset of cardiovascular disease.

The trends revealed by the survey are undeniably alarming, and could have negative consequences, on both a social and economic level, for various Member States and the EU overall. Given this situation, can the Commission please identify the main initiatives that have been launched by the Union in order to promote sport and an active lifestyle?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

The Commission agrees that physical inactivity is a problem that needs to be taken seriously; and that the results of the 2014 Eurobarometer survey represent an unsettling trend, especially when compared with the figures reported in the previous 2010 survey ([1]).

The Commission works closely with the World Health Organisation on these matters. In its Recommendation of 26 November 2013 on promoting health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) across sectors, ([2]) the Council invited Member States to take a wide range of initiatives and assigned several supporting tasks to the Commission: to assist Member States in adopting national strategies; to promote the establishment of a HEPA monitoring framework; to support capacity building and training of national HEPA focal points; to collect data and work jointly with the WHO; and to report every three years on progress made by Member States.

Moreover, sport and physical activity will be supported through the Erasmus+: programme (2014-20). 'Supporting the implementation of the EU physical activity guidelines, to encourage participation in sport and physical activity' will be one of the programme's objectives for 2015. 2015 will also be the year of the first European Week of sport.

([1]) TNS Opinion & Social (2010): Special Eurobarometer 334/Wave 72.3: Sport and Physical Activity; TNS Opinion & Social (2014): Special Eurobarometer 412/Wave EB80: Sport and Physical Activity.
([2]) OJ C 354, 4.12.2013, 1-5.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003801/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Dichiarazioni riguardo alla secessione della Republika Srpska

Il presidente della Republika Srpska, entità a maggioranza serba, ha di recente avanzato l'ipotesi di secessione dalla Bosnia Erzegovina e di conseguente adesione alla Serbia, con un parallelismo con gli eventi ucraini. La proposta è giunta nel contesto dell'incontro con l'ambasciatore russo in Bosnia, occasione in cui il presidente ha appoggiato apertamente la condotta di Mosca in Crimea, definendo legittimo e democratico il referendum dello scorso 16 marzo. Differenze tra i due casi, in realtà, esistono eccome, dal momento che la Republika Srpska non ha mai fatto parte della Serbia e che le due entità bosniache (Republika Srpska e Federacija BiH) sono state create solo nel 1995, con gli accordi di Dayton.

L'attuale rinascita del sentimento secessionista in Europa potrebbe portare a riaccendere il dibattito sulla divisione territoriale ed etnica della Bosnia Erzegovina, oggi principale problema del paese balcanico, con conseguenze per certi versi ancora incerte. In merito a questa situazione può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. ritiene sia possibile un parallelismo tra Ucraina e Serbia in questo senso?

2. Ritiene praticabile la via della secessione della Republika Srpska?

3. Teme che la situazione nei Balcani possa deteriorarsi ulteriormente?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

Per quanto riguarda la Bosnia-Erzegovina, il Consiglio Affari esteri del 14 aprile 2014 ha ribadito «il suo inequivocabile impegno a favore dell'integrità territoriale della Bosnia-Erzegovina in quanto paese sovrano e unito» e «a favore della prospettiva europea della Bosnia-Erzegovina» e ha condannato in tale contesto la retorica e le idee secessioniste e che sono fonte di divisione, ritenendole inaccettabili.

I Balcani occidentali, considerati nel loro insieme, procedono bene nel cammino verso l'UE. La Commissione continuerà a sostenere tutti i paesi della regione per mantenere questa tendenza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003801/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Declarations concerning the secession of Republika Srpska

The president of the Serb-dominated Republika Srpska has recently voiced the possibility of secession from Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore accession to Serbia, in a situation mirroring recent events in Ukraine. The suggestion emerged at a meeting with the Russian ambassador in Bosnia, in which the president openly supported Moscow's behaviour in Crimea, saying that the referendum held on 16 March was legitimate and democratic. There are of course practical differences between the two cases, in that Republika Srpska has never been part of Serbia and the two Bosnian regions (Republika Srpska and Federacija BiH, or Bosnia and Herzegovina) were only created in 1995, under the Dayton Accords.

The current resurgence of secessionist sentiment in Europe could refuel the debate on the geographical and ethnic division of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the main problem currently facing the Balkans, with consequences that remain uncertain in some respects. Can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions on this situation:

1. Does she think there are any parallels to be drawn here between Ukraine and Serbia?

2. Does she think the secession of Republika Srpska is feasible?

3. Is she concerned about a further deterioration of the situation in the Balkans?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina the Foreign Affairs Council of 14 April 2014 reaffirmed 'its unequivocal commitment to the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign and united country' and 'to Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU perspective. In this regard, it condemns as unacceptable secessionist and divisive rhetoric and ideas.'

The Western Balkans as a whole are advancing well on the path towards the EU. The Commission will continue to support all countries of the region so as to maintain this trend.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003802/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Impatto della crisi sui redditi dei cittadini europei

Secondo il Dipartimento delle Finanze italiano, che ha da poco pubblicato le statistiche sulle dichiarazioni dei redditi delle persone fisiche relative all'anno d'imposta 2012, a livello nazionale il reddito complessivo totale dichiarato è pari a 800 miliardi di euro mentre il reddito medio è pari a 19 750 euro (+0,5 % sul 2011).

Dall'analisi per tipologia di reddito emerge che i lavoratori autonomi hanno il reddito medio più elevato, pari a 36 070 euro, mentre il reddito medio dichiarato dagli imprenditori è pari a 17 470 euro, inferiore a quello dichiarato dai lavoratori dipendenti (20 280 euro). Infine, i pensionati dichiarano in media 15.780 euro. I redditi da pensione e da lavoro dipendente hanno conosciuto un aumento generale (+1,7 % e +1,3 %rispettivamente), mentre i redditi legati alle attività imprenditoriali sono calati dell'8 %, così come quelli dei liberi professionisti (-14,7 %).

Guardando alle differenze con l'anno d'imposta 2008, l'ultimo prima della crisi, ci sono ora circa 350mila lavoratori dipendenti in meno, 190 mila pensionati in meno e 32 mila imprenditori in meno. Sono invece aumentati i lavoratori autonomi, 128mila in più rispetto a quattro anni prima.

I dati mostrano come la crisi abbia influenzato pesantemente i redditi dei cittadini, ma soprattutto come siano gli imprenditori e i liberi professionisti quelli che continuano a soffrire maggiormente degli strascichi della congiuntura negativa.

Può la Commissione indicare se dispone di dati aggiornati comparabili provenienti dagli altri Stati membri, oltre che di una media europea in relazione alle variazioni dei redditi dei cittadini europei negli anni della crisi?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(14 maggio 2014)

Gli ultimi dati forniti dall'indagine UE di Eurostat sul reddito e sulle condizioni di vita (EU-SILC) mostrano che nel 2012, nell'UE-28, il valore mediano del reddito disponibile equivalente delle famiglie era in media di 15 510 EUR per le persone di età maggiore di 18 anni. Nel 2007 tale dato risultava di 14 011 EUR (UE-27).

A seconda della condizione lavorativa nel 2012, il reddito disponibile equivalente mediano delle famiglie nell'UE-28 era in media di 18 654 EUR per i lavoratori dipendenti, 14 842 EUR per quelli non dipendenti (compresi imprenditori e altri lavoratori autonomi), 8 734 EUR per i disoccupati e 14 480 EUR per i pensionati .

I dati ripartiti per Stato membro nonché per ciascun anno del periodo 2007-2012 sono disponibili nella banca dati online di Eurostat ([1]).

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database, tabella ilc_di05

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003802/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Impact of recession on European citizens' incomes

The Finance Department at the Italian Ministry of the Economy and Finance recently published statistics from personal tax returns for tax year 2012. These show that total declared income nationwide stands at EUR 800 billion, while average personal income is EUR 19 750 (up 0.5% on 2011).

The breakdown into income types shows that self-employed incomes are highest, averaging EUR 36 070, while the declared income of entrepreneurs averages EUR 17 470, below that declared by employees (EUR 20 280). Finally, pensioners declare an average income of EUR 15 780. There was a general rise in income from pensions (+1.7%) and from employment (+1.3%), while incomes from entrepreneurial activities fell 8%, and incomes of independent professionals were down 14.7%.

A comparison with 2008, the last tax year before the recession, shows that there are now about 350 000 fewer employed workers, 190 000 fewer pensioners and 32 000 fewer entrepreneurs. By contrast, the number of self-employed has risen over the past four years, by 128 000.

The figures reflect the burden of the recession on the incomes of members of the public and that entrepreneurs and independent professionals continue to suffer most from the aftermath of the economic downturn.

Can the Commission state whether it holds comparable updated figures from the other Member States? Does it have a European average for the fluctuations in European citizens' incomes during the recession years?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

According to the latest data available from Eurostat's EU-SILC survey, the median equivalised disposable income of the households was on average EUR 15 510 in the EU28 for people aged 18 and over in 2012. It was EUR 14 011 in the EU-27 in 2007.

Depending on the activity status, the median equivalised disposable income of the households was on average EUR 18 654 for employees, EUR 14 842 for employed persons other than employees (including entrepreneurs and other self-employed), EUR 8 734 for unemployed and EUR 14 480 for retired persons in the EU28 in 2012.

Data by Member State and for every year over the period 2007-2012 are available in the online database of Eurostat ([1]).

(1) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database, table ilc_di05

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003803/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Impatto della crisi sul mercato degli affitti immobiliari

La crisi economica e le conseguenti misure di austerità adottate da taluni paesi europei hanno avuto pesanti ripercussioni anche sul mercato degli affitti immobiliari. In Italia, l'introduzione di nuove tasse sugli immobili ha inciso sui prezzi dei locali commerciali in affitto, proprio mentre gli esercizi affittuari vedevano un calo degli introiti a causa del ridotto potere d'acquisto della propria clientela. Diverse attività commerciali sono state obbligate a chiudere o a trasferirsi in altre aree, nonostante diversi proprietari d'immobili abbiamo ridotto i canoni d'affitto a più riprese.

Può la Commissione chiarire se esistano disposizioni di diritto dell'UE che disciplinano il mercato degli affitti immobiliari?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza di alcuna legislazione UE specifica relativa al mercato della locazione di beni immobili. La prestazione di servizi di locazione immobiliare (ad esempio attraverso agenzie immobiliari) è, in linea di principio, disciplinata dalla normativa generale, come la direttiva sui servizi.

I consumatori dell'UE sono tuttavia tutelati nei confronti di operatori che ricorrono a pratiche sleali. La direttiva 93/13/CEE, concernente le clausole abusive nei contratti stipulati con i consumatori, stabilisce che una clausola contrattuale, che non è stata oggetto di negoziato individuale, si considera abusiva se, malgrado il requisito della buona fede, determina, a danno del consumatore, un significativo squilibrio dei diritti e degli obblighi delle parti derivanti dal contratto. La direttiva 2005/29/CE, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali, vieta ai proprietari di immobili e agli altri operatori commerciali di porre in atto pratiche sleali nei confronti dei consumatori. Essa stabilisce che i professionisti operino nel rispetto degli obblighi di diligenza professionale e che forniscano in modo chiaro, comprensibile e tempestivo le informazioni di cui i consumatori necessitano per prendere una decisione d'acquisto informata, quali le caratteristiche principali e il prezzo di un determinato prodotto.

Per quanto riguarda le imposte patrimoniali, la legislazione dell'UE si applica anche nel settore dell'imposizione fiscale diretta, per quanto con portata limitata. Gli Stati membri hanno ampie competenze per strutturare i propri sistemi fiscali e decidere che cosa tassare, quando e con quale aliquota. Essi devono tuttavia rispettare gli obblighi derivanti dai trattati e non possono compiere discriminazioni sulla base della nazionalità o della residenza nei confronti di cittadini di qualsiasi Stato membro, compreso il proprio, o nei confronti di chi esercita le libertà concesse a norma del TFUE, né possono prevedere restrizioni ingiustificate all'esercizio di tali libertà.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003803/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Impact of the financial crisis on the property rental market

The financial crisis and the austerity measures consequently adopted by several European countries have also had major repercussions on the property rental market. The new property taxes that have been introduced in Italy have had an impact on the prices of leased commercial premises, at a time when letting agencies were already seeing a downturn in their income due to their clients' reduced purchasing power. Many businesses have been forced to close down or move to other areas, even though landlords have repeatedly reduced the rents they charge.

Can the Commission specify whether there are any provisions in EC law that regulate the property rental market?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission is not aware of any specific EU legislation concerning the property rental market. Provision of property rental services (through real-estate agencies, for example) would in principle be covered by general legislation, such as the Services Directive.

Nonetheless EU consumers are protected from traders engaging in unfair practices. Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts provides that any term which has not been individually negotiated shall be regarded as unfair and not binding on the consumer if, contrary to the requirement of good faith, it causes a significant imbalance in the parties' rights and obligations to the detriment of the consumer. Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices prevents land lords and any other commercial operators from engaging in unfair practices towards consumers. Its provisions require traders to operate in accordance with professional diligence and to provide in a clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that consumers need in order to take an informed purchase decision, such as the main characteristics and the price of a product.

As regards property taxes, EU legislation has also a scope, though only a limited,in the area of direct taxation. Member States are largely competent to design their own tax systems, and to decide what to tax, when to tax it and at what rate. However, Member States have to respect their obligations under the Treaties and they are not allowed to discriminate on the basis of nationality or residence against the nationals of any Member State, including their own, or against anyone who exercises the freedoms granted under the TFEU. Nor can they apply unjustified restrictions on these freedoms.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003804/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Incidenza dell'osteoporosi nell'UE e prevenzione

L'osteoporosi, da alcuni definita come una «grave pandemia silenziosa», solo in Italia rende disabili circa 18mila pazienti all'anno in seguito alla frattura del femore. Secondo un recente studio durato quattro anni, in Italia oltre il 33 % della popolazione femminile di età superiore ai 65 anni è colpito da osteoporosi e circa il 47 % da osteopenia, mentre circa il 17 % delle donne è andato incontro ad almeno una frattura non traumatica: il risultato è che oltre tre quarti delle donne sottoposte a densitometria presenta una riduzione della densità ossea secondo i criteri dell'OMS e non ne è consapevole, mentre solo meno di un quinto presenta una massa ossea normale.

Di conseguenza, la sanità nazionale dovrà stanziare ampi fondi, che ad oggi si attestano a 6,8 miliardi di euro ogni 5 anni. Questi costi salgono se si considera che circa la metà delle persone con frattura del femore subisce una forte riduzione della propria autosufficienza, mentre circa un quinto richiede un'ospedalizzazione a lungo termine, in special modo tra i più anziani. Per ridurre questi costi occorrono diversi strumenti, a partire dalla diffusione di informazione e dalla prevenzione, dato che una terapia adeguata può ridurre il rischio di fratture del 50-70 %.

In merito a questa patologia, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se dispone di dati sui tassi di incidenza dell'osteoporosi in altri Stati membri dell'UE e sul tasso medio europeo;

2. se sia possibile finanziare una campagna informativa paneuropea sui rischi e sulla prevenzione dell'osteoporosi, che coinvolga istituzioni pubbliche e ONLUS, tramite l'utilizzo di fondi europei?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

La relazione sulla salute delle donne finanziata dall'UE comprende una sezione sull'osteoporosi in cui si afferma che nel 2000 3,79 milioni di europei hanno subito fratture da osteoporosi, 0,89 milioni delle quali erano fratture dell'anca. La Fondazione internazionale contro l'osteoporosi stima che il numero di fratture dell'anca ogni anno nelle donne sia ampiamente superiore (611 000 casi) rispetto a quello negli uomini (179 000 casi).

Eurostat sta attualmente sviluppando una serie minima di dati per redigere una statistica sulla morbilità specifica in funzione della diagnosi comprendente dati di prevalenza relativi all'osteoporosi. Studi pilota svolti in 16 Stati membri hanno indicato la fattibilità di questo metodo. Il passo successivo sarà un inventario sul grado di preparazione a raccogliere tali dati su base regolare in tutti gli Stati membri.

In linea di principio, i progetti nel settore della prevenzione e della promozione della salute possono essere finanziati attraverso il programma dell'UE per la salute. Le priorità di finanziamento sono fissate nei programmi di lavoro annuali e i progetti vengono selezionati su base competitiva, con la partecipazione di valutatori esterni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003804/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Prevalence of osteoporosis in the EU, and prevention thereof

Osteoporosis is regarded by some as a 'serious yet silent pandemic'; in Italy alone, around 18 000 patients are disabled each year by the condition after having fractured one of their femurs. According to a recent study that was conducted over four years, more than 33% of the Italian female population aged 65 and over suffer from osteoporosis and around 47% from osteopenia, while approximately 17% of all women have suffered at least one non-traumatic fracture. The study found that over three-quarters of all the women who were subjected to a bone densitometry scan had a low bone density (as defined by WHO criteria) without even being aware of it, while less than one-fifth had a normal bone density.

Consequently, Italy's national health systems will have to allocate vast funds to deal with the problem, these funds currently standing at EUR 6.8 billion every 5 years. The costs are increasing all the time, given that roughly one person in every two who fractures a femur sees their levels of independence drop markedly, while around 20% require long-term hospital treatment (with this figure being even higher amongst the elderly). A number of different initiatives will need to be taken if these costs are to be brought down, starting with making information more readily available and favouring prevention over cure, since appropriate treatments can reduce the risk of fractures by 50-70%.

1. In light of the above, does the Commission have any information to hand concerning the prevalence of osteoporosis in other Member States of the EU, as well as the overall European average?

2. Would it be possible to use European funds to finance a Europe-wide information campaign focusing on the risks of osteoporosis and how to prevent it, which would involve public institutions and non-profit organisations?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The EU-funded 'Women's health report' includes a section on osteoporosis where it states that in 2000, 3.79 million Europeans suffered from osteoporosis fractures, of which 0.89 million were hip fractures. The International Osteoporosis Foundation estimates that the number of hip fractures each year in women is substantially higher (611 000 cases) than it is in men (179 000 cases).

Eurostat is currently developing a minimum data set for diagnosis-specific morbidity statistics, including osteoporosis prevalence data. Pilot studies in 16 Member States indicated the feasibility of this approach. The next step will be an inventory on preparedness for such regular data collection in all Member States.

In principle, projects in the area of health prevention and health promotion can be financed through the EU Health Programme. The funding priorities are set out in the annual work programmes and projects are selected on a competitive basis, with the involvement of external evaluators.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003805/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Intercettazioni telefoniche in merito alla crisi ucraina

In una telefonata intercettata e pubblicata su internet, l'ex leader della rivoluzione arancione ucraina si è scagliata con violenza contro il presidente russo, dicendosi «pronta a imbracciare un mitra e sparare in fronte a questo mascalzone». Avrebbe anche proposto di uccidere con armi nucleari gli otto milioni di ucraini di etnia russa, concentrati per lo più nel sud-est del paese.

La donna si è difesa sostenendo che si tratta di una manipolazione ai suoi danni e che in realtà abbia solo detto che «i russi dell'Ucraina sono ucraini», accusando poi i servizi segreti russi dell'intercettazione.

In merito a questa intercettazione telefonica, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire quale sia la sua posizione in merito alle dichiarazioni esternate e se ritiene che queste possano essere state effettivamente manipolate?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

L'AR/VP non si pronuncia su affermazioni non confermate in merito a conversazioni telefoniche private.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003805/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Telephone hacking and the Ukrainian crisis

In a telephone call that was intercepted and then published on the Internet, the former Ukrainian Prime Minister and leader of the Orange Revolution, Yulia Tymoshenko, hurled violent abuse at President Vladimir Putin, stating that she was 'ready to take up arms and shoot that crook in the head'. She also purportedly threatened to use nuclear weapons against Ukraine's ethnic Russian population of eight million, which is mainly concentrated in the south-east region of the country.

Tymoshenko subsequently defended herself by arguing that the telephone call had been manipulated to present her in a bad light and that what she had actually said was 'the Russians in Ukraine are Ukrainians', and went on to accuse the Russian secret service of having hacked and altered the conversation.

In light of the above telephone-hacking incident, can the High Representative/Vice-President clarify what her position is regarding leaked telephone conversations, and whether she believes that they can actually be manipulated?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The HR/VP will not comment on unconfirmed allegations regarding private telephone conversations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003806/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo studio oncologico in Svizzera sull'uso degli infrarossi

Alcuni ricercatori di un politecnico svizzero hanno realizzato un nuovo tipo di particelle, dette plasmoniche, che hanno la funzione di riscaldarsi quando assorbono luce vicina agli infrarossi generando una quantità di calore in grado di uccidere i tessuti tumorali.

Il problema fondamentale è che le nanoparticelle sono sovente realizzate in oro, grazie alla sua tollerabilità e al ridotto rischio di reazioni avverse da parte dell'organismo umano. Normalmente le particelle in oro hanno una forma sferica ma, affinché possano assorbire gli infrarossi per scaldarsi, esse devono essere modellate secondo una forma tubolare che permetta agli atomi di oro che le compongono di adottare una configurazione in grado di assorbire la luce infrarossa e generare calore. Il costo di produzione di simili nanotubi è però altissimo.

Il team è stato in grado di risolvere il problema rivestendo con uno strato di biossido di silicio le varie particelle, in modo da definire esattamente la distanza tra una particella e l'altra e ottenere la proprietà di assorbimento desiderata. Inoltre, il rivestimento permette alle particelle di non deformarsi in seguito al riscaldamento e quindi di non perdere le proprietà assorbenti. Infine, per essere in grado di colpire solo le cellule tumorali, le particelle sono state mescolate con ferro super magnetico in modo che i nanoaggregati possano essere facilmente controllati attraverso campi magnetici.

I test hanno dato risultati estremamente positivi. Hanno infatti mostrato che, esponendo un infrarosso accanto alle nanoparticelle, il calore è stato in grado di uccidere le cellule cancerogene; lo studio, tuttavia, presenta ancora una serie di problematiche relative all'applicazione sul corpo umano.

In merito a quanto detto, l'interrogante chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai quesiti di seguito elencati.

1. È a conoscenza dello studio?

2. Quest'ultimo è stato finanziato tramite fondi europei?

3. A seguito degli ultimi eventi che hanno caratterizzato le relazioni UE-Svizzera, è eventualmente possibile ottenere ulteriori finanziamenti?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio, pubblicato nella rivista scientifica *Advanced Functional Materials*, cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato ([1]) ([2]).

2. Pur non affrontando specificamente la ricerca sulle nanoparticelle plasmoniche in grado di uccidere i tessuti tumorali, il settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (2007-2013) ([3]) ha stanziato circa 270 milioni di euro per sostenere la ricerca di frontiera e collaborativa sul trattamento del tumore, compresi ad esempio la scoperta di farmaci e i metodi di somministrazione; la terapia basata sulle nanoparticelle, sugli anticorpi e sulle cellule; i meccanismi di resistenza e gli effetti collaterali degli approcci terapeutici nonché le prove cliniche per convalidare approcci terapeutici per neoplasie, sia comuni che rare, che colpiscono adulti, adolescenti e bambini.

Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([4]), offrirà ulteriori opportunità di sostenere la ricerca sulle nuove terapie antitumorali nel quadro della sfida per la società «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere» ([5]). Maggiori informazioni sono reperibili sul portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([6]).

([1]) https://www.ethz.ch/en/news-and-events/eth-news/news/2014/03/hot-nanoparticles-for-cancer-treatments.html
([2]) http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/adfm.201303416/abstract
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

3. Come per qualsiasi paese terzo partecipante, i soggetti giuridici svizzeri possono continuare a partecipare a consorzi nell'ambito di Orizzonte 2020. Dato che i soggetti giuridici svizzeri partecipanti non sarebbero finanziati automaticamente attraverso il programma, la Svizzera ha dichiarato di voler sostenere direttamente i partecipanti svizzeri ai progetti di Orizzonte 2020 ([7]).

([7]) http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003806/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: New Swiss cancer research into the use of infrared light

Some researchers at a Swiss university have produced a new type of particle, known as a plasmonic nanoparticle, which heats up when it absorbs near-infrared light, generating a temperature capable of killing cancer tissue.

There is a fundamental problem, however, in that nanoparticles are often made of gold because it is well tolerated by the human body and therefore less likely to cause adverse reactions. Gold nanoparticles are usually spherical but, to ensure they can absorb the infrared light they need to heat up, plasmonic nanoparticles have to be tubular. This allows the gold atoms of which they are made to take on a configuration that enables them to absorb infrared light and generate heat. However, these nanotubes are extremely expensive to produce.

The team was able to solve the problem by coating nanoparticles of various shapes in a layer of silicon dioxide, which makes it possible to determine the precise spacing between nanoparticles and thereby achieve the desired level of light absorption. The coating also prevents the nanoparticles from deforming when they heat up, which means they do not lose their light-absorbing qualities. Lastly, to ensure they attack only cancer cells, the nanoparticles are mixed with superparamagnetic iron oxide so that the nanoaggregates can be easily controlled via magnetic fields.

The test results have been extremely positive and have shown that, after exposure to infrared light, the nanoparticles heat up sufficiently to kill off cancer cells. There are, however, still various problems as regards using the treatment on humans.

In connection with the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of this research?

2. Has this research received European funding?

3. Following recent events concerning relations between the EU and Switzerland, is it likely to receive further EU funding in the future?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the study published in the scientific journal *Advanced Functional Materials*, referred to by the Honourable Member ([1]), ([2]).

2. Although research on plasmonic nanoparticles to kill cancer tissue is not being specifically addressed, the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007- 2013) ([3]) devoted some EUR 270 million to support frontier and collaborative research on cancer treatment, including for instance drug discovery and delivery methods; nanoparticle- antibody- and cell-based therapy; resistance mechanisms and side effects to therapeutic approaches and clinical trials to validate therapeutic approaches for both common and rare adult, paediatric and adolescent cancer indications.

Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]), will offer further opportunities to support research on novel cancer therapies through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge ([5]). More information can be found at the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([6]).

3. As for any third country participant, Swiss entities can continue to participate in consortia under Horizon 2020. While Swiss entities taking part would not automatically be funded through the programme, Switzerland has indicated that it will support directly Swiss participants in Horizon 2020 projects ([7]).

([1]) https://www.ethz.ch/en/news-and-events/eth-news/news/2014/03/hot-nanoparticles-for-cancer-treatments.html
([2]) http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/adfm.201303416/abstract
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([7]) http://www.sbfi.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003807/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Sistema di tassazione del Bitcoin

L'Agenzia delle entrate statunitense ha deciso di trattare i Bitcoin come proprietà e non come valuta, al fine di poter tassare le transazioni effettuate con questa moneta virtuale. Nonostante i recenti scandali legati al Bitcoin, diversi analisti sostengono che il regime fiscale sui guadagni, che sarà lo stesso a cui sono sottoposti i titoli azionari, sarà abbastanza conveniente, tanto da portare a un aumento degli investimenti.

La Commissione può fornire informazioni relativamente ad azioni di questo genere compiute anche in altri Stati membri dell'UE?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(6 giugno 2014)

Vari Stati membri e l'Autorità bancaria europea (ABE) hanno già segnalato una serie di rischi derivanti dall'acquisto, dalla detenzione o dalla negoziazione di monete virtuali. Alcuni Stati membri hanno già adottato misure rispetto ai bitcoin. Ad esempio, la Finlandia non li classifica come moneta ([1]), bensì sembra trattarli come un prodotto di base; nel Regno Unito le transazioni in bitcoin sono esenti da IVA ([2]), mentre in Estonia sono tassate ([3]).

La Commissione segue attentamente gli sviluppi riguardanti le monete virtuali/digitali come i bitcoin. A tal fine essa partecipa attualmente ad un'apposita task force guidata dall'ABE, comprendente la Banca centrale europea (BCE), l'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (ESMA) e vari rappresentanti degli Stati membri, avente l'obiettivo di definire le monete virtuali, di valutare se dovrebbero e possano essere regolamentate e di adottare un approccio concertato a livello UE su tale materia. Le conclusioni di tale task force sono attese entro giugno 2014. Per quanto riguarda il trattamento IVA dei bitcoin, la questione sarà discussa dal comitato IVA nella sua prossima riunione, che si terrà nell'autunno 2014, al fine di assicurare un'applicazione uniforme da parte di tutti gli Stati membri.

([1]) http://www.suomenpankki.fi/en/suomen_pankki/ajankohtaista/muut_uutiset/Pages/uutinen_140114.aspx?hl=bitcoin
([2]) http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/briefs/vat/brief0914.htm
([3]) http://www.emta.ee/index.php?id=35227&highlight=bitcoin

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003807/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: System for taxing Bitcoin

The US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has decided to treat Bitcoin as property rather than currency so that it can tax transactions conducted using the virtual currency. Despite the recent scandals linked to Bitcoin, various analysts maintain that capital gains tax, as applied to stocks and shares, will be advantageous, perhaps even leading to an increase in investments.

Can the Commission provide information on any actions of this kind being taken by EU Member States?

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

Various Member States as well as the European Banking Authority (EBA) have already issued warnings on a series of risks derived from buying, holding or trading virtual currencies. Some Member States have already taken action regarding Bitcoin. For example, Finland does not classify Bitcoin as a currency ([1]), but seems to treat it as a commodity; in the United Kingdom, transactions in Bitcoin are deemed to be exempt from VAT ([2]), whereas in Estonia they are taxed ([3]).

The Commission is following attentively the developments around virtual/digital currencies such as Bitcoin. To this end, the Commission is currently participating in a dedicated task force led by the EBA including the European Central Bank (ECB), European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) and various Member States' representatives with the aim of defining virtual currencies, assessing whether virtual currencies should and can be regulated and adopting a concerted approach at EU level on this matter. The conclusions of this task force are expected at the latest in June 2014. As regards the VAT treatment of Bitcoin, this will be discussed by the VAT Committee at its next meeting, to be held in autumn 2014, in order to ensure a uniform application by the Member States.

([1]) http://www.suomenpankki.fi/en/suomen_pankki/ajankohtaista/muut_uutiset/Pages/uutinen_140114.aspx?hl=bitcoin
([2]) http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/briefs/vat/brief0914.htm
([3]) http://www.emta.ee/index.php?id=35227&highlight=bitcoin

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003808/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Test balistici in Corea del Nord

In seguito al vertice trilaterale Usa — Corea del Sud — Giappone, tenutosi di recente all'Aja, la Corea del Nord risponde in maniera provocatoria con il lancio di due missili a medio raggio nel Mar Giapponese, violando ancora una volta le risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU contro i suoi piani nucleari. L'amministrazione USA ha definito l'azione come una «escalation provocatoria e preoccupante» e ha chiarito che è al lavoro con partner e alleati per adottare misure adeguate contro le provocazioni nord-coreane.

La preoccupazione per la sicurezza internazionale è accresciuta dal fatto che con tutta probabilità si tratta di missili teoricamente in grado di raggiungere il Giappone e la Cina con effetti dal potenziale fortemente destabilizzante per una regione che già vive una serie di tensioni bilaterali latenti.

In merito all'effettuazione di test balistici da parte del governo di Pyongyang in violazione delle risoluzioni ONU, può il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire:

1. se intende condannare il lancio dei due missili effettuato nelle acque del Mar del Giappone;

2. se siano state già adottate decisioni comuni in ambito PESC in relazione ai rapporti tra gli Stati membri e la Corea del Nord?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

1. Il 28 marzo 2014 il portavoce dell'AR/VP ha rilasciato la seguente dichiarazione contro il lancio di missili balistici da parte della RPDC: «L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente esprime profonda apprensione per le azioni di destabilizzazione intraprese dalla RPDC il 26 marzo 2014 e successive ai lanci di razzi delle ultime tre settimane. I lanci di missili di questa settimana costituiscono un'evidente violazione degli obblighi internazionali incombenti alla RPDC, in particolare in forza delle risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU 1718 e 1874.

L'AR/VP esorta la RPDC al rispetto pieno, incondizionato e immediato degli obblighi derivanti dalle pertinenti risoluzioni del Consiglio di sicurezza dell'ONU, dell'accordo globale in materia di salvaguardie dell'AIEA nel quadro del Trattato di non proliferazione nucleare (TNP) e degli impegni verso la denuclearizzazione assunti nel quadro della dichiarazione comune del 2005 nei colloqui a sei. L'AR/VP invita inoltre la RPDC a astenersi dall'intraprendere qualsiasi azione in grado di esacerbare ulteriormente le tensioni regionali.

L'Unione europea è pronta a proseguire l'impegno con i partner internazionali per contribuire a raggiungere la pace duratura e la stabilità nella penisola coreana.»

2. L'UE ha adottato una serie di decisioni PESC che attuano e rafforzano le misure restrittive imposte dall'ONU alla RPDC. Queste azioni contro i programmi della RPDC sulle armi di distruzione di massa e i missili balistici limitano le relazioni di natura economica tra gli Stati membri e la RPDC. Prima dell'entrata in vigore del trattato di Lisbona, l'UE ha adottato una serie di posizioni comuni e di azioni comuni PESC nei riguardi della RPDC, tra cui l'attuazione e il rafforzamento delle misure restrittive imposte dall'ONU e le azioni a sostegno di iniziative specifiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003808/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Ballistic missile testing by North Korea

North Korea has launched two medium-range missiles in the Sea of Japan, in provocative response to the recent trilateral summit held in The Hague between the USA, South Korea and Japan. North Korea's action again violates the resolutions of the UN Security Council against its nuclear plans. The US Administration has described it as a 'troubling and provocative escalation' and has stated that it is working with its partners and allies to adopt suitable measures against the North Korean provocations.

There is every probability that the theoretical range of these missiles extends to Japan and China, which heightens concern for international security. The repercussions have strong potential to destabilise a region already simmering with bilateral tensions.

1. Does the Vice-President/High Representative intend to condemn the Pyongyang government's test launches of the two ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan, in violation of the UN resolutions?

2. Have joint decisions on the Member States' relations with North Korea already been made under the CFSP?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

1. On 28 March 2014 the Spokesperson of the HR/VP issued a statement regarding the DPRK's launches of ballistic missiles. The text of said Statement is hereby enclosed : 'The HR/VP is deeply concerned about the destabilising actions undertaken by the DPRK on 26th March 2014, following the rocket launches over the course of the last three weeks. This week's missile firings represent a clear violation of the DPRK's international obligations as set out in particular under UN Security Council Resolution 1718 and 1874.

The HR/VP calls upon the DPRK to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with its obligations under relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement under the NPT, and its commitments towards denuclearisation under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. She also urges DPRK to refrain from any action that could further increase regional tensions.

The EU is ready to continue working with its international partners, with a view to contributing to the pursuit of lasting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.'

2. The EU has adopted a number of CFSP decisions implementing and reinforcing the restrictive measures against the DPRK imposed by the United Nations. These measures are targeted at the weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes of the DPRK and have restricted Member States' relations with the DPRK in the economic realm. Prior to the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, a number of CFSP common positions and joint actions *re* the DPRK were adopted by the EU, as implementation and reinforcement of restrictive measures imposed by the United Nations and as actions supportive of specific initiatives

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003809/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Accesso a internet nei paesi emergenti

In seguito alla decisione della Turchia di chiudere un noto social network, ritorna ancora una volta in auge il dibattito sull'impegno dell'UE a promuovere i propri valori fondanti e il rispetto dei diritti umani nella comunità internazionale. Uno studio di un istituto di ricerca privato ha rilevato che le popolazioni di diversi paesi emergenti soffrono ancora di una forte restrizione della libertà di accesso a internet, anche se questa è riconosciuta come un diritto umano dalle Nazioni Unite e ampi strati della società civile desiderino un più ampio e libero rispetto di tale diritto, in particolare tra le fasce più giovani. Spesso l'accesso a internet è limitato a causa di problemi di natura economica, ma talvolta si tratta di blocchi deliberati a scopo di censura.

Basandosi su quasi 22.000 interviste con persone provenienti da 24 paesi, l'istituto di ricerca ha estrapolato alcuni dati che mostrano come in taluni paesi emergenti di rilievo, come Argentina o Brasile, più dell'80 % della popolazione desideri un accesso a internet più libero, con un picco dell'89 % in Venezuela.

Il Parlamento europeo si è già occupato di questo tema in passato, in particolare tramite la relazione d'iniziativa «Una strategia di libertà digitale nella politica estera dell'UE» (A7-0374/2012).

In merito a quanto detto, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. come intende dare seguito alla relazione d'iniziativa sopra menzionata;

2. se esistono strumenti e finanziamenti tramite cui l'UE promuove la libertà di accesso a internet nei propri partner internazionali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

L'UE si è impegnata a promuovere e tutelare la libertà di espressione in tutto il mondo ed è consapevole che le innovazioni tecnologiche nel campo dell'informazione e delle comunicazioni hanno creato nuove opportunità, ma anche nuove sfide. L'UE ribadisce costantemente che tutti i diritti umani esistenti offline devono essere tutelati online, in particolare il diritto alla libertà di opinione e di espressione.

La Commissione concorda pienamente con le conclusioni della relazione d'iniziativa del Parlamento europeo intitolata «Una strategia di libertà digitale nella politica estera dell'UE» e ha incluso la maggior parte delle raccomandazioni ivi contenute nel progetto di orientamenti sulla libertà di espressione online e offline, che dovrebbero essere adottati prossimamente dal Consiglio Affari esteri. La Commissione si avvarrà di questi orientamenti per caldeggiare la promozione del diritto alla libertà di espressione online, sostenere gli sforzi profusi dai paesi terzi per aumentare e migliorare l'accesso da parte dei rispettivi cittadini a Internet e ai servizi di comunicazione digitale, nonché l'utilizzo sicuro di quest'ultimi, promuovere l'accesso libero, integrale e non discriminatorio di tutti alle TIC e ai servizi online e adoperarsi contro qualsiasi tentativo di bloccare, disturbare, censurare o chiudere le reti di comunicazione o ogni altra interferenza che violi il diritto internazionale.

Tutti gli opportuni strumenti finanziari esterni dell'UE dovrebbero essere utilizzati per promuovere e tutelare ulteriormente la libertà di opinione e di espressione online e offline. In particolare, la Commissione si avvarrà dello strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR) e del suo meccanismo per la concessione di piccole sovvenzioni a favore di coloro che devono far fronte a una minaccia immediata. Anche gli altri strumenti finanziari geografici e tematici dell'Unione saranno utilizzati per promuovere la libertà di opinione e di espressione in collaborazione con i paesi partner.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003809/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Internet access in emerging economies

The EU's commitments to promoting the values on which it was founded, and respect for human rights in the international community, have once again become topical subjects of discussion since Turkey's decision to shut down a well-known social network. A study by a private research institution has revealed that people in various emerging economies still find their Internet access tightly restricted, even though the United Nations has recognised it as a human right. Wide sectors of society, especially younger people, would like to see this freedom more widely respected. Economic problems are often a constraint on Internet access, but sometimes it is deliberately blocked for the purpose of censorship.

Based on interviews with nearly 22 000 people from 24 countries, the research institution extrapolated data showing that over 80% of the populations of some major emerging economies, such as Argentina and Brazil, would like freer Internet access. The figure peaks at 89% for Venezuela.

The European Parliament has already dealt with this subject, especially via the own-initiative report on a Digital Freedom Strategy in EU Foreign Policy (A7-0374/2012).

1. How does the Commission intend to follow up the own-initiative report referred to above?

2. Do financial and other means exist for the promotion of freedom of Internet access by the EU in its international partner countries?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

The EU is committed to promoting and protecting freedom of expression worldwide and is also conscious that technological innovations in information and communications technology have created new opportunities but also brought new challenges. The EU never seizes to stress that all human rights that exist offline must also be protected online, in particular the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

The Commission fully subscribes to the findings of the European Parliament's own initiative report on a Digital Freedom Strategy in EU Foreign Policy. In this context, it has included most of its recommendations in the draft EU Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline, soon to be adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council. Through these Guidelines, the the Commission will advocate for the promotion of the right to freedom of expression online, support efforts by third countries to increase and improve their citizens' access to and safe use of the Internet and digital communication, promote unhindered, uncensored and non-discriminatory access to ICTs and online services for all and work against any attempts to block, jam, filter, censor or close down communication networks or any kind of other interference that is in violation of international law.

All appropriate EU external financial instruments should be used to further protect and promote freedom of expression online/offline. In particular, the Commission will make use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and its small grants mechanism for individuals facing immediate threat. Other EU geographic and thematic financial instruments will also be used to promote freedom of opinion and expression in cooperation with partner countries.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003811/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Frana nei pressi di Seattle

Lo scorso 22 marzo una frana di proporzioni enormi ha colpito la contea di Snohomish, a circa 90 chilometri da Seattle nello Stato di Washington, causando la morte di almeno 14 persone. Un'area di circa 2,6 chilometri quadrati di terreno si è staccata da una parete montuosa e si è riversata a valle, investendo decine di abitazioni e automobili e invadendo diverse arterie stradali, fino a raggiungere un livello di cinque metri dal suolo. Il bilancio delle vittime potrebbe però aumentare, dal momento che sono oltre cento le persone ancora disperse e le condizioni meteorologiche avverse non facilitano le ricerche.

In merito all'evento descritto, può la Commissione chiarire quanto segue:

— nella frana sono rimasti coinvolti cittadini europei?

— tra i feriti, le vittime o i dispersi vi sono cittadini europei?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

In base alle informazioni fornite dagli Stati membri, non risultano cittadini dell'UE tra le vittime della frana avvenuta nella contea di Snohomish il 22 marzo 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003811/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Landslide near Seattle

On 22 March 2014, a massive landslide occurred in Snohomish County, about 90 kilometres from Seattle in Washington State, USA, killing at least 14 people. A section of mountainside with an area of about 2.6 square kilometres came away and plunged into the valley, destroying dozens of homes and vehicles and leaving roads blocked with debris up to a depth of five metres. The death toll could increase, as more than a hundred people are still missing and poor weather conditions are hampering the rescue operation.

Can the Commission say whether there are any EU citizens among the dead, injured or missing?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

According to information provided by Member States, there were no EU citizen casualties in the Snohomish landslide of 22 March 2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003812/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aumento delle truppe statunitensi in Uganda

L'amministrazione statunitense ha deciso di incrementare il personale e i mezzi militari impegnati in Uganda, nella ricerca di un noto guerrigliero a capo del Lord's Resistance Army. L'Lra ha compiuto, in oltre vent'anni, decine di migliaia tra omicidi, stupri e rapimenti, operando nella Repubblica centrafricana, nella Repubblica democratica del Congo e in Sud Sudan.

Gli Stati Uniti sono presenti sul territorio ugandese in qualità di consiglieri militari e non hanno mandato per ingaggiare le truppe dell'Lra, se non per autodifesa. Già durante il mandato del precedente presidente americano il Pentagono aveva autorizzato l'invio di alcuni consiglieri militari per addestrare le truppe ugandesi e l'attuale amministrazione ha già partecipato in passato alla pianificazione di un attacco contro un avamposto dell'Lra, non riuscendo però a catturarne il leader.

In merito a queste notizie, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dell'incremento di forze statunitensi nello stato africano;

2. se l'UE partecipa in qualche modo alle operazioni o intende pianificare un'operazione in Uganda;

3. se vi sono truppe di Stati membri dell'UE impegnate in Uganda in missioni internazionali?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente che gli Stati Uniti hanno recentemente aumentato il loro contributo, in termini di truppe e di attrezzature, alla Task Force regionale (RTF) dell'iniziativa di cooperazione regionale per l'eliminazione del Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA), guidata dall'Unione africana. L'UE sostiene pienamente l'RCI-LRA, che è stata approvata dal Consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite, e ha recentemente annunciato un contributo di quasi 2 milioni di EUR, da erogare attraverso il Fondo per la pace in Africa, a sostegno dell'iniziativa, ivi compreso il suo quartier generale situato a Yambio, nel Sud Sudan. Gli Stati membri dell'UE non distaccano truppe presso l'RTF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003812/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: US troops reinforced in Uganda

The US Administration has decided to increase its deployment of personnel and military equipment in Uganda, in search of the well-known warlord at the head of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Operating in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and southern Sudan, the LRA has killed, raped and kidnapped tens of thousands of people over a period of more than 20 years.

The US personnel are present on Ugandan territory as military advisers, and have no mandate to engage the LRA combatants, other than in self-defence. During the last US President's term of office, the Pentagon had authorised the deployment of a few military advisers to train the Ugandan troops. The present US Administration has already participated in the planning of one attack against an LRA outpost, but this did not succeed in capturing the LRA leader.

1. Is the Commission aware of the increase in US forces in Uganda?

2. Is the EU participating in these operations in any way, or does it intend to plan its own operation in Uganda?

3. Are there troops of EU Member States involved in international missions in Uganda?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission is aware that the US has recently increased the number of troops and equipment that it contributes to the Regional Task Force (RTF) of the African Union-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA). The EU fully supports the work of the RCI-LRA, which has been endorsed by the UN Security Council. The EU has recently announced that it would provide through the African Peace Facility close to EUR 2 million to support the RCI-LRA, including the RTF headquarters in Yambio, South Sudan. EU Member States do not contribute troops to the RTF.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003813/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovi aggiornamenti sullo spionaggio del Nsa

Nuovi documenti tra quelli forniti dalla talpa del Nsa nell'ambito dello scandalo Datagate denunciano attività di spionaggio dell'agenzia americana ai danni di una nota società cinese operante nel settore delle telecomunicazioni per ricercare eventuali legami tra il colosso cinese e il Partito comunista cinese. I documenti affermano anche che, pur non avendo raggiunto alcun risultato in tal senso, l'Nsa ha potuto recuperare il codice sorgente del software utilizzato dall'impresa, per poi cercare di identificare vettori da usare per eventuali futuri attacchi contro le aziende che fanno uso degli apparati prodotti dall'azienda cinese. Infine, svelano i documenti, gli alti dirigenti della società sarebbero stati messi sotto sorveglianza.

È la Commissione a conoscenza di attività simili mosse ai danni di società europee nel settore della telecomunicazione o in altri settori a alto contenuto tecnologico?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza delle operazioni di spionaggio della NSA nei confronti di società europee operanti nei settori dell'alta tecnologia. Per quanto riguarda le società di telecomunicazioni, la Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla sua precedente risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-011104/2013, in cui si fa riferimento al presunto spionaggio della NSA ai danni di Belgacom.

La Commissione continua a nutrire preoccupazioni circa l'impatto esercitato sui diritti fondamentali dai programmi statunitensi di raccolta di *intelligence* su vasta scala. La Commissione ha indicato le azioni da intraprendere per rispondere alle preoccupazioni dei cittadini, anche nella comunicazione «Ripristinare un clima di fiducia negli scambi di dati fra l'UE e gli USA», adottata il 27 novembre 2013. La Commissione ha inoltre preso atto dei risultati della risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 12 marzo 2014 ([1]).

([1]) Programma di sorveglianza dell'Agenzia per la sicurezza nazionale degli Stati Uniti, organi di sorveglianza in diversi Stati membri e impatto sui diritti fondamentali dei cittadini dell'UE. TC"(A7-0139/2014 — Rapporteur: Claude Moraes)"\l3 \n> * MERGEFORMAT §.
Risoluzione del Parlamento europeo del 12 marzo 2014 sul programma di sorveglianza dell'Agenzia per la sicurezza nazionale degli Stati Uniti, sugli organi di sorveglianza in diversi Stati membri e sul loro impatto sui diritti fondamentali dei cittadini dell'UE, e sulla cooperazione transatlantica nel campo della giustizia e degli affari interni (2013/2188(INI)).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003813/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Further revelations concerning the NSA's spying operations

The former NSA contractor who blew the whistle on the Datagate scandal has recently leaked new documents that implicate the American agency in yet another spying operation, this time against a well-known Chinese telecommunications company, which it secretly infiltrated in order to uncover any possible links it had with the Chinese Communist Party. The documents also reveal that, even though it failed to find any such links, the NSA was still able to get its hands on the source code of the software used by the company, so that it could then go on to identify vectors that would be of use for conducting possible future cyber attacks against the businesses and organisations that purchased the equipment manufactured by the Chinese company. Lastly, the documents also disclose that the senior managers of the company were apparently placed under surveillance.

Is the Commission aware of any similar operations that have been conducted against European companies operating either in the telecommunications sector or in other high-technology sectors?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The Commission is not aware of NSA spying operations against European companies operating in high technology sectors. Regarding telecommunication companies, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its previous reply to Written Question E-011104/2013, which talks about the NSA alleged espionage against Belgacom.

The Commission remains concerned about the impact of US large-scale intelligence collection programmes on fundamental rights. The Commission has set out the steps to be taken to address the concerns of citizens, including in a communication on 'Rebuilding Trust in Transatlantic Data Flows', adopted on 27 November 2013. The Commission has also taken note of the results of the European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 ([1]).

([1]) US NSA surveillance programme, surveillance bodies in various Member States and impact on EU citizens' fundamental rights TC"(A7-0139/2014 — Rapporteur: Claude Moraes). European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2014 on the US NSA surveillance programme, surveillance bodies in various Member States and their impact on EU citizens' fundamental rights and on transatlantic cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs (2013/2188(INI)).

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003815/14
till kommissionen
Nils Torvalds (ALDE)
(27 mars 2014)

Angående: Kommissionens riktlinjer för statligt stöd till jordbruk och skogsbruk och på landsbygden 2014–2020 (Commission guidelines for State aid in the agriculture and forestry sector and in rural areas 2014 to 2020)

Kommissionen utarbetar för tillfället Europeiska unionens riktlinjer för statligt stöd inom jord- och skogsbrukssektorn och i landsbygdsområden 2014–2020. Kommissionens förslag är på många punkter problematiskt speciellt för Finland och landskapet Åland. I det aktuella förslaget till förnyade riktlinjer stipuleras att stödberättigade åtgärder får beviljas för att kompensera för förlust av träd och kostnader för återplantering upp till marknadsvärdet för träd som förstörts av skyddade djur.

En stor del av skadorna i Finland orsakas av djur som inte är skyddade – såsom älg, rådjur och sork.

Finland är unikt i EU i fråga om skogsskador orsakade av hjortdjur. I Finland får skogsägaren ersättning av staten för skador som hjortdjur, bland annat älgen, förorsakar i nyplanterade skogar. I Finland är det markägaren som enligt lag är skyldig att förnya avverkad skog. I värsta fall kommer de föreslagna riktlinjerna för statligt stöd alltså att göra det omöjligt för Finland att betala ut ersättningar för skogsskador orsakade av hjortdjur i fortsättningen. Det här kan slå hårt mot enskilda markägare.

Kan kommissionen försäkra att de nya riktlinjerna för statligt stöd inte heller i fortsättningen kommer att hindra utbetalningen av ersättningarna i nuvarande form för hjortdjursskador i Finland?

Vidare är kommissionens utkast till riktlinjer mer detaljerade och mer begränsande än tidigare, vilket kan leda till en kraftigt ökad administrativ börda. Samtidigt innebär förslaget till riktlinjer en kraftig nedprioritering av skogens ekonomiska funktioner jämfört med de miljömässiga och sociala funktionerna. Kan kommissionen garantera att riktlinjerna kommer att godta alla typer av investeringar i skogen som kan inkluderas i ett hållbart skogsbruk – inte bara i miljömässiga och ekologiska syften?

Skogstillgångarna, skogsbruksmetoderna och inriktningen på skogsbruket varierar inom EU. Hur ska kommissionen garantera att riktlinjerna ger medlemsstaterna frihet att utforma sina nationella stödordningar så att de passar för ett hållbart skogsbruk på regional och nationell nivå och att de tillåter investeringar i hantering och bearbetning av biomassa om biomassan används som råvara vid energiproduktion?

Svar från Dacian Cioloş på kommissionens vägnar
(16 maj 2014)

Översynen av reglerna för statligt stöd till jordbruket och skogsbruket pågår fortfarande. Medlemsstaterna och andra berörda parter har vid flera tillfällen konsulterats om utkast till nya bestämmelser, och de frågor som ledamoten tar upp är kända för kommissionen. I och med att kommissionen fortfarande diskuterar innehållet i de framtida bestämmelserna kan jag i dagsläget inte bekräfta vilka slutliga villkor som kommer att tas med i de nya riktlinjerna för statligt stöd till jordbruket och skogsbruket.

Kommissionen kan försäkra ledamoten om att kommissionens avdelningar gör sitt bästa för att tillgodose intressenternas önskningar och samtidigt säkerställa att de nya bestämmelserna är förenliga med den gemensamma jordbrukspolitikens mål och de övergripande reglerna för statligt stöd.

Det bör också nämnas att riktlinjerna för statligt stöd till jordbruket och skogsbruket inte är det enda instrumentet för statligt stöd till skogsbruket. Skogsbruket kan omfattas av den allmänna förordningen om stöd av mindre betydelse ([1]) och omfattas dessutom av de nyligen antagna riktlinjerna för statligt stöd för miljöskydd och energi ([2]), den kommande gruppundantagsförordningen för jordbruket och skogsbruket ([3]) och den kommande allmänna gruppundantagsförordningen ([4]).

([1]) Kommissionens förordning (EU) nr 1407/2013 (EUT L 352, 24.12.2013).
([2]) Kommissionens beslut C(2014)2322.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/stateaid/policy/feedback-aber/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_consolidated_gber/index_en.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003815/14
to the Commission
Nils Torvalds (ALDE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Commission guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector and in rural areas 2014 to 2020

The Commission is currently drawing up EU guidelines for state aid in the agriculture and forestry sector and in rural areas 2014-2020. The Commission's proposal is problematic in many respects, particularly for Finland and the Province of Åland. The current proposal for revised guidelines stipulates that measures eligible for support may be granted by way of compensation for the loss of trees and to subsidise the costs of replanting up to the market value of trees destroyed by protected animals.

Much of the damage in Finland is caused by animals which are not protected, such as elk, roe deer and voles.

Finland is unique within the EU as regards the damage caused to woodland by deer. In Finland, owners of woodland receive compensation from the State for damage which deer, including elk, cause to newly planted woodland. Under Finnish law, it is landowners who are responsible for regenerating harvested woodland. Thus, in the worst case, the proposed guidelines on state aid will make it impossible for Finland to pay compensation for damage to woodland caused by deer. This could hit some individual land owners hard.

Can the Commission give an assurance that the new guidelines for state aid will not in future prevent payment of compensation in the current form for damage caused by deer in Finland?

The Commission's draft new guidelines are also more detailed and more limiting than the previous guidelines, which could substantially increase administrative burden. At the same time, the draft guidelines greatly reduce the priority assigned to the economic functions of woodland in comparison with its environmental and social functions. Can the Commission guarantee that the guidelines will approve all types of investment in woodland which can fall under the heading of sustainable forestry — not only investment for environmental and ecological purposes?

Forest resources, forestry methods and the organisation of the forestry industry vary within the EU. How will the Commission ensure that the guidelines give Member States the freedom to design their national support schemes so that they are suited to sustainable forestry at regional and national level and permit investment in the management and processing of biomass if biomass is used as a raw material for energy production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The revision of state aid rules for the agricultural and forestry sectors is in process. The Member States and other stakeholders have been consulted on the draft new rules on several occasions, and the issues described in the question of the Honourable Member are known to the Commission. As the Commission is still discussing the content of the future rules, it is not yet possible to confirm the final conditions that will be included in the new Guidelines for state aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors.

The Commission can assure the Honourable Member that its services do try to accommodate the requests from stakeholders while making sure that the new rules are consistent with the common agricultural policy objectives and the horizontal state aid rules.

It should be also noted that the agricultural and forestry guidelines are not the only state aid instrument applicable to the forestry sector. The forestry sector can benefit from the general *de minimis* regulation ([1]). In addition, the sector falls under the scope of the recently adopted Environmental and Energy aid Guidelines ([2]), the future block exemption Regulation for the agricultural and forestry sectors ([3]) and the future general block exemption Regulation ([4]).

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 (OJ L 352, 24.12.2013).
([2]) Commission Decision C(2014)2322.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/stateaid/policy/feedback-aber/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2013_consolidated_gber/index_en.html

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003816/14
an die Kommission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(27. März 2014)

Betrifft: Rolle der Partner und Qualitätssicherung im EURES-Netz

Am 18. März 2014 präsentierte die Kommission dem Sozial- und Beschäftigungsausschuss des Europäischen Parlamentes ihren Verordnungsvorschlag über ein Europäisches Netz der Arbeitsvermittlungen, den Zugang von Arbeitskräften zu mobilitätsfördernden Diensten und die weitere Integration der Arbeitsmärkte (2014/0002(COD)). Einige der aufkommenden Fragen blieben in der Diskussion unbeantwortet, die ich hiermit schriftlich nachreiche.

1. Bisher beschränkt sich die Erwähnung der Sozialpartner im VO-Vorschlag auf die Teilnahme der europäischen Partner an den Treffen der Koordinierungsbüros (Artikel 11(3)) und deren Konsultation im Rahmen der nationalen Umsetzungsprogramme (Artikel 28(4)). Sieht die Kommission vor, die Rolle der Sozialpartner im EURES-Netzwerk klarer zu definieren? Hat die Kommission vor, die Einbeziehung der Sozialpartner auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene als verpflichtendes Element in die bestehende Verordnung aufzunehmen, sowie es auch in der Allgemeinen VO (Artikel 5) und dem ESF (Artikel 6(2)) der Fall ist?

2. Das Programm EaSI schreibt ausdrücklich vor, dass Information und Beratung von Arbeitnehmern in Grenzregionen weiterhin förderfähig bleiben. Der VO-Vorschlag der KOMspricht nun allerdings von einer Zentralisierung der Antragstellung und Mittelverwaltung durch nationale Koordinationsbüros. Wie wird hierbei die Verankerung der EURES-Grenzpartnerschaften als Organisationen im EURES-Netz sichergestellt?

3. Wird es für die Einstellung der Stellenangebote in EURES bestimmte Kriterien geben, um deren Transparenz und Qualität sicherzustellen? Und wenn ja, welche Kriterien sieht die Kommission vor? Plant die Kommission, die Umsetzung solcher Qualitätskriterien durch Kontrollen zu prüfen?

Antwort von László Andor im Namen der Kommission
(23. Mai 2014)

1. Artikel 11 des Vorschlags beruht auf der langjährigen Praxis des derzeitigen EURES-Netzes, gemäß welcher Vertreter der Sozialpartner auf europäischer Ebene zu Sitzungen mit den Kommissionsdienststellen und den Mitgliedstaaten zur Koordinierung der Tätigkeiten des Netzes und der Aktivitäten des wechselseitigen Lernens eingeladen werden. Es obliegt diesen Vertretern, sich mit ihren nationalen Mitgliedern abzustimmen und diese bei den Sitzungen zu vertreten. Des Weiteren ist es an den Mitgliedstaaten zu entscheiden, welche Organisationen an den EURES-Aktivitäten auf nationaler Ebene teilnehmen, und zwar in Einklang mit den im Anhang festgelegten gemeinsamen Mindestkriterien für die Zulassung dieser Organisationen als EURES-Partner.

2. Im Vorschlag wird anerkannt, wie wichtig die Förderung der Mobilität in Grenzregionen und die Erbringung von Leistungen für Grenzgänger sind. Mit Artikel 19 Absatz 2 werden die Mitgliedstaaten verpflichtet, in Grenzregionen, in denen Bedarf an besonderen Strukturen für die Zusammenarbeit und die Erbringung von Dienstleistungen besteht, speziell an Grenzgänger gerichtete Informationen auszuarbeiten. Ferner werden die Mitgliedstaaten aufgefordert, in Grenzregionen die Kommunikation gebündelt über zentrale Anlaufstellen abzuwickeln. Im Programm EaSI sind grenzüberschreitende Partnerschaften mit aktiver Beteiligung der Sozialpartner vorgesehen.

3. Mit dem Vorschlag soll Mobilität unter fairen Bedingungen in allen ihren Dimensionen gewährleistet werden. Für die Qualität der Daten zu Stellenangeboten ist die Organisation zuständig, die die einschlägigen Informationen bereitstellt. Entsprechend Artikel 14 sollen alle Stellenangebote, die auf nationaler Ebene von den öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen veröffentlicht werden sowie diejenigen, die von anderen, als EURES-Partner zugelassenen Organisationen übermittelt werden, auf europäischer Ebene bereitgestellt werden. Mit Blick auf die Übereinstimmung mit vereinbarten Standards soll sich der Ursprung der Daten zurückverfolgen lassen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003816/14
to the Commission
Jutta Steinruck (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Partnership and quality assurance as aspects of the EURES network

On 18 March 2014 the Commission presented its proposal for a regulation on a European network of employment services, workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets (2014/0002(COD)) to Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. In the ensuing discussion, certain issues were not resolved, hence the following questions.

1. In the proposal as it stands, the social partners are referred to only in Articles 11(3), stipulating that representatives of the social partners at Union level are to attend the meetings of the European Coordination Office, and 28(4), providing for them to be consulted about draft national work programmes. Does the Commission intend to define the social partners' role in the EURES network more clearly? Does it intend to make the involvement of the social partners at national and regional level a compulsory aspect of the arrangements provided for by this regulation, thus mirroring the corresponding provisions of the general regulation on the Structural Funds and of the ESF Regulation (Article 5(2)?

2. It is an explicit aim of the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) to ensure continuing support for information and advice services for workers in border regions. However, the Commission proposal refers merely to the pooling of job applications and the management of resources by national Coordination Offices. How will these provisions secure a place in the EURES network for the EURES cross-border partnerships?

3. Will the inclusion of job vacancies in the EURES system be subject to specific transparency and quality criteria? If so, what criteria does the Commission have in mind? Has it any plans for monitoring the application of such criteria?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. Article 11 of the proposal builds on the long standing practice in the current EURES network whereby representatives of the social partners at European level are invited to meetings with Commission services and Member States on the coordination of network activities and mutual learning activities. It is the task of those representatives to coordinate with and represent their national members at those occasions. In addition, it is up to the Member States to decide which organisations participate in EURES activities at national level, in accordance with the minimum common criteria set out in the annex for the authorisation of those organisations as EURES Partners.

2. The proposal acknowledges the importance of supporting mobility in the cross-border regions and of providing services to frontier workers and introduces the obligation for Member States to develop specific information for frontier workers in cross-border regions where there is need for specific cooperation and service structures in Article 19 (2). It also invites Member States to develop a one-stop shop solution for the communication there. Under the EaSI Programme, cross border partnerships are recognised and supported with the active participation of the social partners.

3. The proposal aims to ensure fair mobility in all its dimensions. The responsibility for the quality of job vacancy data lies with the organisation that makes this information available. Article 14 envisages that all the job vacancies published nationally by the public employment services as well as those provided by other organisations authorised to become EURES partners should be made available at European level and that to ensure compliance with agreed standards, the sources of the data must be traceable.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003817/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Details of number of prosecutions for human trafficking offences

On 25 March 2014 it was the International Day for the Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery. The ending of the transatlantic slave trade, halting one of history's most disturbing injustices, is certainly something worth commemorating. The suffering of the victims must never be forgotten, and it is right that those who devoted their lives to achieving abolition — most famously the Christian missionary and abolitionist William Wilberforce — are also honoured. But slavery is not dead — it merely manifests itself in new ways, and we as legislators must be alert to these new methods that criminals use to capture, control and dehumanise their victims.

In this context, I wish to ask the Commission to answer the following, with reference to Europe and for each of the past three years:

1. How many successful prosecutions have there been for human trafficking and modern-day slavery-related offences?

2. How many people have been rescued from human trafficking criminals and from modern-day slavery conditions, such as forced prostitution and domestic servitude?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The European Commission presented its first data collection report on trafficking in human beings at the EU level in April 2013, covering the years 2008 up to 2010 ([1]). The report shows statistics on victims and on traffickers, broken down by age, gender, form of exploitation and citizenship. It shows that based on information from countries reporting data for the three reference years, the number of convictions for trafficking in human beings decreased by 13% between 2008 and 2010. The total number of traffickers convicted in 2010 was 1 339.

The Commission asked Member States for data on the number of identified and presumed victims. Countries reporting such data over the three reference years reported an increase by 18% between 2008 and 2010 to a total of 9 528 victims in 2010. Data on identified and presumed victims distinguished by different forms of exploitation for all three reference years showed that around 62% of the victims were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, around 25% for labour exploitation and around 14% for other purposes.

The next data collection report of the European Commission, covering the years 2010 to 2012, will be available later this year.

([1]) See Eurostat report on Trafficking in Human Beings published in 2013 available at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/publication?p_product_code=KS-RA-13-005

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003818/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: EU support for youth services

Recent figures published in England have indicated that spending on youth services engaging teenagers has fallen by 36% in the past two years. This amounts to a reduction in funding of GBP 438 million for services related to youth clubs, out-of-school activities, teenage pregnancy services, and drug and alcohol support programmes.

In this context, can the Commission please detail what efforts are being made at EU level to consolidate youth services across the Member States given the economic downturn, and bearing in mind the transformative potential of young people?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission agrees with the opinion of the Honourable Member on the importance of youth work for the development of young people. A study which has just been published [1] stresses how valuable this work is and confirms that the economic crisis can have a negative effect on the financing of national youth support schemes.

At European level, financial support for these schemes is available from the European Social Fund. In 2014-20 the ESF will finance measures in relation to participation in lifelong learning as well as measures aimed at reducing the number of early school leavers and reintegrating young people not involved in employment, education or training back into the education system and employment. Actions connected with employment and training will be strengthened also by the Youth Employment Initiative which will support the regions of the EU most affected by youth unemployment.

Furthermore, support measures are also available at European level through the Erasmus+ (2014-2020) programme. This programme, which covers non-formal learning activities which were previously funded through the Youth in Action programme, promotes in particular the mobility of individuals, cooperation with regard to innovation and exchanging good practices between organisations operating in the sector and the reform of youth policies. The Erasmus+ budget represents an increase of 40% compared to the budget allocated to the programmes which preceded it.

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/study/youth-work-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003819/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Tackling truancy

According to recent figures published by the Department of Education in England, the number of parents receiving fines as a result of permitting their children to miss school has risen by a quarter in the last 12 months. This increase has seen 52 000 parents handed penalties.

In light of this, and given the need to build skills and knowledge capacity among our young people, can the Commission please detail what efforts have been — and will be — made at EU level to help Member States to combat truancy, and to compel parents to provide an acceptable example to their children in relation to commitment to their education?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the responsibility for the content and organisation of education and training systems rests entirely with Member States. Through the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), the Commission supports Member States to improve their education systems through e.g. the sharing of best practices and peer reviews of national policies.

Within this framework, truancy and parental involvement are part of the EU's efforts to reduce Early School Leaving (ESL), which is one of the five headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy ([1]). In the context of the European semester education related recommendations, including on early school leaving, have also been made to Member States ([2]). The Council Recommendation of June 2011 on policies to reduce ESL ([3]) calls on Member States to implement comprehensive policies, comprising prevention, intervention and compensation measures. It proposes a number of actions to be taken, such as enhancing the involvement of parents and developing early warning systems for pupils at risk. Also, the 2013 final report of the OMC Working Group on ESL ([4]) includes key messages for policy-makers and discusses prevention and intervention in more detail.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/index_en.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011H0701(01)&from=EN
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups_en.htm#schools

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003820/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Παράταση των χρονοδιαγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής στις χώρες του Μνημονίου

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «υποστηρίζει μια επιφυλακτική παράταση των χρονοδιαγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής που έχουν ήδη υλοποιηθεί στο πλαίσιο των μνημονίων συνεννόησης, καθώς έχουν υποχωρήσει οι φόβοι μιας γενικής κατάρρευσης· υποστηρίζει την εξέταση πρόσθετων προσαρμογών υπό το φως των περαιτέρω μακροοικονομικών εξελίξεων».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Δεδομένων των οικονομικών και κοινωνικών επιπτώσεων από την εφαρμογή των Μνημονίων, θεωρεί χρήσιμη και υλοποιήσιμη την εισήγηση του Κοινοβουλίου για παράταση των χρονοδιαγραμμάτων δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής;

2. Αν όχι, τι είναι εκείνο που εμποδίζει την υιοθέτηση της εισήγησης του Κοινοβουλίου;

3. Ποιες πρόσθετες προσαρμογές θα μπορούσαν να γίνουν, όπως ζητά το Κοινοβούλιο, λαμβανομένης υπόψη και της σχετικής οικονομικής ανάκαμψης που παρατηρείται στη ζώνη του ευρώ;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει την έκθεση που συνέταξε το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο εξ ιδίας πρωτοβουλίας για τον ρόλο και τις ενέργειες της Επιτροπής, της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας και του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου στις χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003820/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Prolongation of fiscal adjustment timeframes

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)), Parliament 'supports the cautious prolongation of fiscal adjustment timeframes that have already been fulfilled in the memoranda as fears of general meltdown receded; supports considering further adjustments in light of further macroeconomic developments'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Given the economic and social impact of the implementation of the memoranda, does it consider that Parliament's recommendation about the prolongation of fiscal adjustment timeframes is useful and feasible?

2. If not, what stands in the way of the adoption of Parliament's recommendation?

3. What further adjustments, as requested by Parliament, could be made, taking into account the economic recovery in the euro area?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed the European Parliament's own-initiative report on the role and operations of the Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund in euro area programme countries.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003822/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Έκδοση «υπό αίρεση μετατρέψιμων ομολόγων»

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο, «συνιστά να εξεταστεί περαιτέρω από την Επιτροπή, την Ευρωομάδα και το ΔΝΤ η έννοια των "υπό αίρεση μετατρέψιμων ομολόγων", βάσει της οποίας η απόδοση των νεοεκδιδόμενων τίτλων δημόσιου χρέους στα κράτη μέλη που λαμβάνουν συνδρομή συνδέεται με την οικονομική ανάπτυξη».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Θεωρεί ότι η έκδοση «υπό αίρεση μετατρέψιμων ομολόγων» θα μπορούσε να βοηθήσει τις χώρες του Μνημονίου να εξέλθουν γρηγορότερα από την κρίση;

2. Υπάρχουν οποιοιδήποτε κίνδυνοι για την ευρωπαϊκή οικονομία οι οποίοι συνδέονται με τυχόν υιοθέτηση της πιο πάνω εισήγησης του Κοινοβουλίου;

3. Προτίθεται να μελετήσει περαιτέρω ή/και να υιοθετήσει την πιο πάνω εισήγηση;

Απάντηση
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει αυτό το θέμα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003822/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Issue of 'contingent convertible bonds'

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) Parliament: 'Recommends that the Commission, the Eurogroup and the IMF should explore further the concept of "contingent convertible bonds", where the returns of newly issued sovereign debt in Member States under assistance are linked to economic growth'

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it believe that the issue of 'contingent convertible bonds' could help programme countries emerge more rapidly from the crisis?

2. Are there any risks to the economy of the EU associated with the adoption of the above recommendation by Parliament?

3. Will it further study and/or adopt the above recommendation?

Reply
(28 May 2014)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003824/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Φοροδιαφυγή, φορολογική απάτη και δημοσιονομική κατάσταση στις χώρες του Μνημονίου

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο θέτει θέμα φοροδιαφυγής και φορολογικής απάτης στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ και «συνιστά τη θέσπιση εκτελεστικών μέτρων με στόχο τη δίκαιη συνεισφορά όλων των μερών στα φορολογικά έσοδα».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ασπάζεται τις εκτιμήσεις του Κοινοβουλίου περί ύπαρξης φορολογικής απάτης και άδικης κατανομής των φορολογικών βαρών μεταξύ των διαφόρων μερών;

2. Προτίθεται να μελετήσει το θέμα της φοροδιαφυγής και της φορολογικής απάτης στις χώρες του Μνημονίου, και γενικότερα στην ΕΕ, και να θεσπίσει εκτελεστικά μέτρα καταπολέμησης του φαινομένου;

3. Σε ποιο βαθμό θα μπορούσε η καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής και της φορολογικής απάτης να συμβάλει στην επίλυση του δημοσιονομικού προβλήματος στις χώρες του Μνημονίου; Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να με εφοδιάσει με συγκριτικά στοιχεία για το μέγεθος του προβλήματος στα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση
(23 Ιουνίου 2014)

Σύμφωνα με τα συμπεράσματα του Ευρωπαϊκού Συμβουλίου της 23ης Μαΐου 2013, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο δήλωσε ότι «είναι σημαντικό να ληφθούν αποτελεσματικά μέτρα για την καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής και της φορολογικής απάτης, ιδίως στο σημερινό πλαίσιο της δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης, προκειμένου να προστατευθούν τα έσοδα και να διασφαλιστεί η εμπιστοσύνη των πολιτών στο δίκαιο χαρακτήρα και την αποτελεσματικότητα των φορολογικών συστημάτων. Απαιτούνται εντατικότερες προσπάθειες στον τομέα αυτό, με συνδυασμό μέτρων σε εθνικό, ευρωπαϊκό και παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, τηρουμένων πλήρως των αρμοδιοτήτων των κρατών μελών και των Συνθηκών».

Τον Δεκέμβριο του 2013, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο υπενθύμισε τα συμπεράσματα του Μαΐου του 2013 και ζήτησε να υπάρξει περαιτέρω πρόοδος σε παγκόσμιο και ενωσιακό επίπεδο όσον αφορά την καταπολέμηση της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής, τον επιθετικό φορολογικό σχεδιασμό, τη διάβρωση της βάσης και τη μετατόπιση των κερδών (BEPS) και το ξέπλυμα χρήματος.

Στα συμπεράσματά του για τη φοροδιαφυγή, τα οποία ενέκρινε στις 14 Μαΐου 2013, το Συμβούλιο αναγνώρισε ότι απαιτείται κατάλληλος συνδυασμός των προσπαθειών σε εθνικό, ενωσιακό και παγκόσμιο επίπεδο για την καταπολέμηση της φορολογικής απάτης και της φοροδιαφυγής, καθώς και του επιθετικού φορολογικού σχεδιασμού, επανέλαβε ότι όλα τα κράτη μέλη αναγνωρίζουν τη σημασία λήψης αποτελεσματικών μέτρων για την καταπολέμηση της φοροδιαφυγής και της φορολογικής απάτης, και υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη αντιμετώπισης του επιθετικού φορολογικού σχεδιασμού.

Οι εργασίες επικεντρώνονται σε δύο κύριους τομείς: αφενός, στην αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών και, αφετέρου, στη διάβρωση της βάσης και τη μετατόπιση των κερδών.

Όσον αφορά την αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών, ενώ στην οδηγία του Συμβουλίου, της 3ης Ιουνίου 2003, για τη φορολόγηση των υπό μορφή τόκων εισοδημάτων από αποταμιεύσεις προβλέπεται η αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών μεταξύ των κρατών μελών για τα εισοδήματα από αποταμιεύσεις, στην αναθεωρημένη οδηγία για τις αποταμιεύσεις που εκδόθηκε στις 24 Μαρτίου 2014 διευρύνεται το πεδίο εφαρμογής της, ιδίως με τις συμβάσεις ασφάλισης ζωής και με την ευρύτερη κάλυψη των επενδυτικών ταμείων, και επιτρέπεται μια μέθοδος διαφάνειας για να εντοπίζεται καλύτερα ποιος πραγματικά επωφελείται από τους τόκους.

Επιπλέον, η οδηγία 2011/16/ΕΕ, της 15ης Φεβρουαρίου 2011, σχετικά με τη διοικητική συνεργασία στον τομέα της φορολογίας διασφαλίζει ότι, από το 2015, τα κράτη μέλη θα ανταλλάσσουν διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες αυτόματα σχετικά με πέντε κατηγορίες εισοδήματος και κεφαλαίου. Τον Ιούνιο του 2013, η Επιτροπή υπέβαλε πρόταση τροποποίησης της οδηγίας 2011/16/ΕΕ που αποσκοπεί στην ενίσχυση της ισχύουσας νομοθεσίας της ΕΕ στον τομέα της ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών, λαμβανομένης υπόψη της ανάπτυξης κοινού διεθνούς προτύπου αυτόματης ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών σε επίπεδο ΟΟΣΑ.

Όσον αφορά τη διάβρωση της βάσης και τη μετατόπιση των κερδών, συνεχίζονται οι εργασίες σχετικά με την πρόταση της Επιτροπής για οδηγία του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας 2011/96/ΕΕ σχετικά με το κοινό φορολογικό καθεστώς το οποίο ισχύει για τις μητρικές και τις θυγατρικές εταιρείες διαφορετικών κρατών μελών, καθώς και για τα επιζήμια φορολογικά καθεστώτα, στο πλαίσιο της ομάδας «Κώδικας Δεοντολογίας».

Επιπλέον, το Συμβούλιο εξετάζει την οδηγία για κοινή ενοποιημένη βάση φορολογίας των εταιρειών (ΚΕΒΦΕ) που υποβλήθηκε από την Επιτροπή τον Μάρτιο του 2011.

Το Συμβούλιο δεν διαθέτει συγκριτικά στοιχεία σχετικά με το μέγεθος του προβλήματος στα κράτη μέλη. Ωστόσο, τα ζητήματα δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και οι τρόποι είσπραξης εσόδων, ιδίως όταν τα περισσότερα κράτη μέλη έχουν αντιμετωπίσει χρηματοπιστωτικές κρίσεις, έχουν αποκτήσει εξαιρετική σημασία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003824/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Tax evasion, tax fraud and the financial situation in the euro area programme countries

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)), Parliament raises the issue of tax evasion and tax fraud in the EU Member States and 'recommends implementing measures that would make all parties contribute fairly to tax revenues'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it endorse Parliament's views on the existence of tax fraud and the unfair distribution of tax burdens among the various parties?

2. Does it intend to study the issue of tax evasion and tax fraud in the programme countries, and the EU in general, and to adopt implementing measures to combat this phenomenon?

3. To what extent could the fight against tax evasion and tax fraud help solve the fiscal problem in the programme countries? Can it provide comparative data on the magnitude of the problem in the EU Member States?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

In its conclusions of 23 May 2013, the European Council stated that 'it is important to take effective steps to fight tax evasion and tax fraud, particularly in the current context of fiscal consolidation, in order to protect revenues and ensure public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of tax systems. Increased efforts are required in this field, combining measures at the national, European and global levels, in full respect of Member States' competences and of the Treaties'.

In December 2013, the European Council recalled its conclusions of May 2013 and called for further progress at the global and EU levels in the fight against tax fraud and evasion, aggressive tax planning, base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) and money laundering.

In its conclusions on tax evasion, adopted on 14 May 2013, the Council recognised the need for an appropriate combination of efforts at the national, EU and global levels to combat tax fraud and tax evasion and also aggressive tax planning, reaffirmed that all Member States recognise the importance of taking effective steps to fight tax evasion and tax fraud, and underlined the need to tackle aggressive tax planning.

Work is focusing on two main themes: automatic exchange of information (AEI) and base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS).

Regarding AEI, while Council Directive of 3 June 2003 on taxation of savings income in the form of interest payments provides for automatic exchange of information on savings income between Member States, the revised Savings Directive adopted on 24 March 2014 enlarges its scope in particular to life insurance contracts and to a broader coverage of investment funds and allows for a 'look-through approach' to better identify who is really benefiting from interest payments.

Moreover, Directive 2011/16/EU of 15 February 2011 on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation ensures that, as from 2015, Member States exchange information automatically upon availability on five categories of income and capital. The Commission presented in June 2013 a proposal amending Directive 2011/16/EU which aims at reinforcing current EU legislation in the field of exchange of information, in the light of the development of a common global standard of AEI at OECD level.

Regarding BEPS, work is on-going on a Commission proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 2011/96/EU on the common system of taxation applicable in the case of parent companies and subsidiaries of different Member States, as well as on harmful tax regimes in the context of the Code of Conduct Group.

Furthermore, the directive on a common consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB) presented by the Commission in March 2011 is being examined by the Council.

The Council has no comparative data on the magnitude of the problem in the Member States. Nevertheless, the issues of fiscal consolidation and ways to raise revenue, especially when most Member States have faced financial crises, have become extremely important.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003826/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Χρησιμοποίηση πόρων της διάσωσης στις χώρες του Μνημονίου

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο, «ζητεί να δημοσιοποιηθεί ο τρόπος με τον οποίο χρησιμοποιήθηκαν οι χρηματοδοτικοί πόροι της διάσωσης· τονίζει ότι θα πρέπει να διευκρινίζεται η ποσότητα των πόρων που διοχετεύθηκαν στη χρηματοδότηση των ελλειμμάτων, στη χρηματοδότηση της δημόσιας διοίκησης και στην αποπληρωμή των ιδιωτών πιστωτών».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Παρακολουθεί τη χρήση των πόρων διάσωσης και κατέχει τα πιο πάνω στοιχεία που αφορούν την περίπτωση του προγράμματος προσαρμογής της Κύπρου;

2. Πώς αξιολογεί τον τρόπο αξιοποίησης των πόρων της διάσωσης που δόθηκαν μέχρι σήμερα στην Κύπρο;

3. Κρίνει ότι οι πόροι που προνοούνται στο Μνημόνιο και ο τρόπος αξιοποίησής τους είναι ικανοποιητικοί για την εξυγίανση και επανεκκίνηση της κυπριακής οικονομίας;

4. Προτίθεται μελλοντικά να δημοσιοποιεί τα στοιχεία στα οποία αναφέρεται το Κοινοβούλιο, πιο πάνω;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

Στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013 η Ευρωομάδα δήλωσε ότι — κατ' αρχήν — η οικονομική βοήθεια στην Κύπρο δικαιολογείται προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί, μέσω της παροχής οικονομικής βοήθειας με ποσό έως δέκα δισεκατομμύρια ευρώ, η χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα τόσο στην Κύπρο όσο και στη ζώνη του ευρώ στο σύνολό της.

Η πορεία προς την υλοποίηση του προγράμματος παρακολουθείται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή (ΕΕ), την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα (ΕΚΤ) και το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο (ΔΝΤ) μέσω εξαμηνιαίων αναθεωρήσεων του προγράμματος. Η Ευρωομάδα δημοσιεύει τακτικές δηλώσεις επί των ανωτέρω αναθεωρήσεων για την εκταμίευση της οικονομικής βοήθειας στην Κύπρο ([1]).

Έως σήμερα, η συνολική εκταμίευση από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας (ΕΜΣ) ανέρχεται στα 4,75 δισ. ευρώ και οι συνολικές εκταμιεύσεις του ΔΝΤ ανέρχονται σε 297 εκατομμύρια ειδικά τραβηκτικά δικαιώματα (ΕΤΔ) (περίπου 333,2 εκατομμύρια ευρώ) ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/documents/?source=0&type=4850&country=1382& from=&to=
([2]) http://www.esm.europa.eu/assistance/cyprus/index.htm; http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2014/pr14143.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003826/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Use made of bail-out funds in the programme countries

In its report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) Parliament:

'Calls for the publication of the use made of bail-out funds; stresses that the quantity of funds channelled to finance the deficits, fund the government and repay private creditors should be clarified'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Is it monitoring the use of the bail-out funds and does it have the above information concerning the Cyprus adjustment programme?

2. How does it assess the use made of the bail-out funds granted to Cyprus so far?

3. Is it satisfied with the funding provided for in the Memorandum and the way in which these funds are being used, given the task of streamlining and relaunching the Cypriot economy?

4. Does it intend in future to publish the above information referred to by Parliament?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

On 25 March 2013 the Eurogroup stated that — in principle — financial assistance to Cyprus was warranted to safeguard financial stability in Cyprus and the euro area as a whole by providing financial assistance for an amount of up to EUR 10 billion.

Progress in programme implementation is monitored by the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through quarterly programme reviews. The Eurogroup delivers regular statements on such reviews with a view to disbursing financial assistance to Cyprus ([1]).

To date, cumulative disbursement by the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) amounts to EUR 4.75 billion and total IMF disbursements to Special Drawing Rights (SDR) 297 million (about EUR 333.2 million) ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/documents/?source=0&type=4850&country=1382& from=&to=
([2]) http://www.esm.europa.eu/assistance/cyprus/index.htm — http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2014/pr14143.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003828/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Libera circolazione di auto private, registrate nell'UE, in Belgio

Considerando i numerosi casi in cui guidatori di veicoli con targa estera sono fermati dalla polizia, sanzionati o impossibilitati a proseguire il loro viaggio;

considerando l'elevato numero di cittadini espatriati che vivono anche temporaneamente in Belgio o che sono di passaggio con la loro auto privata (debitamente registrata presso un altro Stato membro) e che sono impossibilitati, secondo le normative belghe, dal momento che sono residenti in Belgio, a guidare il loro stesso veicolo;

considerando che queste azioni sono in palese conflitto con le diverse disposizioni della Convenzione per la salvaguardia dei diritti dell'uomo e delle libertà fondamentali (*Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*), in particolare all'articolo 6 e 8 dell'ECHR;

considerando che la normativa del Belgio in materia di registrazione delle auto e la sua applicazione violano la normativa UE (articoli 18, 20, 49, 56, 63 del TFUE, come recentemente confermato dalla giurisprudenza delle Corte di giustizia europea nelle cause riunite da C 578/10 a C 580/10 (van Putten) e nella causa C-5/13 (Kovacs)), poiché richiede ai residenti del Belgio la registrazione dei loro veicoli privati indipendentemente dal fatto che abbiano un uso regolare o no (secondo l'articolo 2, paragrafo 1 del regio decreto, l'auto che viene messa in circolazione deve avere il numero di targa belga; secondo l'articolo 3, paragrafo 1, le persone residenti in Belgio che intendono guidare il proprio mezzo devono registrare il veicolo nel registro nazionale, anche se la macchina è già registrata in un registro di un altro Stato membro);

considerando, quindi, che vi è una diretta violazione della normativa UE da parte delle autorità belghe;

non ritiene opportuno la Commissione ricordare alle autorità del Belgio di rispettare la normativa europea, vagliando con loro tutte le possibili soluzioni che consentano a un cittadino di un altro Stato membro, anche se residente temporaneamente in Belgio, di guidare il proprio veicolo debitamente registrato in uno dei paesi UE?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(8 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è al corrente delle difficoltà incontrate con l'uso dei veicoli immatricolati in uno Stato membro diverso da quello di residenza del proprietario. Al fine di migliorare la situazione per i cittadini, il 4 aprile 2012 la Commissione ha adottato la proposta di regolamento recante norme per la semplificazione del trasferimento dei veicoli a motore all'interno del mercato unico ([1]), cui si applica la procedura legislativa ordinaria. Finché tale regolamento non sarà adottato, gli Stati membri restano tuttavia liberi di esercitare i loro poteri in materia, in conformità con le disposizioni del trattato.

In linea generale, i proprietari sono tenuti a immatricolare i veicoli a fini fiscali nello Stato membro in cui hanno la normale residenza ai sensi della direttiva 83/182/CEE.

Tale direttiva, comunque, non impedisce a uno Stato membro di esigere l'immatricolazione del veicolo, anche se già immatricolato in un altro Stato membro, laddove il proprietario trasferisca, anche solo temporaneamente, la residenza. Pronunciandoci nella causa C-302/12 (*X* c/ Minister van Financiën), la Corte ha recentemente affermato che l'articolo 43 del TFUE (libertà di stabilimento) non osta a che la tassa di immatricolazione sia imposta in due Stati membri qualora il veicolo sia destinato ad essere essenzialmente utilizzato effettivamente e in via permanente in entrambi.

Le amministrazioni nazionali hanno il diritto di procedere a controlli adeguati per assicurare l'applicazione della normativa del rispettivo Stato membro.

Quanto all'adozione in Belgio delle misure atte a dare effetto alla sentenza nella causa C-580/10 (Van Putten), si rimanda l'onorevole deputato alla risposta già data all'interrogazione scritta 003064/2014.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003828/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Free movement of EU-registered private cars in Belgium

It often happens that drivers of vehicles with a foreign (i.e. non-Belgian) number-plate are stopped by the police, incur a penalty, or are prevented from continuing their journey.

There are many expatriates living in Belgium, possibly temporarily, who have come with their private cars (duly registered in another Member State); given that they live in Belgium, they are debarred, under the Belgian rules, from driving their own vehicles.

The behaviour of the Belgian authorities is blatantly at odds with the Convention of the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in particular Articles 6 and 8 thereof.

The Belgian legislation on car registration and the way in which it is enforced contravene EU rules (Articles 18, 20, 49, 56, and 63 of the TFEU, as has recently been confirmed by the Court of Justice rulings in Joined Cases C-578/10 to C-580/10 (van Putten) and in Case C-5/13 (Kovacs)): the reason is that persons living in Belgium are required to register their private vehicles, whether or not these are used regularly (Article 2(1) of the relevant royal decree stipulates that no car can be put into service unless it has a Belgian number-plate; under Article 3(1), persons living in Belgium who intend to drive their own vehicle have to have it entered in the national register, even if it is already registered in another Member State).

What this situation amounts to is a direct infringement of EU rules by the Belgian authorities.

Does the Commission not believe that it should call upon the Belgian authorities to observe European rules and help them weigh up all possible solutions enabling citizens of other Member States, even though they might be living temporarily in Belgium, to drive their own vehicles, if these are properly registered in an EU country?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(8 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of difficulties regarding the use of vehicles which are registered in another Member State than the one of the owner's residence. In order to improve the situation for citizens, on 4 April 2012 the Commission adopted a proposal for a regulation simplifying the transfer of motor vehicles within the single market ([1]), which is subject to the ordinary legislative procedure. However, as long as it is not yet adopted, Member States are free to exercise their powers in this area, in compliance with the Treaty provisions.

Owners of vehicles must ordinarily register their vehicles for taxation purposes in the Member State in which they have their normal residence, within the meaning of Directive 83/182/EEC.

In any case, this directive does not prevent a Member State to require registering a car even if that car was already registered in another Member State if its owner changes his residency, even temporarily. Recently in the case C- 302/12 (*X* v. Minister van Financiën) the Court considered that Article 43 of the TFEU (freedom of establishment) does not prevent two Member States from levying registration tax if the car is intended, essentially, to be actually used on a long-term basis in both those Member States.

National administrations are entitled to implement adequate controls to ensure that their legislation is applied.

As to the adoption by Belgium of the measures to give effect to the Case C-580/10 (Van Putten) the Honourable Member should refer to the answer already given to written question 003064/2014.

([1]) COM(2012) 164 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003829/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 mars 2014)

Objet: Politique du livre

Il n'y a pas de politique homogène du livre, il y a plusieurs secteurs de l'influence européenne qui ont un impact sur le livre. En matière de culture, la souveraineté des États a été conservée et la Commission européenne apporte des compétences subsidiaires. Par ailleurs, la fragmentation des marchés limite également une politique du livre à une plus large échelle.

La culture en Europe, c'est 4,5 % du PIB et plus de 8 millions d'emplois. Le livre, c'est 22 milliards d'euros, 130 000 emplois et 530 000 nouveaux livres par an, faisant de l'Europe un leader en la matière.

Nouveaux modèles économiques, nouveaux acteurs, alors que le secteur de l'édition numérique représente 3 % des ventes totales de livres, en Europe. Si l'ebook offre l'occasion d'élargir les publics, cela ne va pas sans risques.

Ainsi, l'abaissement des prix, la généralisation des offres par les algorithmes, la protection des données personnelles et la fragilisation des réseaux de librairies sont autant de menaces à court ou long terme, contre lesquelles il faut se prémunir. Seule une action européenne a des chances de réussir face à des défis globaux.

Qu'envisage la Commission?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(23 mai 2014)

En Europe, l'édition de livres est à la fois un facteur de diversité culturelle et un des secteurs de la culture et de la création majeurs. Les livres jouent un rôle essentiel dans la participation des citoyens européens à la vie économique, sociale, culturelle et politique.

La Commission est déterminée à promouvoir la diffusion des connaissances, y compris des livres, au moyen du programme «Europe créative». Le sous-programme «Culture» d'Europe créative encourage la diffusion de la littérature en Europe, favorisant ainsi la diversité culturelle et le dialogue interculturel. En particulier, le Prix de littérature de l'Union européenne vise à encourager les auteurs européens en devenir.

Dans le programme Horizon 2020, de nouveaux instruments permettent de financer des projets de moindre envergure et davantage axés sur l'innovation. Ces instruments présentent un intérêt particulier pour les projets conçus par les petites et moyennes entreprises des secteurs de l'édition et des TIC, l'accent étant mis sur les jeunes entreprises.

Europeana — le point d'accès commun au patrimoine culturel européen en ligne — permet actuellement d'accéder à plus de **30 millions d'objets** provenant de plus de 2 300 institutions partenaires, contribuant ainsi de manière non négligeable à la promotion et la diffusion des livres majeurs.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003829/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(27 March 2014)

Subject: Book policy

There is no uniform book policy, but there are several areas of European influence that have an impact on books. As far as culture is concerned, Member State sovereignty has been maintained and the Commission has subsidiary powers. Moreover, market fragmentation also makes it more difficult to frame a book policy on a wider scale.

Culture in Europe accounts for 4.5% of GDP and more than 8 million jobs. Books alone account for EUR 22 billion and 130 000 jobs; with 530 000 new books being published each year, this makes Europe a leader in the field.

New business models and new operators are emerging and the digital publishing sector accounts for 3% of total book sales in Europe. While e-books may provide an opportunity to broaden the range of readers, they are not without risk.

Accordingly, the lowering of prices, increasing online sales (by using algorithms), the protection of personal data and the weakening of bookshop networks are short- or long-term threats which we have to address. Only EU action has some possibility of success in the face of global challenges.

What is the Commission planning to do in this regard?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

Book publishing is both a driver for cultural diversity in Europe and one of Europe's most important cultural and creative industries. Books are key to the participation of European citizens in economic, social, cultural and political life.

The Commission is committed to promoting the dissemination of knowledge, including books, through the Creative Europe Programme. The Culture Sub-Programme of Creative Europe stimulates the circulation of literature across Europe, thereby promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. In particular, the EU Prize for Literature seeks to promote emerging European authors.

New instruments in the Horizon 2020 programme can fund smaller and more innovation-focused projects. These instruments are of particular interest for projects set up by small and medium enterprises in the publishing and ICT sectors, with a special emphasis on start-ups.

Europeana — the common access point to Europe's cultural heritage online — currently gives access to over 30 million objects from over 2 300 partner institutions, thereby contributing significantly to the promotion and dissemination of great books.

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