IV

(Informacje)

INFORMACJE INSTYTUCJI, ORGANÓW I JEDNOSTEK ORGANIZACYJNYCH UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI

PYTANIA PISEMNE Z ODPOWIEDZIĄ

Pytania pisemne skierowane przez posłów do Parlamentu Europejskiego i odpowiedzi na te pytania udzielone przez instytucję Unii Europejskiej

(2014/C 413/01)

Treść Strona

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005270/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Zero-hour contracts

In its resolution of 19 October 2010 on precarious women workers (P7_TA(2010)0365), Parliament called on the Member States to take legislative measures to put an end to zero-hour contracts.

In its answer of 15 September 2009 to Written Question E-4338/09, the Commission said that it did not envisage regulating zero-hour employment contracts at Community level 'at this stage'.

In the ruling of 8 November 2012 in joint Cases C-229/11 and 230/11 (Alexander Heimann (C-229/11), Konstantin Toltschin (C-230/11) v. Kaiser GmbH), the Court of Justiceof the European Union stated that zero-hour workers are covered to some extent by EC law concerning working time and minimum paid annual leave entitlement on the basis of actual hours worked.

In its answer of 11 November 2013 to Written Question E-010783/2013, the Commission pointed out that it had raised the issues of precarious work and zero-hour employment in its 2006 Green Paper entitled 'Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century' (COM(2006)0708), but that 'there was insufficient support among the Member States for the Commission to propose new legislation at EU level to address these issues'.

Workers on zero-hour employment contracts have no guarantee of any hours' work yet must still make themselves available for work, leading to inconsistent levels of pay and making it extremely difficult for the workers to plan ahead or to reconcile work and family life. Research conducted by the Irish trade union Mandate in 2013 found that nearly one in five people living below the poverty line worked in jobs with zero-hour contracts.

Will the Commission give consideration to coming forward with draft legislation tackling the problems of precarious work and zero-hour employment contracts?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

As regards precarious work, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Question E-4718/2014 ([1]). It has also been tackling the issue in the wake of its 2006 Green Paper ([2]). One of the most harmful forms of precarious work is undeclared work, which deprives workers of social protection and decent working conditions and governments of tax and social security revenue. The Commission recently put forward a proposal ([3]) to establish a European platform to improve cooperation at EU level between the Member States in preventing and deterring undeclared work. The Social Investment Package ([4]) adopted in 2013 presents a comprehensive strategy for structural reform of social policy to help the Member States better protect and invest in people and consequently tackle the root causes of precarious work.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) 'Outcome of the Public Consultation on the Commission's Green Paper "Modernising labour law to meet the challenges of the 21st century"' (COM(2007) 627 final of 24.10.2007).
([3]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9.4.2014).
([4]) 'Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion — including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020' (COM(2013) 83 final of 20.2.2013).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005271/14
a la Comisión
Inés Ayala Sender (S&D) y Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Refundición de la Decisión marco del Consejo

La recién implantada Directiva 2011/82/UE por la que se facilita el intercambio transfronterizo de información sobre infracciones de tráfico en materia de seguridad vial garantizará que la investigación de infracciones de tráfico también se aplique a los conductores no residentes. Este nuevo instrumento subsana una carencia importante en la cadena de aplicación de la ley al permitir el intercambio de información entre la policía y las autoridades competentes para lograr el pleno cumplimiento de la legislación en materia de tráfico y mejorar la seguridad vial.

La Decisión marco 2005/214/JAI del Consejo relativa a la aplicación del principio de reconocimiento mutuo de sanciones pecuniarias representa el elemento final en la cadena de aplicación de la ley en el ámbito de las infracciones de tráfico en materia de seguridad vial.

Aunque ambos textos se complementan entre sí y su objetivo es acabar con la impunidad en las carreteras de la UE, es necesario tomar medidas adicionales para disponer de un sistema viable que tenga un efecto disuasorio real sobre los conductores no residentes cuando conduzcan en el extranjero. Desgraciadamente, el texto actual de la Decisión tiene una cantidad importante de deficiencias y debe adaptarse a las nuevas disposiciones del Tratado de Lisboa. Además, esto podría constituir una nueva oportunidad para mejorar la vinculación de ambos textos legislativos y ampliar su ámbito de aplicación de forma que incluya las infracciones civiles y administrativas, que son el procedimiento normal empleado en algunos Estados miembros para perseguir las infracciones de tráfico.

La Comisión Europea comenzó a preparar una refundición de la Decisión 2005/214/JAI en 2012, pero todavía no ha presentado ninguna propuesta.

1. ¿Cuándo comenzará la Comisión la modificación prevista de la Decisión marco 2005/214/JAI del Consejo?

2. ¿Cómo piensa garantizar que se lleven a cabo los últimos pasos de la cadena de aplicación de la ley y contribuir a la mejora de la seguridad vial?

3. ¿Considerará la posibilidad de incluir las infracciones civiles/administrativas en esta importante parte final de la cadena de aplicación de la ley?

Respuesta de la Sra. Reding en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión reitera su compromiso de proseguir la mejora de la seguridad vial. Se puede observa una disminución impresionante de las muertes en carretera en las dos últimas décadas. Gran parte de este éxito se puede atribuir a una aplicación efectiva de las normas de seguridad vial establecidas por los Estados miembros para prevenir y perseguir las infracciones de tráfico, lo que incluye sanciones tanto administrativas como penales.

La Directiva 2011/82/UE, por la que se facilita el intercambio transfronterizo de información sobre infracciones de tráfico en materia de seguridad vial ([1]), aportó un gran valor añadido al poner fin al anonimato de los conductores no residentes y al facilitar que las infracciones de tráfico no quedaran impunes. En su sentencia de 6 de mayo de 2014 ([2]), el Tribunal de Justicia anuló la Directiva 2011/82/UE, pero declaró que seguiría surtiendo efecto durante un plazo de 12 meses hasta la adopción de una nueva Directiva que la sustituya con la base jurídica correcta relativa al transporte.

La Decisión marco 2005/214/JAI del Consejo, relativa a la aplicación del principio de reconocimiento mutuo de sanciones pecuniarias, constituye la etapa final del procedimiento de ejecución transfronteriza de sanciones pecuniarias mediante el reconocimiento mutuo. Aun teniendo en cuenta sus deficiencias, los Estados miembros hacen referencia al sistema establecido por la Decisión marco y hay indicios de que el porcentaje de sanciones financieras correspondientes a las multas de tráfico por carretera es muy alto, alrededor del 93 % en el conjunto de la UE. En una reciente Comunicación de la Comisión ([3]) se hace referencia explícita a reforzar en mayor medida los instrumentos relativos al reconocimiento mutuo de sanciones pecuniarias.

No obstante, las posibles nuevas medidas de la UE relativas a la aplicación de las normas de seguridad vial exigen una evaluación en profundidad que todavía debe llevarse a cabo.

([1]) DO L 288 de 5.11.2011, p. 1.
([2]) http://curia.europa.eu/juris/documents.jsf?num=C-43/12
([3]) COM(2014) 144 final. Programa de Justicia de la UE para 2020 — Reforzar la confianza, la movilidad y el crecimiento dentro de la Unión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005271/14
to the Commission
Inés Ayala Sender (S&D) and Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Recast of Council framework decision

The recently implemented new Directive 2011/82/EU facilitating the cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences will ensure that the investigation of traffic offences also applies to non-resident drivers. This new instrument fills an important gap in the enforcement chain, enabling the exchange of information between police and enforcement authorities so as to achieve full compliance with traffic law and improve road safety.

Council Framework Decision 2005/214/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to financial penalties represents the final element in the enforcement chain for road safety related traffic offences.

Although both texts complement one another and aim to put an end to impunity on EU roads, further steps need to be taken in order to have a workable system that provides a real deterrent to non-resident drivers. Unfortunately the current text of the decision has a significant number of shortcomings, and it should also be adapted to the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty. Furthermore, this could be a new opportunity to better link both pieces of legislation and enlarge the scope to include civil and administrative offences, which are the typical procedure used in some Member States for the prosecution of road traffic offences.

The Commission started to prepare a recast of the decision in 2012 but has not yet come up with a proposal.

1. When will the Commission commence its planned modification of Council Framework Decision 2005/214/JHA?

2. How will it ensure that the final steps in the enforcement chain are carried through and help to improve road safety?

3. Will it consider the possibility of including civil/administrative offences in this important final part of the enforcement chain?

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

The Commission reiterates its commitment to continue improving road safety. An impressive decline of road fatalities can be observed over the last two decades. Much of this success can be credited to an effective enforcement of road safety rules put in place by Member States to prevent and prosecute traffic offences, which include both administrative and criminal penalties.

The directive 2011/82/EU facilitating the cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences ([1]) brought a significant added value by putting an end to the anonymity of non-resident drivers and by facilitating that their road traffic offences would not go unpunished. In its judgment of 6 May 2014 ([2]) the European Court of Justice annulled Directive 2011/82/EU but ruled that its effects are maintained for a period of 12 months until a new Directive will replace it based on the correct transport legal basis.

The Council Framework Decision 2005/214/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to financial penalties is a final step in the procedure for enforcing cross-border financial penalties via mutual recognition. Even with its shortcomings, Member States make reference to the system established by the framework Decision and evidence suggests that the share of financial penalties related to road traffic fines is very high, around 93% across the EU. In a recent Commission Communication ([3]) explicit reference is made to further strengthening the instruments concerning mutual recognition of financial penalties.

However, any new actions at EU level concerning the enforcement of road safety rules require an in-depth evaluation that has yet to be carried out.

([1]) OJ L 288, 5.11.2011.
([2]) http://curia.europa.eu/juris/documents.jsf?num=C-43/12
([3]) COM(2014) 144 final : The EU Justice Agenda for 2020 — Strengthening Trust, Mobility and Growth within the Union.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005272/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: 2009-2014 legislature — a disaster for Europe

During the course of the current legislature, the Member States have demonstrated unwillingness, possibly even inability, to act together in a number of policy areas, notably on the Syrian crisis. It is also the legislature that will be remembered for the eurozone crisis, and crippling austerity measures that have contributed to rising unemployment and other social ills. These factors are seen to have contributed to a highly disturbing rise in support for the far-right political parties across Europe. One Member State, the United Kingdom, has committed to a referendum on withdrawal from the EU.

The failed attempt to agree an association agreement with Ukraine has triggered a chain of events that has brought Europe to the brink of war, with a dramatic escalation of military presence in that region.

Would the Commission agree with me that this has been a disastrous legislature for the EU, and for Europe?

Answer given by Mr Reding on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

No. The Commission does not agree with you. I invite you to read the record of achievements of the European Commission 2010-2014 http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/achievements/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005273/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: 30 km/h speed limit in urban areas

What action has the Commission taken following Parliament's resolution of 3 July 2013 on 'Road safety 2011-2020 — First milestones towards an injury strategy', and most notably in response to paragraph 14, which called on the Commission to provide an overview of urban areas with a 30 km/h speed limit and of the effects of that limit in reducing fatalities and serious injuries?

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

In line with the European Parliament resolution of 3 July 2013 ([1]), the Commission has continued to work with Member States to establish a target on serious road traffic injuries. As first step a methodology for the gathering of comparable and reliable data on these injuries was developed in close consultation with the Member States during 2013, including study visits for exchange of best practices between Member State experts. The data collection using the new common EU definition of serious road traffic injury subsequently started in January 2014. The first results are expected to become available in 2015, when also the target can be set.

As regards speed limits, the attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the fact that the decisions to set speed limits on road network lay in the exclusive competence of the Member States concerned. The Commission does not possess information on all urban areas of the EU with a speed limit of 30 km/h. However, the Commission has gathered and published the information on national speed limits ([2]) applied on various types of roads, including in urban areas of the Member States. The Commission continues to closely monitor the accident situation on various types of roads in the EU, including on such rural and urban roads outside the TEN-T to which the provisions of the road safety infrastructure management Directive ([3]) do not apply.

([1]) European Parliament resolution of 3.7.2013 on Road safety 2011-2020 — First milestones towards an injury strategy (2013/2670(RSP)).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm
([3]) Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19.11.2008 on road infrastructure safety management OJ L 319, 29.11.2008, p. 59-67.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005274/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: European 116 numbers

How is the Commission responding to paragraph 27 of Parliament's resolution of 24 October 2013 on the implementation report on the regulatory framework for electronic communications ([1]), which welcomed the Commission's work on the practical implementation of the 116 numbers, especially the missing child hotline (116000), and called for better promotion of these numbers by the Commission?

In particular, what is the role of DG SANCO in the promotion of these numbers, particularly the 116123 emotional support helpline? How is the 116 initiative aligned with wider Commission objectives, in particular the strategic priorities of DG SANCO?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

The Commission welcomes the support expressed by the Parliament concerning the 116 numbers in its resolution of 24 October 2013 on the implementation report on the regulatory framework for electronic communications.

Concerning the promotion of the individual numbers, the Commission actively pushes Member States to promote 116 services as required by EC law. However, apart from 116 000, the hotline for missing children, there is no strict legal requirement for Member States to render their 116 service operational. Concerning the organisation of 116 services, Member States are vested with the task of establishing the rules on the assignment and operation of these services as well as their promotion.

The Commission is acting as centre for the exchange of information and best practices, and regularly publishes the state of implementation on its 116 website (the latest report was published on 27 May 2014 and is available at the Commission website ([2])).

Through a Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-being under the EU-Health Programme, 25 Member States are working together to agree on a common framework of action in the field of mental health. The resulting action framework, foreseen for early 2016, could include the recommendation to operate support helplines.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0454.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/state-play-implementation-116-numbers-10

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005275/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Carers' leave directive

80% of care across the EU is provided informally, by spouses, partners, relatives and friends, usually on an unpaid basis. These carers will become even more important due to demographic change. It is estimated that the economic value of unpaid informal care amounts to between 50% and 90% of the overall cost of formal long-term care provision.

What action is the Commission taking on foot of Parliament's resolution of 4 July 2013 on the impact of the crisis on access to care for vulnerable groups, which, in its paragraph 56, called on the Commission (and the Member States) to 'explicitly recognise the invaluable contribution made by informal carers', urged the Member States to 'put in place and maintain targeted support measures for carers and the voluntary sector, in the interests of providing more personal, quality and cost-effective measures, e.g. measures enabling reconciliation of work and family life, facilitating better cooperation and coordination between informal and formal care providers, and ensuring appropriate social security policies and training for carers', called on the Commission and the Member States to 'develop a coherent framework for all types of care leave', and called on the Commission to 'propose a directive on carers' leave, in line with the subsidiarity principle as set out in the Treaties'?

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

The EU has adopted legislation which enables citizens to reconcile their professional and private life and also to enhance gender equality. Respective initiatives need to keep pace with the development of our societies in order to reflect an ever growing integration of women into the labour market and the demographic changes as well as evolving business needs.

The 2008 Commission proposal for an amendment to the maternity leave Directive, still under negotiation, is an initiative pursuing that objective. Also, the revised Directive 2010/18/EC on Parental Leave now gives each working parent the right to four months leave after the birth or adoption of a child (previously up to three months).

In 2013, the Commission adopted the Social Investment Package which includes a Commission Staff Working Document on long-term care[1] which also discusses the contribution made by family carers to society and points to the difficulties they are facing in terms of opportunity costs (income situation, pensions entitlement, health problems etc.). As a follow-up the Commission has supported the Social Protection Committee in preparing a report on long-term care which should become available in summer 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005276/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: European statute for voluntary organisations

How has the Commission responded, or is it responding, to Parliament's resolution of 10 December 2013 on volunteering and voluntary activity in Europe, and most notably to paragraph 7 thereof, which called for a European statute for voluntary organisations to be adopted in order to help ensure that they are given proper legal and institutional recognition?

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

The Commission always consults with civil society on its various initiatives and organises regular events actively involving civil society. As far as the creation of a European Association Statute is concerned the reply is to be found in the Commission's Communication 'Social Business Initiative' ([1]), last paragraph, as follows: 'The Commission also suggests giving further consideration to: … the need for a possible European statute for other forms of social enterprise such as non-profit-making associations and/or a possible common European statute for social enterprises'. To achieve this, once the European Foundation Statute proposal ([2]) has been adopted, the Commission will organise a high-level meeting between key stakeholders from all sectors involved in social entrepreneurship, the European Parliament and the Council in order to consider the initiatives to be taken to improve the legal framework for social enterprises at European level.

In addition, it the context of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) ([3]), supported by the Erasmus+ Programme, the Commission implements an EVS Charter that all organisations wishing to take part in EVS must adhere to. The EVS Charter outlines the rights and roles of partners in an EVS project. Before taking part in EVS, organisations from Erasmus+ Programme Countries as well from Partner Countries neighbouring the EU apply for an EVS accreditation and go through a process of evaluation by accreditors. A valid EVS accreditation is required for an organisation to be eligible to take part in EVS.

([1]) COM(2011) 682: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0682:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/eufoundation/index_en.htm
([3]) http://europa.eu/youth/EU/voluntary-activities/european-voluntary-service_en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005277/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Review of Directive 2003/59/EC on driver training

What is the current situation with regard to the review of Directive 2003/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2003 on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers, amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 3820/85 and Council Directive 91/439/EEC and repealing Council Directive 76/914/EEC ([1])? Will the Commission address the issue of the cost of training as part of this review?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

The Commission has initiated the review of Directive 2003/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 July 2003 on the initial qualification and periodic training of drivers of certain road vehicles for the carriage of goods or passengers with the objective to assess whether it can be made more efficient and should be adapted to technical and legal changes that have occurred since its adoption in 2003, such as the adoption of Directive 126/2006/EC on driving licences ([2]). The Honourable Member is herewith informed that the review of Directive 2003/59/EC is ongoing, and that the costs and benefits of any potential amendment will be analysed in the impact assessment accompanying the Commission proposal.

([1]) OJ L 226, 10.9.2003, p. 4.
([2]) OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 18-60 as amended.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005278/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Revision of Directives 2001/23/EC and 2002/14/EC

What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, in response to Parliament's resolution of 21 May 2013 on the application of Directive 2004/25/EC on takeover bids, and in particular to paragraph 18 thereof, which stressed that the question of how to protect and strengthen workers' rights urgently requires further consideration, taking also into account the *acquis*, including Directives 2001/23/EC and 2002/14/EC?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Commission recently carried out a 'Fitness Check' on three Directives ([1]) on worker information and consultation. On the basis of studies and consultations with stakeholders, it found that they were generally relevant, effective, efficient, coherent and concluded that they were 'broadly fit for purpose' ([2]). However, since the Fitness Check also revealed a number of gaps and shortcomings, in particular as regards the definition of 'information' and 'consultation', the Commission will consider their consolidation, subject to the results of a consultation of the social partners ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2002/14/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.3.2002 establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees in the European Community (OJ L 80, 23.3.2002, p. 29), Council Directive 2001/23/EC of 12.3.2001 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the safeguarding of employees' rights in the event of transfers of undertakings, businesses or parts of undertakings or businesses (OJ L 82, 22.3.2001, p. 16) and Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20.7.1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies (OJ L 225, 12.8.98, p. 16).

([2]) See Commission Staff Working Document "Fitness check' on EC law in the area of information and consultation of workers' (SWD(2013) 293 final of 26.7.2013).

([3]) See Commission Communication 'Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT): Results and Next Steps' (COM(2013) 685 final of 2.10.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005279/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Support for people with spina bifida

Further to its answer of 27 March 2013 to Question E-000579/2013, what are the Commission's plans to follow up the 2010-2013 framework partnership agreement with Spina Bifida? What possibilities are there under the Erasmus+ programme, the successors to Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action, and other new EU programmes such as the Health for Growth Programme, etc., to support organisations that work with and on behalf of people with spina bifida? When does the Commission expect to issue calls for proposals that would be of interest and relevance to these organisations?

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

The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IF) is among the beneficiaries of grants under the 2007-2013 Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (PROGRESS) ([1]). IF also received a grant in 2010 in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Under the 2014-2020 Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme ([2]), a call for proposals for framework partners to support EU networks in the area of disabilities is planned to be launched in 2014 ([3]).

The third Health Programme 2014-2020 ([4]) also gives a possibility for non-governmental bodies working in the field of public health to apply for operating grants. The call for the first year of programme implementation is expected to be launched shortly (see http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/index.html).

Although the Erasmus+ programme does not specifically target support to organisations working with people with disabilities, it encourages the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, including with disabilities, and provides specific financial support to their participation if needed. The Programme aims in particular at promoting equity and inclusion by facilitating access to learners with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities compared to their peers.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=327
([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1381/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 establishing a Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme for the period 2014 to 2020, OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 62.
([3]) Cf. the Annual Work Programme for 2014, published at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index_en.htm
([4]) Established by Regulation (EU) No 282/2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005280/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Niños bajo acusación en Pakistán

Según ha informado el periódico *The New York Times* en un artículo publicado el 9 de abril de 2014, en Pakistán la policía ha presentado cargos ante los tribunales contra un niño de nueve meses de edad, de nombre Musa Khan, acusado de una tentativa de homicidio. Sus familiares han tenido que esconderlo de la policía. El niño ha sido acusado, junto con otras cuatro personas adultas, de perpetrar en febrero de 2014 actos violentos en el marco de una acción de protesta en un suburbio de Lahore. Los habitantes de la barriada lanzaron piedras contra los empleados de la empresa suministradora de gas que habían venido a cortar el suministro a varios hogares por el impago de facturas, y después, la policía acusó a una familia entera de una tentativa de homicidio, incluido a Musa Khan.

Según los abogados, la policía pakistaní formula a menudo acusaciones abultadas contra familias marginadas — como castigo colectivo. Pakistán firmó y ratificó la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos del Niño del año 1989, cuyo artículo 2 dice lo siguiente:

«1. Los Estados Partes respetarán los derechos enunciados en la presente Convención y asegurarán su aplicación a cada niño sujeto a su jurisdicción, sin distinción alguna, independientemente de la raza, el color, el sexo, el idioma, la religión, la opinión política o de otra índole, el origen nacional, étnico o social, la posición económica, los impedimentos físicos, el nacimiento o cualquier otra condición del niño, de sus padres o de sus representantes legales.

2. Los Estados Partes tomarán todas las medidas apropiadas para garantizar que el niño se vea protegido contra toda forma de discriminación o castigo por causa de la condición, las actividades, las opiniones expresadas o las creencias de sus padres, o sus tutores o de sus familiares.»

1. ¿Podría indicar la Comisión si la UE sigue con atención la situación en Pakistán en lo relativo a presuntas actuaciones violentas de la policía y la persecución arbitraria de los grupos sociales más pobres?

2. ¿Qué gestiones está llevando a cabo la UE para abordar la cuestión de la protección de los niños contra las actuaciones de los cuerpos de seguridad del Estado dirigidas a intimidar y perseguir a las familias de las que proceden?

3. ¿Se ha interesado la UE ante el Gobierno de Pakistán por el número de niños puestos a disposición de las autoridades judiciales acusados de delitos penales y por las condiciones materiales en que se les mantiene detenidos?

4. Teniendo en cuenta que Pakistán goza de una cobertura SPG+, que lleva aparejado el obligatorio cumplimiento de una serie de tratados sobre derechos humanos, incluido el derecho a la protección de los niños, ¿qué medidas va a adoptar la UE para garantizar que el Gobierno pakistaní aplique estos tratados? ¿Está considerando la posibilidad de retirar las ventajas comerciales concedidas a Pakistán mientras el país no aplique estos tratados en la práctica?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión recibe información periódica de grupos de la sociedad civil y de defensores de los derechos humanos sobre cuestiones relativas a las violaciones de los derechos humanos, especialmente en relación con las detenciones arbitrarias y la actuación policial.

La historia de Musa Khan es representativa de los retos a los que se enfrenta el Gobierno de Pakistán a la hora de reformar la ley y el orden en el país. Es esencial que el pueblo de Pakistán disponga de un servicio de policía en el que pueda confiar. En relación con Musa Khan, el juez desestimó el caso y aseguró que el tribunal no hubiera debido admitir nunca a trámite la acusación. En sus conversaciones con el Gobierno paquistaní, la UE ha subrayado reiteradamente la importancia de la protección de los derechos de todos los ciudadanos del país, incluidos los niños, y de la asunción de responsabilidades.

Pakistán es signatario de la Convención Internacional sobre los Derechos del Niño. El órgano de supervisión de la Convención de los Derechos del Niño de las Naciones Unidas exige a Pakistán que informe sobre la aplicación de la Convención. La sociedad civil participa también en el acopio de datos e información pertinente. Las conclusiones y recomendaciones de los órganos de supervisión internacionales constituyen la principal fuente de información para la supervisión de la Comisión.

Como ocurre con cualquier beneficiario del SPG+, Pakistán está sujeto a un mecanismo de seguimiento continuo por parte de la Comisión para garantizar que realmente aplica un conjunto de 27 convenios internacionales, incluida la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño. Pakistán tiene que mostrar un balance positivo del respeto de todos los convenios. Además de las conclusiones de los órganos de supervisión internacionales, la Comisión puede tomar en consideración la información presentada por la sociedad civil, siempre que sea exacta y fiable. En caso de detectar un grave incumplimiento de cualquiera de los convenios, la Comisión puede retirar las preferencias del SPG +.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005280/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Pakistan child charges

According to a report published in the *New York Times* on 9 April 2014, Musa Khan, a 9-month-old child in Pakistan, was brought to court by the police on charges of attempted murder, and his relatives had to hide him from the police. The baby boy was charged alongside four adults in connection with a violent protest in a Lahore slum in February 2014. Slum residents threw stones at gas company workers who had tried to disconnect households that failed to pay their bills, leading the police to charge an entire family with attempted murder, including Musa.

Lawyers say that the Pakistani police have often lodged exaggerated complaints against poor families as a form of collective punishment. Pakistan has signed and ratified the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which explicitly states in Article 2:

'1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. 2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members'.

1. Is the EU monitoring the situation in Pakistan regarding police brutality and the arbitrary prosecution of the poorest social groups?

2. What steps is the EU taking to address the issue of the protection of children from actions by government agencies aiming at intimidating and prosecuting their families?

3. Is the EU currently requesting data from the Government of Pakistan over the number of children brought to court under criminal charges and the condition of the facilities where these children are being detained?

4. Taking into account that Pakistan has been granted GSP+ status, which requires the implementation of a series of human rights treaties, including the protection of children, what steps will the EU take to ensure that the Pakistani Government implements these treaties? Is it considering withdrawing the trade benefits granted to Pakistan until such time as these treaties are complied with?

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

The Commission is regularly informed by civil society groups and human rights defenders on issues concerning human rights abuses, including arbitrary detentions and the behaviour of the police.

The story of Musa Khan is emblematic of the challenges facing the government of Pakistan in tackling reform of law and order in the country. It is essential that the Pakistani people should have a police service in which they can have confidence. Concerning Musa Khan, the case which was brought against him was dismissed: the presiding judge said that the case should never have been brought to court. The EU has repeatedly underlined the importance of protection of the rights of all Pakistan's citizens, including children, as well as accountability in its discussions with the government.

Pakistan is a signatory to the international Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The UN's CRC monitoring body requires Pakistan to report on the implementation of the CRC. Civil society also participates by providing data and supporting information. The conclusions and recommendations of the international monitoring bodies constitute the main source of information for Commission monitoring.

As with any GSP+ beneficiary, Pakistan is subject to a continuous monitoring mechanism by the Commission, to ensure it effectively implements a set of 27 international conventions including the CRC. Pakistan has to show a positive record of compliance of all conventions. In addition to the conclusions of the relevant international monitoring bodies, the Commission can consider information submitted by civil society provided that it is accurate and reliable. In case serious failure to implement any of the conventions is shown, the Commission may withdraw GSP+ preferences.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005281/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Tniġġis fis-settur marittimu

L-Unjoni Ewropea hija mdawra bl-oċeani u l-ibħra, u hemm iktar baħar taħt il-ġuriżdizzjoni tal-Istati Membri milli art. Il-kosta, maqsuma bejn 23 mit-28 Stat Membru, hija seba' darbiet itwal minn dik tal-Istati Uniti. Aktar minn 200 miljun ċittadin tal-UE jgħixu f'reġjuni kostali u 88 miljun jaħdmu f'dawn ir-reġjuni, u jiġġeneraw 'il fuq minn 40 % tal-PDG tal-UE. 5.4 miljuni minn dawn iċ-ċittadini huma impjegati fis-settur tal-baħar u dak marittimu, li l-valur gross miżjud tiegħu jammonta għal EUR 500 biljun. Dawn il-fatti jindikaw l-importanza attwali taż-żoni tal-baħar u kostali u tal-ekonomija marittima għall-Unjoni Ewropea. Madankollu, se jkollhom rwol anki aktar importanti fil-ġejjieni. Se jkun hemm żieda ulterjuri fl-attivitajiet tal-bniedem u l-attivitajiet ekonomiċi fi ħdan dawn ir-reġjuni u setturi. L-ekonomija marittima tal-UE hija kruċjali biex l-għanijiet ta' Ewropa 2020 jinkisbu, u għandha potenzjal enormi biex tiżgura l-kompetittività tal-Ewropa f'dinja globalizzata. L-UE għandu jkollha rwol ewlieni fit-tisħiħ tar-riċerka u l-innovazzjoni fil-qasam tal-baħar dak marittimu, u sabiex tiffavorixxi t-tkabbir tas-setturi marittimi. Illum, 90 % tal-prodotti ta' kummerċ barrani tal-UE huma trasportati bil-baħar. Il-portijiet Ewropej, ir-rotot marittimi bil-bastimenti u l-industrija tan-navigazzjoni għandhom rwol maġġuri biex tiġi żgurata l-katina tal-forniment ta' prodotti, u biex ikun hemm rabta bejn il-kumpaniji Ewropej u s-suq Ewropew ma' ekonomiji oħra mad-dinja kollha.

1. X'inhuma l-proġetti li għaddejjin bħalissa biex l-oċeani u l-ibħra jiġu mħarsa mit-tniġġis?

2. Meta jitqies li 'l fuq minn 200 miljum ċittadin Ewropew jgħixu f'reġjuni kostali u 88 miljun jaħdmu f'dawn ir-reġjuni, jiġġeneraw aktar minn 40 % tal-PDG tal-UE, u 5.4 miljun minnhom huma impjegati fis-settur tal-baħar u dak marittimu, li l-valur gross miżjud tagħhom jammonta għal kważi EUR 500 biljun, il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti tagħrif dwar kemm nisa jaħdmu fis-settur marittimu?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Potočnik f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(18 ta' Ġunju 2014)

1. Id-Direttiva Kwadru dwar l-Istrateġija Marina ([1]) hija l-istrument ewlieni biex jitħares l-ambjent tal-baħar tal-UE. Din id-Direttiva għandha l-għan li jinkiseb Status Ambjentali Tajjeb tal-ilmijiet tal-baħar tal-UE sal-2020 u li titħares il-bażi ta' riżorsi li fuqha jiddependu l-attivitajiet ekonomiċi u soċjali b'rabta mal-baħar. Barra minn din id-Direttiva, firxa wiesgħa ta' leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE tikkontribwixxi wkoll għal titjib fl-ambjent tal-baħar, pereżempju d-Direttiva Qafas dwar l-Ilma, id-Direttiva dwar it-Trattament tal-Ilma Urban Mormi, id-Direttiva dwar l-Ilma għall-Għawm, id-Direttiva dwar in-Nitrati jew id-Direttivi dwar l-Għasafar u dwar il-Ħabitats. Bħala parti mill-implimentazzjoni tas-Seba' Programm ta' Azzjoni Ambjentali, il-Kummissjoni qed tqis ukoll mira mifruxa mal-UE dwar l-iskart fil-baħar.

2. Il-perċentwal medju ta' nisa li jaħdmu fl-ekonomija marittima fl-2012 u l-2013 huwa 9% fl-estrazzjoni taż-żejt mhux maħdum grezz, 10% fis-sajd, 13% fil-bini tal-vapuri u d-dgħajjes, 16% f'attivitajiet ta' appoġġ għall-estrazzjoni taż-żejt mhux maħdum u l-gass naturali, 17% fil-ġarr tal-merkanzija fil-baħar u mal-kosta, 23% fl-akkwakultura, 29% fil-ġarr tal-passiġġieri fil-baħar u mal-kosta, 48% f'siti tal-ikkampjar, parks tal-vetturi ta' rikreazzjoni u parks tal-karrijiet, 50% fir-ristoranti u attivitajiet tas-servizzi tal-ikel mobbli, 55% fl-ipproċessar u l-preservazzjoni tal-ħut, il-krustaċji u l-molluski, 60% fil-lukandi u akkomodazzjoni simili, 63% f'akkomodazzjoni tal-vaganzi u żjarat qosra oħra u 65% fil-libreriji, l-arkivji, il-mużewijiet u attivitajiet kulturali oħra. Dawn l-attivitajiet meħudin mill-Istħarriġ dwar il-Forza tax-Xogħol ([2]) mhux kollha huma purament marittimi iżda nistgħu nassumu li, pereżempju, il-proporzjon li jaħdmu f'ristoranti li jservu lit-turisti huwa l-istess proporzjon għar-ristoranti kollha.

([1]) ĠU. L 164, 25/06/2008.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/lfs

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005281/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Pollution in the maritime sector

The European Union is surrounded by oceans and seas, and there is more sea under the Member States' jurisdiction than land. The coastline, shared by 23 out of the 28 Member States, is seven times as long as that of the US. More than 200 million EU citizens live in coastal regions and 88 million work in these regions, generating more than 40% of the EU's GDP. 5.4 million of these citizens are employed in the marine and maritime sectors, the gross value added of which amounts to almost EUR 500 billion. These facts indicate the current importance of the marine and coastal areas and of the maritime economy for the European Union. However, they will play an even more important role in the future. There will be a further increase of human and economic activities within these regions and sectors. The EU's maritime economy is crucial to achieving the Europe 2020 goals and has huge potential to ensure Europe's competitiveness in a globalised world. The EU should play a leading role in strengthening marine and maritime research and innovation, and fostering growth of the maritime sectors. Today, 90% of the EU's foreign trade goods are transported by sea. European ports, the maritime shipping routes and the shipping industry play a major role in ensuring the supply chain, and in connecting European companies and the European market with the other economies all over the world.

1. What are the on-going projects to help protect the oceans and seas from pollution?

2. Given that more that 200 million EU citizens live in coastal regions and 88 million work in these regions, generating more than 40% of the EU's GDP, and 5.4 million of them are employed in marine and maritime sectors, the gross value added of which amounts to almost EUR 500 billion, can the Commission state how many women work in the maritime sector?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

1. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive ([1]) is the main instrument to protect the EU's marine environment. It aims to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES) of the EU's marine waters by 2020 and to protect the resource base upon which marine-related economic and social activities depend. In addition to this directive, a large span of EU legislation also contributes to improving the marine environment, for example the Water Framework Directive, the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive, the Bathing Water Directive, the Nitrates Directive or the Birds and Habitats Directives. As part of the implementation of the 7th Environmental Action Programme, the Commission is also considering on an EU wide marine litter reduction target.

2. The average percentage of women working in the maritime economy in 2012 and 2013 is 9% in extraction of crude petroleum, 10% in fishing, 13% in building of ships and boats, 16% in support activities for petroleum and natural gas extraction, 17% in sea and coastal freight water transport, 23% in aquaculture, 29% in sea and coastal passenger water transport, 48% in camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks, 50% in restaurants and mobile food service activities, 55% in processing and preserving of fish, crustaceans and molluscs, 60% in hotels and similar accommodation, 63% in holiday and other short-stay accommodation and 65% in libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities. Not all of these activities extracted from the Labour Force Survey ([2]) are purely maritime but we can assume that, for instance, the proportion working in restaurants servicing tourists is the same as the proportion for all restaurants.

([1]) OJ. L 164, 25.6.2008.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/lfs

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005282/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-melanoma

Fis-17 ta' April 2014 it-*Times of Malta* rrappurtat li madwar wieħed minn kull sitt persuni bil-melanoma saritilhom dijanjożi tard wisq, u dan wassal għall-mewt ta' 118-il persuna f'Malta u Għawdex f'żewġ deċennji.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti figuri dettaljati dwar kemm persuni mietu bil-melanoma fit-28 Stat Membru fl-aħħar żewġ deċennji?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tindika kemm minnhom kienu nisa u kemm kienu rġiel?

3. X'qed tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tipprovdi iktar informazzjoni għall-pubbliku rigward il-melanoma?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(3 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Skont id-dejta disponibbli mogħtija mill-Eurostat, fl-Unjoni Ewropea (UE-28), matul il-perjodu bejn l-1999 u l-2010, 159.347 persuna — li minnhom 86.780 huma rġiel u 72.567 huma nisa — mietet minħabba melanoma tal-ġilda. Fir-rigward tal-għadd totali ta' mwiet, l-Istati Membri l-aktar affettwati kienu l-Ġermanja (28.159 imwiet), ir-Renju Unit (22.155), Franza (15.494), l-Italja (15.633), il-Polonja (12.046) u Spanja (9.637).

Sa minn nofs is-snin sebgħin, ir-rati ta' inċidenza ta' melanoma malinna ġeneralment żdiedu fl-Unjoni Ewropea. Għall-irġiel, ir-rati ta' inċidenza tal-Istandard Aġġustat Ewropew kienu madwar seba' darbiet oghla bejn l-2008 u l-2010 meta mqabbla mal-perjodu bejn l-1975 u l-1977. Għan-nisa, iż-żieda hija iżgħar iżda r-rati kkwadruplikaw bejn il-perjodu 1975-1977 u l-perjodu 2008-2010.

Il-Kodiċi Ewropew Kontra l-Kanċer żviluppat mill-Aġenzija Internazzjonali għar-Riċerka dwar il-Kanċer b'appoġġ mill-Kummissjoni, jirrakkomanda b'mod speċifiku biex wieħed jevita esponiment eċċessiv għax-xemx.

Il-Programm tas-Saħħa (2007-2013) appoġġja l-proġetti EUROSUN (li jkejlu l-esponiment ta' individwi u popolazzjonijiet fl-Ewropa għar-radjazzjoni UV permezz ta' dejta mis-satelliti meteoroloġiċi) ([1]) u EPIDERM (l-Inizjattiva Ewropea ta' Prevenzjoni għal Kundizzjonijiet Dermatoloġiċi Malinni) ([2]). Il-Programm qafas għar-Riċerka kompla jiffinanzja l-proġett EUROSKIN (Netwerk Ewropew ta' prevenzjoni tal-kanċer tal-ġilda) ([3]).

([1]) http://www.eurosun-project.org/Home/EuroSun-introduction-background-and-objectives.html
([2]) http://www.epiderm-network.eu/
([3]) http://www.euroskin.eu/en/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005282/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Melanoma

The Times of Malta reported on 17 April 2014 that about one in six people with melanoma were diagnosed too late, leading to the deaths of 118 people in Malta and Gozo over two decades.

1. Can the Commission give a detailed breakdown of people who have died of melanoma in the 28 Member States in the past two decades?

2. Can the Commission indicate how many were women and how many were men?

3. What is the Commission doing to provide more information for the public regarding melanoma?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

According to the available data provided by Eurostat, during the period 1999-2010, 159 347 persons — of which 86 780 men and 72 567 women — died from melanoma of the skin in the European Union (EU-28). As regards the total number of deaths, the most affected Member States were Germany (28 159 deaths), the United Kingdom (22 155), France (15 494), Italy (15 633), Poland (12 046) and Spain (9 637).

Malignant melanoma incidence rates have overall increased in the European Union since the mid-1970s. For men, European Adjusted Standard incidence rates were around seven times higher in 2008-2010 than in 1975-1977. For women the increase is smaller but rates have quadrupled between 1975-1977 and 2008-2010.

The European Code Against Cancer developed by the International Agency for Research on Cancer with support from the Commission, specifically recommends to avoid excessive sun exposure.

The Health Programme (2007-2013) has supported the projects Eurosun (Measuring the exposure of individuals and populations in Europe to UV radiation by using the data of meteorological satellites) ([1]) and Epiderm (European Prevention Initiative for Dermatological Malignancies) ([2]). The framework Programme for Research further funded the project Euroskin (European network of skin cancer prevention) ([3]).

([1]) http://www.eurosun-project.org/Home/EuroSun-introduction-background-and-objectives.html
([2]) http://www.epiderm-network.eu/
([3]) http://www.euroskin.eu/en/

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005283/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-ġeneru u d-drogi

Is-sustanzi psikoattivi l-ġodda, li jista' jkollhom ħafna użi kummerċjali u industrijali kif ukoll użi xjentifiċi, jisgħu jippreżentaw riskji għas-saħħa, għas-soċjetà u għas-sikurezza meta jiġu kkonsmati mill-bnedmin. Il-konsum tas-sustanzi psikoattivi l-ġodda jidher li qed jiżdied fl-Ewropa u l-użu tagħhom hu predominanti fost iż-żgħażagħ. Skont l-Ewrobarometru "L-attitudni taż-Żgħażagħ fir-rigward tad-drogi", 5 % taż-żgħażagħ fl-UE użaw tali sustanzi mill-inqas darba f'ħajjithom, bl-ogħla rata ta' 16 % fl-Irlanda, u kważi 10% fil-Polonja, il-Latvja u r-Renju Unit.

Il-konsum tas-sustanzi psikoattivi l-ġodda jista' jikkawża dannu għas-saħħa u għas-sikurezza tal-individwi u jista' jippreżenta riskju għas-soċjetà u jqiegħed piż fuqha, peress li dan jista' jwassal għal imġiba vjolenti u għal kriminalità. Il-fatt li dawn is-sustanzi tfaċċaw u nxterdu tant malajr wassal lill-awtoritajiet nazzjonali biex jissottomettuhom għal diversi miżuri restrittivi. Mijiet ta' tali sustanzi jew taħlitiet ta' sustanzi ġew suġġetti għal miżuri differenti ta' restrizzjoni fl-Istati Membri fis-snin riċenti.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tistma kemm jiswa għal kull Stat Membru biex jgħin lill-persuni joħorġu miċ-ċirku vizzjuż tal-abbuż mid-drogi u s-sustanzi u jtaffi l-effett tagħhom?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti informazzjoni dwar kemm mill-utenti tad-drogi huma nisa f'kull Stat Membru u l-etajiet tagħhom, u tista' tiddikjara jekk il-proporzjon tal-utenti nisa tas-sustanzi psikoattivi hux ogħla minn dak tal-utenti irġiel jew vice versa?

3. Xi proġetti għandha intenzjoni li tibda l-Kummissjoni fil-ħames snin li ġejjin biex ittaffi l-impatt tal-abbuż mid-drogi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(19 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja tal-preżenza frekwenti u l-firxa mgħaġġla tas-sustanzi psikoattivi ġodda fl-UE, u tal-ħsara li dawn is-sustanzi jistgħu jikkawżaw lis-saħħa u s-sigurtà tal-individwi u tas-soċjetà. Fl-2013, il-Kummissjoni ppreżentat proposti leġiżlattivi biex issaħħaħ ir-rispons tal-UE fir-rigward tas-sustanzi psikoattivi ġodda, permezz ta' titjib tal-monitoraġġ u tal-valutazzjoni tar-riskju ta' dawn is-sustanzi, kif ukoll azzjoni aktar rapida biex dawn jiġu rtirati mis-suq.

It-tnaqqis fid-domanda għad-drogi jaqa' primarjament taħt il-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri tal-UE, li jipprovdu l-prevenzjoni tad-droga, u s-servizzi tat-trattament u t-tnaqqis tal-ħsara. Skont ir-Rapport Ewropew dwar id-Drogi tal-2013, ippubblikat miċ-Ċentru Ewropew għall-Monitoraġġ tad-Droga u d-Dipendenza fuq id-Droga (EMCDDA), fl-2011 mill-inqas 1.2 miljun persuna rċeviet trattament marbut mal-użu illeċitu tad-drogi fl-Ewropa. Il-Kummissjoni ma għandhiex statistika skont l-Istat Membru dwar il-kost tal-abbuż tas-sustanzi. Madankollu, l-EMCDDA tippubblika wkoll rapporti nazzjonali provduti mill-Member States' National Focal Points on Drugs, li jipprovdi ċerta informazzjoni dwar il-kost tat-trattament.

Ir-Rapport Ewropew dwar id-Drogi jipprovdi statistika skont is-sessi għall-persuni taħt trattament li kkunsmaw il-kannabis, il-kokaina, l-amfetamini u l-eroina madwar l-Ewropa. In-nisa jammontaw għal 16 % ta' dawk taħt trattament li jużaw il-kannabis, 16 % ta' dawk li jużaw il-kokaina, 29 % ta' dawk li jużaw l-amfetamina u 22 % ta' dawk li jużaw l-eroina.

Il-Kummissjoni se tkompli tikkumplimenta l-azzjoni tal-Istati Membri rigward it-tnaqqis tad-domanda għad-drogi billi pereżempju tappoġġa l-iżvilupp ta' approċċi innovattivi, jew tikkondividi l-aħjar prattiki, permezz ta' programmi finanzjarji tal-UE. Il-proġett ALICE RAP ([1]), iffinanzjat skont is-Seba' Programm Qafas għar-Riċerka, qed janalizza l-fenomenu tad-dipendenza, inkluż id-dipendenza fuq sustanzi psikoattivi.

([1]) L-ALICE-RAP (Addiction and lifestyles in contemporary Europe — reframing addictions) huwa proġett tranżitorju u interdixxiplinarju ta' ħames snin (2011-2016) iffinanzjat permezz tas-Seba' Programm Qafas għar-Riċerka, bil-għan li jikkontribwixxi għad-dibattitu dwar in-normi attwali u l-implikazzjonijiet futuri tad-dipendenza u l-istili tal-ħajja fl-Ewropa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005283/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Gender and drugs

New psychoactive substances, which may have numerous commercial and industrial uses as well as scientific uses, can pose health, social and safety risks when consumed by humans. Consumption of new psychoactive substances appears to be increasing in Europe and use is predominant among young people. According to the 2011 Eurobarometer 'Youth attitudes on drugs', 5% of young people in the EU have used such substances at least once in their life, with a peak of 16% in Ireland, and close to 10% in Poland, Latvia and the United Kingdom.

The consumption of new psychoactive substances can cause harm to the health and safety of individuals and can pose risks to and place burdens on society, as it may lead to violent behaviour and crime. The rapid emergence and spread of these substances have led national authorities to subject them to various restrictive measures. Hundreds of such substances or mixtures of substances have been subjected to different restriction measures in the Member States in recent years.

1. Can the Commission estimate how much it costs each Member State to mitigate and help people get out of the vicious circle of drug and substance abuse?

2. Can the Commission give a breakdown of female drug users for each Member State and their ages, and state whether the proportion of female users of psychoactive substances is higher than that of male users or vice versa?

3. What projects does the Commission intend to launch in the next five years to mitigate the impact of drug abuse?

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

The Commission is aware of the frequent emergence and rapid spread of new psychoactive substances in the EU, and of the harm that such substances can cause to the health and safety of individuals and of society. The Commission presented in 2013 legislative proposals to strengthen the EU response to new psychoactive substances, through enhanced monitoring and risk assessment of these substances, and swifter action to withdraw them from the market.

Drug-demand reduction is primarily the competence of the EU Member States, which provide drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction services. According to the 2013 European Drug Report, published by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), at least 1.2 million people received treatment for illicit drug use in Europe in 2011. The Commission does not have a break down by Member State on the cost of substance abuse. However, the EMCDDA also publishes national reports produced by the Member States' National Focal Points on Drugs, which provide certain information regarding the cost of treatment.

The European Drug Report provides gender breakdowns for the persons in treatment who have consumed cannabis, cocaine, amphetamines and heroin across Europe. Female users account for 16% of cannabis users in treatment, 16% of cocaine users, 29% of amphetamine users and 22% of heroin users.

The Commission will continue to complement Member States' action on drug-demand reduction by supporting the development of innovative approaches, for instance, or the sharing of best practices, through EU financial programmes. The ALICE RAP ([1]) project, funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, is studying the phenomenon of addiction, including addiction to psychoactive substances.

([1]) ALICE-RAP (Addiction and lifestyles in contemporary Europe — reframing addictions) is a five-year (2011-2016) transitional and interdisciplinary project funded through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, aimed at contributing to the debate on current norms and future implications of addiction and lifestyles in Europe.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005286/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: In-nisa fl-ekonomija ekoloġika

Ir-Rapport tas-17 ta' Lulju 2012 dwar ir-rwol tan-nisa fl-ekonomija ekoloġika ([1]) jirreferi għall-ħtieġa li l-ekonomija ekoloġika u dik sostenibbli , li min-naħa tagħha tinkludi ekonomija soċjali u ekoloġikament sostenibbli, jitpoġġew fuq l-istess livell. Dan ovvjament ifisser ukoll ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel. Ekonomija ekoloġika jew sostenibbli hi sistema li tippreserva l-kapaċità produttiva tal-ekosistema (it-tolleranza tal-pjaneta) filwaqt li toħloq soċjetà fejn jiġu ssodisfati l-bżonnijiet bażiċi ta' kulħadd. Għalhekk l-iżvilupp ekonomiku f'ekonomija ekoloġika jseħħ fil-kuntest ta' dak li tista' tittollera n-natura, u tiżgura distribuzzjoni ġusta tar-riżorsi bejn in-nies, bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel, u bejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet.

Ir-rapport stieden lill-Istati Membri jiżviluppaw korsijiet ta' taħriġ, permezz ta' programmi tal-UE, bħall-FEŻR u l-FSE, imfasslin biex jiffaċilitaw l-aċċess tan-nisa għall-impjiegi "ekoloġiċi", u t-teknoloġiji l-ġodda b'impatt ambjentali baxx, kemm fis-settur privat kif ukoll f'dak pubbliku; stieden lill-Istati Membri jiżguraw li l-ħaddiema nisa jiddaħħlu aktar fi proġetti u programmi ta' taħriġ dwar it-trasformazzjonijiet ekoloġiċi, jiġifieri, fis-settur rinnovabbli u f'impjiegi intensivi tax-xjenza u t-teknoloġija, u biex jiffukaw sabiex permezz tal-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ, jagħtu lin-nisa l-kompetenzi u l-kwalifiki li jkollhom bżonn sabiex jikkompetu mal-irġiel b'mod indaqs fl-impjiegi u fl-iżvilupp tal-karriera individwali; u osserva li l-irġiel għandhom aċċess eħfef għall-mezzi avvanzati ta' produzzjoni tal-agrikoltura u tat-teknoloġiji tan-negozju meħtieġa biex jinkisbu pożizzjonijiet ta' livell għoli fl-ekonomija ekoloġika.

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti rendikont dettaljat tad-data statistika dwar in-nisa preżenti fl-ekonomija ekoloġika?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni telenka l-impjiegi u l-opportunitajiet ta' impjiegi għan-nisa f'dan il-qasam?

3. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti d-data statistika dwar il-korsijiet ta' taħriġ żviluppati permezz ta' programmi tal-UE u dwar kemm-il mara bbenefikat minn korsijiet bħal dawn?

Tweġiba mogħtija tas-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Ġunju 2014)

1. Id-dejta dwar is-settur tal-prodotti u s-servizzi ambjentali (EGSS), miġbura fil-livell tal-UE biex tipprovdi informazzjoni armonizzata dwar attivitajiet relatati mal-impjiegi b'għanijiet ambjentali, mhix disponibbli skont il-ġeneru. ([2]) Madankollu, l-istudji li saru għall-Kummissjoni jew mill-aġenzji tal-UE għandhom tendenza juru li n-nisa għandhom inqas ċans li jkunu impjegati f'xogħlijiet li jistgħu jiġu ddefiniti li huma fis-settur ekoloġiku u jipparteċipaw inqas fit-teħid tad-deċiżjonijiet relatati mat-tibdil fil-klima ([3])fis-settur pubbliku wkoll.

2. Ir-riżultati tar-riċerka juru li l-ekonomija ekoloġika tipprovdi iktar opportunitajiet ta' impjieg f'karigi li jkunu tradizzjonalment iddominati mill-irġiel, bħal karigi professjonali u professjonali assoċjati. ([4]) Iktar nisa jistgħu jiġu impjegati billi jingħelbu l-isterjotipi u s-segmentazzjoni tal-edukazzjoni skont il-ġeneru f'oqsma xjentifiċi u tekniċi, kif ukoll billi tingħeleb is-segregazzjoni professjonali skont il-ġeneru. Barra minn hekk, impjiegi ekoloġiċi ġodda u emerġenti, bħal speċjalisti tal-kontroll tal-kwalità tal-arja, speċjalisti fir-rikonverżjoni tas-siti abbandunati u analisti tal-kummerċ tal-karbonju, li huma inflwenzati inqas mis-segregazzjoni tal-ġeneru għandhom jintużaw biex jiżguraw li kemm l-irġiel kif ukoll in-nisa jibbenifikaw minn opportunitajiet ta' impjieg ta' ekonomija (iktar) ekoloġika. ([5])

3. Għall-perjodu ta' programmazzjoni 2007-2013, l-FSE investa EUR 33.5 biljun f'dawk il-prijoritajiet li għandhom l-għan li jtejbu l-kapital uman madwar id-dimensjonijiet kollha tiegħu. In-nisa rrappreżentaw 52% tal-parteċipanti fl-azzjonijiet tal-FSE, li jammontaw għal madwar 8 miljun mara fis-sena mill-2009 'l hawn.

([1]) Testi adottati. P7_TA(2012)0321.
([2]) Impjiegi fis-settur tal-prodotti u s-servizzi ambjentali (env_ac_egss1).
([3]) Ara pereżempju Cambridge Econometrics, GHK u Warwick Institute for Employment Studies (2011), Studies on Sustainability Issues — Green Jobs; Trade and Labour, studju ppreparat għall-Kummissjoni Ewropea, DĠ Impjiegi, Affarijiet Soċjali u Inklużjoni; ILO/KE (2011), Skills and Occupational Needs in Green building; ILO/KE (2011) Skills and Occupational Needs in Renewable Energy, L-Istitut Ewropew għall-Ugwaljanza bejn is-Sessi (2012) Reviżjoni tal-Implimentazzjoni fl-UE tal-qasam K tal-Pjattaforma ta' Azzjoni ta' Bejġing: In-nisa u l-Ambjent, l-Ugwaljanza bejn il-Ġeneri u t-Tibdil fil-Klima.
([4]) Ibid.
([5]) OECD/Cedefop (2014), Greener Skills and Jobs, OECD Green Growth Studies, OECD Publishing.
u Cambridge Econometrics, GHK u Warwick Institute for Employment Studies (2011), Studies on Sustainability Issues — Green Jobs; Trade and Labour, studju ppreparat għall-Kummissjoni Ewropea, DĠ Impjiegi, Affarijiet Soċjali u Inklużjoni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005286/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Women in the green economy

The report of 17 July 2012 on the role of women in the green economy ([1]) refers to the need to equate the green economy with a sustainable economy, which in turn includes both a socially and ecologically sustainable economy. This of course also means equality between women and men. A green or sustainable economy is a system which preserves the ecosystem's productive capacity (the planet's tolerance) while creating a society where the basic human needs of all are met. Economic development in a green economy therefore takes place within the context of what nature can tolerate, and ensures a fair distribution of resources between people, between men and women, and between generations.

The report invited the Member States to develop training courses, through EU programmes such as the ERDF and the ESF, designed to facilitate women's access to new 'green' jobs, and emerging technologies with a low environmental impact, in both the private and public sectors; called on the Member States to ensure that female workers are included more in training projects and programmes on ecological transformation, i.e., in the renewable sector and in science- and technology-intensive jobs, and to focus on giving women, through education and training, the competences and qualifications they need in order to compete with men on an equal basis for employment and individual career development; and observed that men have easier access to the advanced agricultural production means and the business technologies needed to gain high-skill positions in the green economy.

1. Can the Commission give a detailed account of statistical data on women in the green economy?

2. Can the Commission list the jobs and employment opportunities for women in this field?

3. Can the Commission give statistical data on training courses developed through EU programmes and on how many women benefited from said courses?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

1. Data on the environmental goods and services sector (EGSS), collected at the EU level to provide harmonised European information on employment related activities with environmental purposes, are not available by gender. ([2]) However, studies done for Commission or by EU agencies tend to show that women are less likely to be employed in jobs that can be defined as being in green sectors and they also participate less in decision making in the public sector, related to climate change ([3]).

2. Research findings show that the green economy is more likely to provide employment opportunities in occupations traditionally dominated by men, such as professional and associate professional occupations. ([4]) More women can be employed in them by fighting stereotypes and by breaking segmentation of education by gender in scientific and technical fields as well as occupational gender segregation. Furthermore, new and emerging green occupations, such as air quality control specialists, brownfield redevelopment specialists or carbon trading analysts that are less influenced by gender segregation should be used to ensure that both men and women benefit from employment opportunities of a green(er) economy. ([5])

3. For the 2007-2013 programming period, the ESF has invested EUR 33.5 billion in those priorities that aim to improve human capital across all its dimensions. Women have represented 52% of the participants in ESF actions which amount to approximately 8 million women per year since 2009.

([1]) Texts adopted. P7_TA(2012)0321.
([2]) Employment in the environmental goods and services sector (env_ac_egss1).
([3]) See for instance Cambridge Econometrics, GHK and the Warwick Institute for Employment Studies (2011), Studies on Sustainability Issues — Green Jobs; Trade and Labour, study prepared for the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion; ILO/EC (2011), Skills and Occupational Needs in Green building; ILO/EC (2011) Skills and Occupational Needs in Renewable Energy, European Institute for Gender Equality (2012) Review of the Implementation in the EU of area K of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women and the Environment Gender Equality and Climate Change.
([4]) Ibid.
([5]) OECD/Cedefop (2014), Greener Skills and Jobs, OECD Green Growth Studies, OECD Publishing and Cambridge Econometrics, GHK and the Warwick Institute for Employment Studies (2011), Studies on Sustainability Issues — Green Jobs; Trade and Labour, study prepared for the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005287/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Lung cancer

In the UK today, half of people with lung cancer die within six months of diagnosis, according to a report from Macmillan Cancer Support, which looked at variations in cancer survival rates.

While breast cancer and prostate cancer have a five-year survival rate of more than 80%, lung cancer's is around 10%.

Those who survive lung cancer for five years are then ten times more likely to get another cancer.

Macmillan said improving early diagnosis was key. In its report, the cancer charity carried out an analysis of the experiences of almost 85 000 cancer patients in the NHS in England from 2004 to 2011.

It is no coincidence that survival rates are so much greater for the likes of breast cancer, given that the amount of research funding allocated to such areas has long dwarfed the amount set aside for lung cancer research.

Does the Commission have any plans to channel more funding into lung cancer research given these shocking statistics?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the report referred to by the Honourable Member, which was published by Macmillan Cancer Support ([1]). The Commission is also aware of the low survival rates for lung cancer cited on the Cancer Research UK ([2]) website and collected by the Eurocare-5 study ([3]).

The Commission has been funding cancer research throughout the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013). This has included calls for proposals specifically addressing research on poor-prognosis cancers, including lung cancer. The projects funded covered a wide range of topics, from molecular biology of lung cancer to advances in early diagnosis and imaging, to novel therapeutic strategies and were supported through an EU financial contribution exceeding EUR 32 million.

Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]), offers several opportunities to address research on lung cancer, including research on screening and early diagnosis, through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge. Information on current funding opportunities can be found through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([5]).

([1]) MacMillan report 'Cancer in the UK' State of the nation report 2014.
([2]) http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancer-info/cancerstats/survival/common-cancers/
([3]) De Angelis R, Lancet Oncol. 2014 Jan;15(1):23-34. doi: 10.1016/S1470-2045(13)70546-1.
([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.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005288/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Electrical stimulation of spinal cords

Four paralysed men have been able to move their legs for the first time in years after electrical stimulation of their spinal cords, US doctors report.

They were able to flex their toes, ankles and knees, but could not walk independently.

A report in the journal *Brain* suggests the electricity makes the spinal cord more receptive to the few messages still arriving from the brain.

Experts said it could become a treatment for spinal injury.

The spinal cord acts like a high-speed rail line carrying electrical messages from the brain to the rest of the body. But if there is any damage to the track, then the message will not get through.

People with spinal cord injuries can lose all movement and sensation below the injury.

What is the Commission doing to fund and boost research in this area?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(6 June 2014)

Research relevant for spinal cord injury has been supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (2007-2013) ([1]) through 32 projects involving an EU financial contribution of EUR 43.7 million. Six of these projects ([2]) (EU financial contribution: EUR 16.2 million) involved electric stimulation. They investigated electrochemical stimulation and microelectronics for smart control interfaces to restore motor functions and investigated the development of therapeutic approaches combining electric stimulation with stem cell replacement or pharmacological therapies.

Other supported research relevant for spinal cord injury involves modelling communication between neurons and locomotion circuits, modelling and better understanding processes underlying spinal cord injury and axonal regeneration, improving diagnostics methods, developing safe and effective therapies, and developing computer assistive technologies.

Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020), may offer further opportunities to support research in this field through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge. More information can be found through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([3]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([2]) http://www.mimics.ethz.ch/
http://www.mundus-project.eu/
http://sssa.bioroboticsinstitute.it/projects/NEUWALK
http://www.wayproject.eu/
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93173_en.html
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93584_en.html
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/94236_en.html
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005289/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Global investment in renewables

Global investment in renewables fell by 14% during 2013, but the percentage of electricity generated by renewable sources still increased, a report shows.

It states that investment fell for the second year in a row because of cheaper technology, but also as a result of uncertainty surrounding energy policy.

However, falling costs meant that renewables accounted for 8.5% of the global electricity mix, up from 7.8% in 2012.

Renewables accounted for 43.6% of newly installed generation capacity in 2013.

The report, 'Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2014', was produced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Bloomberg New Energy Finance.

What mechanisms does the Commission have in place to promote and help ensure future investment in renewable sources?

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

The main mechanism in place to develop renewable energy in the EU by 2020 is set by the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC which defines national and EU targets for renewables. Under this directive support schemes for renewables are national competence (mostly feed in tariffs, feed in premiums and quotas schemes).

Dedicated EU funds to be spent on RES are mostly on Research and Development and through regional funding. The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020 earmarked over EUR 5 billion for low-carbon energy, mostly for RES or RES-related system transformations. Support to the shift towards a low-carbon economy, including renewable energy use, will increase to at least EUR 27 billion from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in 2014-2020 period and further support can also be provided from the Cohesion fund.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005290/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Ebola virus

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says it is taking the current outbreak of the Ebola virus in West Africa very seriously. Out of 122 cases recorded in Guinea so far, at least 80 patients have died, with a further four deaths in Liberia.

What is the Commission doing to help contain the spread of this deadly virus and formulate a vaccine for it?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the Ebola outbreak in Western Africa and is monitoring developments closely 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 supports health operations, experts and risk assessments, including by sending humanitarian experts on the ground and is contributing with medical equipment to help accelerate diagnosis and the putting in place of health measures to respond to the event.

Concretely, the Commission has provided EUR 1.4 million to Médecins sans Frontières, the World Health Organisation and the Federation of the Red Cross to provide treatment, preventative measures, community sensitisation and equipment.

The Honourable Member is also referred to the reply given to Parliamentary Question E-004550/2014 ([1]) on 'Investment in medical research — Ebola'.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005291/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Honeybees

A new study covering 17 EU countries says that far more honeybees are dying in the UK and other parts of northern Europe than in Mediterranean countries.

The Commission says it is Europe's most comprehensive study of bee colony deaths so far.

Winter mortality was especially high for bees in Belgium (33.6%) and the UK (29%) in 2012-13. However, in the spring/summer of 2013 it was highest in France, with 13.6%.

Bumblebees and other wild bees were not studied, nor were pesticide impacts.

The study, called Epilobee, described 10% as an acceptable threshold for bee colony mortality — and Greece, Italy and Spain were among the countries with rates below this threshold.

The mortality percentages are national estimates based on representative samples. The report says that all 17 countries applied the same data collection standards.

The survey covered almost 32 000 bee colonies.

Yet there is also much concern about death rates among wild bees, which are vital pollinators too.

What measures has the Commission put in place to tackle this worrying decline?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The Commission refers to its answer to Written Question P-012225/2013 ([1]) on Commission actions for honeybees, to its Conference on 7 April 2014 for Better Bee Health ([2]), including wild bees ([3]) and to its press document ([4]).

Some of the actions mentioned above may also provide support for wild bees threatened by habitat fragmentation and loss, intensive agriculture, pollution from chemicals and invasive alien species. Several measures of the new Common Agricultural Policy ([5]), such as the compulsory greening measures in the new Direct Payment Regulation, [maintenance of permanent grasslands, crop diversification and ecological focus areas (EFAs) etc.] and relevant measures in rural development regulation should have a positive impact on the status of bees. Smart selection of non-productive EFA should also enhance their status.

The EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy ([6]) aims to halt the loss of biodiversity by setting six targets and twenty accompanying actions which, *inter alia*, aim at addressing the factors threatening wild bees. Meeting these targets will be crucial in order to protect the habitats for wild bees' populations, ensure their good nutrition and to mitigate risks represented by invasive alien species.

As regards actions specific to wild bees, the Commission launched the first EU Red List assessment of wild pollinators, financed as an on-going research project on status and trends of European pollinators which should assist in filling existing knowledge gaps in the decline of bees, their drivers and mitigation, and in the two LIFE+ demonstrative projects ([7]). It continues the funding for potential projects for wild bees and/or addressing their declines under the LIFE programme 2014-2020.

It is however for the national authorities to make use of these or meet the biodiversity targets.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://sanco-bee-health-conference2014.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_pres_2014_en.htm#20140407_bee
([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-260_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/index_en.htm
([6]) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020.
([7]) Urbanbees (http://www.urbanbees.eu/) and PP-ICON (http://www.pp-icon.eu/).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005292/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Eating disorders

Young men with an eating disorder are not getting the help and support they need because of perceptions about it being a 'women's illness', say researchers.

Men are underdiagnosed and undertreated for anorexia and other eating disorders despite making up about a quarter of cases, a UK study suggests. Researchers from the University of Oxford and the University of Glasgow interviewed 39 young people aged 16 to 25, including 10 men, about their experiences of diagnosis, treatment and support for eating disorders. They say young men with eating disorders were 'underdiagnosed, undertreated and under-researched'.

What is the Commission doing to raise awareness of eating disorders among young men across the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its response to Parliamentary Question E-002615/2014 and, for further information, to its responses to Parliamentary Questions E-000050/2014 and 001390/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005293/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer tests, which predict how aggressive a tumour is, underestimate disease severity in half of cases, scientists say.

In a study of 847 men with prostate cancer, 209 out of the 415 who were initially told their cancer was slow-growing were found to have a more aggressive form of the disease. And for almost a third of the 415 men, it had spread around the body.

Scientists are calling for better tests to define the nature of the cancer.

What steps is the Commission taking in terms of promoting and funding research in this area?

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

In 2003 the Council Recommendation on cancer screening was adopted setting out the fundamental principles of best practice in early detection of cancer. Based on accepted scientific criteria, organised population-based screening programmes for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer are currently promoted at EU level. In order to be recommended for population-based screening, malignant tumours must meet certain scientific criteria: the disease must be common, sensitive to safe and uncomplicated detection and more easily and effectively treated if diagnosed at an early stage.

As such, when it comes to prostate cancer, current evidence does not point to an appropriate balance between benefit and harm of population-based screening. It has been estimated that population-based screening of healthy men between 55 and 69 years old could reduce prostate cancer mortality by an estimated 20% using prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing. However, screening would also lead to diagnosis and unnecessary treatment of asymptomatic cancers that will not emerge during life. The Commission will continue to follow closely the scientific discussion on this issue.

Under the 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (2007-2013) ([1]) EUR 63 million have been devoted to support frontier and collaborative research on prostate cancer. Examples include COGS ([2]) (Collaborative Oncological Gene-environment Study) and Promark ([3]) (Genetic prostate cancer variants as biomarkers of disease progression) as well as Prosper ([4]) (Prostate cancer: Profiling and evaluation of ncRNA) that explored the role of key regulators in prostate cancer initiation and progression.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([2]) http://cogseu.org/
([3]) http://www.uta.fi/bmt/institute/research/visakorpi/prosper.html
([4]) http://www.promark-fp7.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005294/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Heartbleed cyber bug

Members will be aware of companies and websites within their own Member States and beyond, that have been hit by the Heartbleed cyber bug. This has seen data belonging to a significant number of citizens harvested by criminal elements.

Can the Commission detail what is being done on a European level to assist the improvement of cyber security for citizens, companies and other agencies operating within our borders or on our behalf, and to raise awareness of potential threats?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(4 June 2014)

The Commission considers Heartbleed a potentially serious risk to the confidentiality of citizen's data on the Internet. The extensive publicity that Heartbleed received in the press led to remedial action by the vast majority of Internet sites and services. The exposure to the threat posed by Heartbleed is therefore in steady decline as Internet sites and services continue to update their systems. The Commission is closely monitoring the situation as recovery efforts continue.

Beyond the immediate threat posed by Heartbleed, the European Cyber Security Strategy ([1]) foresees actions geared towards the ICT industry, including research in the area of trustworthy and secure ICT, with the goal of preventing and limiting the negative impact of similar threats in the future.

The proposed Directive ([2]) on Network and Information Security would ensure that market operators, public administrations and Internet enablers manage cyber security risks appropriately and that Member States cooperate in responding to widespread threats such as Heartbleed. The incident has illustrated the increasing need for such EU-wide cooperation.

Awareness efforts on a European level are centred on the European Cyber Security Month (ECSM) which is an EU advocacy campaign that takes place every year in October. The ECSM aim is to promote cyber security awareness among citizens, to modify their perception of cyber threats and to provide updated security information through education, good practices and competitions. Coordination efforts are managed by EC DG Connect and ENISA, and a large number of NIS stakeholders are invited to get involved.in cooperation with ENISA.

([1]) JOIN(2013) 1 final.
([2]) COM/2013/048 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005295/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Technical conservation regulations

Will the Commissioner advise what, if any, revisions to technical conservation regulations in the Irish Sea have been brought to her attention by Member States?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

Since agreement on the reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP), no revisions to the technical conservation regulations in the Irish Sea have been requested by the Member States. Following the reformed CFP, a public consultation on a new framework on technical measures has been published, which contemplates the possibility that Member States could in the future make revisions to the technical conservation measures in force through regional recommendations.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005296/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Abus sexuels en Birmanie

En janvier 2014, l'organisation non gouvernementale Women's League of Burma a publié un rapport intitulé *Same Impunity, Same Patterns* (mêmes situations, même impunité) qui dénonce l'utilisation persistante du viol et des violences sexuelles par l'armée birmane. Le Conseil des Droits de l'homme et l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies ont appelé à plusieurs reprises le gouvernement birman à mettre fin à ce phénomène et à poursuivre les responsables en justice. Le gouvernement a cependant nié et continue de nier que de tels incidents puissent avoir lieu en Birmanie.

Rappelons également qu'en 2013, le gouvernement birman a refusé de signer la Déclaration d'engagement à mettre fin aux violences sexuelles dans les conflits. L'utilisation persistante des viols et des violences sexuelles par l'armée constitue un réel problème dans ce pays.

Cette problématique se trouve par ailleurs au cœur de l'actualité: le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies organisera, le vendredi 25 avril, un débat sur le thème «Femmes, paix et sécurité: les violences sexuelles dans les conflits».

1. L'Union européenne compte-t-elle réagir face à cette situation? Le gouvernement birman sera-t-il interpellé quant aux violences sexuelles perpétrées par l'armée?

2. L'Union européenne compte-t-elle réagir sur cette problématique lors du débat organisé par les Nations unies?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(18 juin 2014)

Lors du premier dialogue UE-Myanmar sur les Droits de l'homme le 20 mai 2014 à Nay Pyi Taw, l'UE a abordé la question des droits des minorités ethniques avec les autorités. Elle a souligné la nécessité d'améliorer les services dans les camps de personnes déplacées, notamment en ce qui concerne les besoins particuliers de protection des femmes et des enfants, et elle a invité le gouvernement birman à enquêter efficacement sur les informations faisant état de violences sexuelles à l'encontre des minorités ethniques, y compris les allégations de maltraitance, de torture et de viol.

Lors du débat annuel sur le thème «Femmes, paix et sécurité» du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies le 22 avril, l'UE a souligné qu'il fallait œuvrer davantage à une approche globale, multisectorielle et pluridimensionnelle de la prévention des violences sexuelles liées aux conflits. Elle a notamment mis l'accent sur la nécessité de transmettre, de suivre et d'échanger les informations, sur l'accès à la justice et la responsabilité, et sur la participation des femmes aux mécanismes de prévention et de résolution des conflits, de protection et de consolidation de la paix.

L'UE continue à mettre en œuvre sa politique dédiée aux femmes, à la paix et à la sécurité, adoptée en 2008, notamment en collaborant étroitement avec d'autres organisations internationales et régionales. Elle a publié son deuxième rapport sur la mise en œuvre de l'approche globale par l'UE de la résolution 1325 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies. La prévention des violences sexuelles y a été définie comme un domaine d'action prioritaire de l'UE pour la période 2013-2015.

L'UE soutient la déclaration d'avril 2013 des ministres des affaires étrangères du G8 sur la prévention des violences sexuelles dans les situations de conflit. Elle se réjouit également que 144 États aient souscrit, en septembre dernier à New York, à la déclaration par laquelle ils s'engagent à mettre fin aux violences sexuelles lors des conflits, qui sera complétée par des accords sur des mesures spécifiques et pratiques pour mettre un terme aux violences sexuelles, à l'occasion du sommet mondial sur ce thème en juin de cette année.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005296/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Sexual abuse in Burma

In January 2014, the Women's League of Burma, a non-governmental organisation, published a report entitled 'Same Impunity, Same Patterns', condemning the continued use of rape and sexual violence by the Burmese army. The UN Human Rights Council and the UN Assembly General have repeatedly called on the Burmese Government to put a stop to this phenomenon and prosecute those responsible. However, the government has denied and continues to deny that such things could happen in Burma.

It should also be recalled that in 2013 the Burmese Government refused to sign the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict. The persistent use of rape and sexual violence by the army is a real problem in Burma.

This is a highly topical issue. The UN Security Council will be holding a debate on Friday, 25 April 2014, on 'Women, peace and security: Sexual violence in conflict'.

1. Does the European Union plan any response to this state of affairs? Will the Burmese Government be questioned about the sexual violence perpetrated by its army?

2. Does the European Union propose to address this set of issues during the UN debate?

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

At the first EU-Myanmar Human Rights dialogue held on 20 May 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, the EU raised the rights of ethnic minorities with the authorities and highlighted the need to improve services in IDP camps, including the special protection needs of women and children and invited the Government to effectively investigate reports of sexual violence against ethnic minorities, including allegations of abuse, torture, and rape.

At the annual UN Security Council debate on 'Women, peace and security' on 22 April, the EU underlined that more work on a comprehensive, multisectoral and multidimensional approach for the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence needs to be undertaken. Among this, the EU emphasised on the need for reporting, monitoring and information sharing; access to justice and accountability; and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, protection and peacebuilding processes.

The EU continues to implement its dedicated policy on women, peace and security, adopted in 2008, including through close cooperation with other international and regional organisations. The EU published the Second report on the implementation of the EU Comprehensive Approach on UNSCR 1325. Prevention of sexual violence has been defined as a priority area for EU action in this regard for 2013-2015.

The EU supported the G8 Foreign Ministers Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict in April 2013 and welcomed the endorsement by 144 states of the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict last September in New York, to be followed up through agreements on specific and practical steps to end sexual violence at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June this year.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005297/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Association de la Confédération européenne des syndicats à la définition des politiques européennes

Toutes les politiques européennes doivent répondre à des objectifs d'intérêt général comme l'amélioration des conditions de vie et de travail, la qualité des emplois ou encore la lutte contre les discriminations.

Dans le cadre de nombreuses législations européennes influant directement sur le droit des salariés et la réglementation du travail, de quelle manière la Commission associe-t-elle la Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES) à ses propositions législatives?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(13 juin 2014)

Conformément aux articles 151 à 155 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne (TFUE), l'Union favorise le dialogue entre les partenaires sociaux au niveau européen, notamment au moyen de consultations sur les initiatives politiques de l'UE et du soutien aux négociations et actions communes de la part des partenaires sociaux.

L'article 154 du TFUE impose à la Commission de consulter les partenaires sociaux sur une éventuelle action de l'UE dans le domaine de la politique sociale, législation comprise. Lesdits partenaires peuvent répondre individuellement ou conjointement et, s'ils le souhaitent, peuvent négocier des accords relatifs aux questions traitées, et notamment des accords destinés à être appliqués au moyen de la législation de l'Union européenne.

La Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES) est l'organisation interprofessionnelle européenne représentant les travailleurs. En tant que telle, elle est consultée conformément à la procédure prévue à l'article 154 du TFUE. Elle a la capacité de négocier des accords au titre de l'article 155 du TFUE via le dialogue social qu'elle instaure avec les organisations patronales interprofessionnelles concernées de l'UE. Quatre des accords interprofessionnels entre partenaires sociaux ont été mis en application par le droit de l'Union [il s'agit des accords sur le congé parental (1995), le travail à temps partiel (1997), le travail à durée déterminée (1999) et le congé parental (2009)].

Le principal forum de dialogue social interprofessionnel de l'Union européenne est le comité du dialogue social, au sein duquel la CES a le statut d'organisation de référence pour les travailleurs. En outre, elle représente les travailleurs au sommet social tripartite pour la croissance et l'emploi ([1]), un forum de concertation créée en 2003 qui réunit deux fois par an et au plus haut niveau les partenaires sociaux et les institutions de l'Union européenne.

S'il souhaite de plus amples informations, l'Honorable Parlementaire peut consulter la page web de la DG Emploi, affaires sociales et inclusion consacrée au dialogue social ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:070:0031:0033:FR:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=329&langId=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005297/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Involvement of the ETUC in the definition of European policies

All European policies should reflect general interest objectives such as better living and working conditions, the quality of jobs and combating discrimination.

In the context of the many European laws with a direct influence on employee rights and the regulation of work, in what way does the Commission involve the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) in its legislative proposals?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

In accordance with Articles 151 to 155 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Union promotes dialogue among the social partners at European level, including through consultations on relevant EU policy initiatives and support for negotiations and joint action by the social partners.

Article 154 TFEU requires the Commission to consult the social partners on possible EU action in the social policy field, including legislation. The social partners may respond individually or jointly and, if they so wish, may negotiate agreements on the issues in question, including agreements to be implemented through EU legislation.

ETUC is the general EU-level cross-industry social partner organisation on the workers' side. As such it is consulted in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 154 TFEU. It has the capacity to negotiate agreements under Article 155 TFEU through its social dialogue with the relevant EU cross-industry employers' organisations. Four cross-industry social-partner agreements have been implemented by EC law (these are the Agreements on parental leave (1995), part-time work (1997), fixed-term work (1999) and parental leave (2009)).

The main forum for EU cross-industry social dialogue is the Social Dialogue Committee, in which ETUC is the leading organisation on the worker's side. ETUC also represents the workers' side within the Tripartite Social Summit for Growth and Employment ([1]), a forum for concertation established in 2003, which brings together the EU social partners and the EU institutions at the highest level twice a year.

For further information the Honourable Member could consult the Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion DG's dedicated webpage on social dialogue ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:070:0031:0033:EN:PDF
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=329&langId=en

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005298/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Autoroutes de la mer

Dans le cadre des négociations sur le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe, nous avons défendu des taux de cofinancement plus élevés pour les autoroutes de la mer, qui offrent une solution alternative aux voies terrestres encombrées grâce au transfert du fret vers les voies maritimes.

La Commission peut-elle indiquer quels taux de cofinancement elle appliquera pour les projets relatifs aux autoroutes de la mer?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

Le règlement établissant le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe ([1]) fixe clairement le taux maximal de cofinancement pour les actions de soutien aux autoroutes de la mer à 30 % des coûts éligibles et à 50 % pour les études. Dans les États membres éligibles à un financement par le Fonds de cohésion, le taux maximal de cofinancement pour les projets d'autoroutes de la mer est de 85 %. Les exigences pour les autoroutes de la mer au sein du réseau transeuropéen de transport (RTE-T) sont fixées à l'article 21 des orientations de l'Union pour le développement du RTE-T ([2]).

([1]) Règlement (UE) nº 1316/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 11 décembre 2013 établissant le mécanisme pour l'interconnexion en Europe, modifiant le règlement (UE) nº 913/2010 et abrogeant les règlements (CE) nºs 680/2007 et (CE) 67/2010, JO L 348 du 20.12.2013.

([2]) Règlement (UE) nº 1315/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 11 décembre 2013 sur les orientations de l'Union pour le développement du réseau transeuropéen de transport et abrogeant la décision nº 661/2010/UE, JO L 348 du 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005298/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Motorways of the sea

During the negotiations on the Connecting Europe Facility the European Parliament advocated higher co-financing rates for the motorways of the sea, which, by taking up a share of freight transport, could alleviate road and rail congestion.

Could the Commission say what co-financing rates it will offer projects involving the motorways of the sea?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Connecting Europe Facility Regulation ([1]) clearly establishes the maximum co-funding rate for actions supporting Motorways of the Sea at 30% of the eligible costs and 50% for studies. In Member States eligible for funding from the Cohesion Fund, the maximum co-funding rate for Motorways of the Sea projects is 85%. The requirements for Motorways of the Sea within the trans-European transport network (TEN-T) are established in Article 21 of the Union guidelines for the development of the TEN-T ([2]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.12.2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010 , OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.12.2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005299/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Coût des études en Europe

Le programme Erasmus est incontestablement l'une des plus grandes réussites de l'Union européenne.

L'Union européenne a cherché depuis longtemps une stratégie d'harmonisation des systèmes universitaires nationaux. Par la mise en place du système de Bologne, elle a permis une meilleure lisibilité des diplômes et nous devons aller plus loin pour mettre fin aux derniers obstacles en vue d'une reconnaissance universelle des diplômes.

Dans la stratégie Europe 2020, l'objectif est de porter le nombre de diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur à au moins 40 % de la population âgée de 30 à 34 ans. Néanmoins, on observe d'énormes disparités entre les États membres de l'Union européenne concernant l'accès pour tous à l'enseignement supérieur. Alors qu'il est en moyenne de 33 % dans les pays de l'Union, la part des 30-34 ans diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur varie de 22 % en Italie, en Roumanie et à Malte, à 51 % en Irlande. La question qui se pose particulièrement pour les jeunes est la question des frais de scolarité. Les différences d'un État membre à un autre sont flagrantes. On peut passer de 0 à 12 000 euros de frais d'inscription maximum en premier cycle et de 0 à 36 000 euros pour un deuxième cycle, ce qui ne conduit pas à une égalité de traitement des jeunes en Europe.

La Commission a-t-elle un plan d'action pour uniformiser le coût des études en Europe et développer à plus long terme un véritable service public européen de l'enseignement supérieur?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2014)

Conformément à l'article 165 du traité sur l'Union européenne, le contenu et l'organisation des systèmes d'enseignement et de formation relèvent de la compétence exclusive des États membres. La Commission ne dispose donc d'aucune compétence dans le domaine des droits d'inscription à l'enseignement supérieur si ce n'est d'assurer l'absence de discrimination pour cause de nationalité entre les étudiants nationaux et ceux qui proviennent d'autres États membres.

Les systèmes d'enseignement supérieur en Europe et ailleurs dans l'OCDE ne montrent aucune corrélation claire entre l'existence de droits d'inscription, d'une part, et les niveaux de participation et d'achèvement des études dans l'enseignement supérieur, d'autre part, notamment pour les étudiants issus de milieux à faibles revenus.

Il importe d'assurer que des fonds adéquats soient disponibles pour créer les conditions permettant aux institutions d'enseignement supérieur de dispenser un enseignement adapté et de haute qualité et il est judicieux que ces institutions tirent leurs moyens de financement de diverses sources. La Commission n'a cessé de faire valoir que si des droits d'inscription à l'enseignement supérieur existent, il convient de fournir un soutien adéquat aux étudiants issus de milieux modestes ou défavorisés.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005299/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Cost of studying in Europe

The Erasmus programme is unquestionably one of the EU's greatest success stories.

The European Union has long been searching for a strategy for harmonising the national university systems. By establishing the Bologna system the EU improved the transparency of diplomas, and we should now go further towards removing the last obstacles to their universal recognition.

The Europe 2020 strategy has set a target of increasing to at least 40% the proportion of people in the 30 to 34 age bracket who possess a higher education qualification. However, there are massive disparities between the EU Member States as regards access to higher education for all. While the average is 33% for the EU as a whole, the proportion of 30-to-34-year-olds with degrees varies from 22% in Italy, Romania and Malta to 51% in Ireland. One particularly important issue facing young people is that of university fees. The differences from one Member State to another are striking. Enrolment fees vary from 0 to EUR 12 000 for a first degree and from 0 to EUR 36 000 for a graduate degree, which is not the way to bring about equal treatment for young people in Europe.

Does the Commission have an action plan for achieving uniformity of study costs in Europe and developing, in the longer term, a genuine European public service for higher education?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(3 June 2014)

In accordance with Article 165 of the Treaty of the European Union, the content and organisation of education and training systems is the exclusive responsibility of Member States. Therefore, the Commission has no competence on the issue of tuition fees charged for higher education other than ensuring that there is no discrimination on grounds of nationality between domestic students and students from another EU Member State.

Evidence from higher education systems in Europe and elsewhere in the OECD shows no clear correlation between the existence of tuition fees, on the one hand, and levels of participation and completion in higher education, on the other, including among those from low income backgrounds.

It is important to ensure adequate investment to create the conditions for higher education institutions to provide high quality and relevant education and it makes sense for institutions to draw funding from a diversity of sources. The Commission has consistently argued that where tuition fees do exist in higher education, adequate support must be provided to those from low income and other disadvantaged backgrounds.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005300/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Priorités en matière d'économie sociale et solidaire

L'Union européenne connaît un dynamisme considérable en matière associative. La crise économique et sociale a renforcé le rôle des associations qui assument un nombre croissant de missions d'intérêt général. Cependant, le cadre législatif européen, malgré des avancées, ne leur permet pas d'exercer leurs missions dans les meilleures conditions.

Le flou juridique subsiste encore sur ce qui relève de l'intérêt général et ce qui relève du marché. De plus, il n'existe pas de statut juridique pour les associations au niveau européen. La réglementation européenne assimile de nombreuses activités au marché, ce qui pèse sur la capacité d'initiative du monde associatif, dans la mesure où il n'existe pas de statut juridique pour les associations au niveau européen.

Quelles actions la Commission entend-elle mettre en œuvre pour favoriser la reconnaissance de l'économie sociale et solidaire au niveau européen?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(30 juin 2014)

La Commission a pris plusieurs initiatives visant à soutenir le volontariat et à faire prendre conscience de son importance.

Le train de mesures sur les investissements sociaux encourage le secteur privé à s'atteler aux défis sociaux fondamentaux, notamment en faisant intervenir le volontariat.

La Commission cherche à favoriser le volontariat des salariés dans le cadre de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises et elle a organisé un séminaire en 2012 sur les jeunes, l'entrepreneuriat, le volontariat et la responsabilité sociale des entreprises.

Le «passeport européen de compétences» proposé par Europass est un portfolio électronique en ligne qui offre aux citoyens la possibilité d'afficher leurs compétences, y compris celles qui sont acquises lors de missions de volontariat réalisées à la fois pour l'emploi et à des fins d'apprentissage. Des travaux sont en cours en vue d'améliorer les méthodes d'Europass en ce qui concerne la présentation de ces compétences et, partant, de valoriser encore davantage le volontariat.

Pour ce qui est du statut de l'association européenne et du service volontaire européen, l'Honorable Parlementaire est invité à consulter la réponse à la question E-5276/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005300/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Priorities as regards the voluntary sector (the 'social and solidarity economy')

The voluntary sector in the European Union is booming. The economic and social crisis has led to an enhanced role for clubs and associations, which are taking on an increasing number of tasks in the public interest. However, while progress has been made, the European legal framework does not afford them the best possible conditions in which to carry out these tasks.

There is still a degree of legal uncertainty as to which matters are covered by the public interest and which by the market. Furthermore, there is no legal status for associations at European level. European rules treat a large number of activities as forming part of the market, and this makes it harder for the voluntary sector to take the initiative, because there is no legal status for associations at European level.

What measures does the Commission propose to take to encourage the recognition of the voluntary sector (the 'social and solidarity economy') at European level?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(30 June 2014)

The Commission has taken several initiatives to support volunteering and to recognise its relevance.

The Social Investment Package promotes involvement of the private sector in addressing deeper social challenges, including with the voluntary sector.

The Commission promotes employee volunteering through corporate social responsibility, and organised a seminar in 2012 on youth, entrepreneurship, volunteering and Corporate Social Responsibility.

The 'European Skills Passport', under Europass, provides citizens with an online electronic portfolio illustrating an individual's competences, including those acquired during volunteering work, for both employment and learning purposes. Work is ongoing to refine the way Europass can document experience, and so further improve the recognition of volunteering.

With regard to a European Association Statute and the European Voluntary Service the Honourable Member is referred to the reply to E-5276/2014.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005301/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Grippe en Grèce

La Grèce présente le taux de mortalité lié à la grippe le plus élevé des pays européens. Les politiques d'austérité drastiques dans le domaine de la santé publique semblent responsables.

Le taux de décès dus à la grippe en Grèce est en effet considérablement plus élevé que dans les autres pays européens. En tant que rapporteur pour la décision concernant les menaces transfrontières graves pour la santé, cette situation me préoccupe d'autant plus que nous avions plaidé pour des procédures d'achats conjoints de vaccins en cas de risque de pandémie.

La Commission envisage-t-elle de développer des politiques sanitaires spécifiques à la Grèce pour lui permettre de gérer ces pandémies?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

La Commission est consciente de la situation épidémiologique relative à la grippe saisonnière en Grèce. Le Centre européen de prévention et de contrôle des maladies indique qu'il ne dispose d'aucune preuve qui permettrait de conclure, pour la saison en cours, à un plus grand nombre de cas de grippe en Grèce par rapport aux années précédentes, ni d'ailleurs par rapport aux autres États membres. En effet, la grippe saisonnière peut infecter jusqu'à 18 % de la population non vaccinée et ce, quels que soient la saison et le pays dont il est question.

L'adoption de mesures sanitaires spécifiques est une compétence nationale.

Conformément à la décision nº 1082/2013/UE ([1]) relative aux menaces transfrontières graves sur la santé, la Commission aide les États membres à coordonner leur réaction aux menaces de ce type, dont la grippe saisonnière et la grippe pandémique. Un aspect important de cette action consistera dans le renforcement de la coordination de la planification de la préparation et de la réaction, ce qui est prévu par la décision.

En outre, à la suite de l'évaluation des stratégies de vaccination contre les grippes pandémiques à l'échelle de l'Union européenne, les États membres ont demandé à la Commission de mettre au point une procédure commune d'achat des contre-mesures médicales nécessaires pour enrayer une menace grave pour la santé. La Commission a adopté une décision relative à un accord de passation conjointe de marché le 10 avril de cette année et l'accord devrait être signé par les États membres le 20 juin 2014.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:FR:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005301/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Flu in Greece

Greece has the highest flu mortality rate in Europe, and its drastic cuts in public healthcare spending could be responsible.

The number of flu-related deaths is much higher in Greece than in any other European country. As rapporteur on the decision on serious cross-border threats to health, I am all the more concerned given that Parliament advocated the joint purchase of vaccines should the risk of a pandemic arise.

Does the Commission intend to develop specific health policies for Greece to help it deal with pandemics of this kind?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission is aware of the epidemiological situation of seasonal influenza in Greece. According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, there is no indication that in Greece, in the current season, more people are affected than in previous seasons, nor that seasonal influenza in Greece is more intense than in other Member States. Seasonal influenza can infect up to 18% of the unvaccinated population in any given season in any country.

The adoption of specific healthcare measures is a national competence.

Under Decision 1082/2013/EU ([1]) on serious cross-border threats to health, the Commission supports Member States to coordinate their response to serious cross border threats to health, including pandemic and seasonal influenza. A key aspect of these activities will be the strengthening of coordination in preparedness and response planning as foreseen in the decision.

Furthermore, as a result of the EU wide review of pandemic influenza vaccination strategies, Member States called upon the Commission to develop a mechanism for the joint procurement of medical countermeasures needed to tackle a serious threat to health (including pandemic and seasonal flu vaccines). The Commission adopted a decision on this Joint Procurement Agreement on 10 April this year and it is intended that Member States sign the Agreement on 20 June 2014.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005302/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Innovation, BEI et réindustrialisation

Pour contrer la crise de l'industrie, l'Europe doit devenir un espace de l'innovation. En vue de répondre à cet objectif, une agence de l'innovation et de la réindustrialisation, adossée à la BEI, pourrait par exemple être mise en place.

Au-delà de l'insuffisante communication intitulée «Pour une renaissance industrielle», adoptée le 22 janvier 2014, quelles stratégies industrielles la Commission compte-t-elle développer pour enrayer le déclin de nos industries en Europe et la crise de l'emploi qui s'ensuit? Quel rôle la Commission entend-elle faire jouer à la Banque européenne d'investissement?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(23 juin 2014)

La Commission est d'avis, comme l'Honorable Parlementaire, que l'UE a besoin d'innovations réussies pour maintenir sa croissance et sa compétitivité au niveau mondial. La récente communication «Pour une renaissance industrielle européenne» ([1]) donne une vue d'ensemble complète de la politique industrielle de la Commission, notamment la stimulation de l'innovation. La Commission a coopéré de manière constructive avec le Parlement européen lors de l'élaboration de sa politique industrielle. Cela se reflète dans le rapport du Parlement intitulé «Réindustrialiser l'Europe pour promouvoir la compétitivité et la durabilité», adopté le 15 janvier 2014.

En ce qui concerne le rôle de la BEI, la Commission collabore étroitement avec la banque de l'UE. Le soutien de la BEI à l'industrie a été non négligeable: depuis 2008, la Banque a prêté un volume d'environ 70 milliards d'euros, principalement en faveur de la RDI et de projets relatifs à l'environnement. Renforcer les investissements dans la RDI, mais aussi le capital-risque et le soutien aux PME sont des priorités essentielles pour la BEI.

Le financement des technologies clés génériques (TCG) a en particulier bénéficié jusqu'à présent de cette coopération. Suite au protocole d'accord signé en février 2013 entre la Commission européenne et la BEI, les prêts de la BEI pour des projets relatifs à des TCG ont augmenté de 60 % (passant de 2,7 milliards d'euros en 2012 à 4,4 milliards d'euros en 2013).

Aucune proposition n'a été faite pour la mise en place d'une agence de l'innovation et de la réindustrialisation.

([1]) COM(2014) 14 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005302/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Innovation, EIB and reindustrialisation

To counteract the crisis in industry, Europe needs to become an area of innovation. One means to achieve that end might be to set up an innovation and reindustrialisation agency, backed up by the EIB.

Apart from its inadequate communication entitled 'For a European Industrial Renaissance' adopted on 22 January 2014, what industrial strategies does the Commission propose to put forward to halt the decline in our European industries and the resulting crisis in employment? What role does the Commission envisage for the European Investment Bank in this connection?

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

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the EU needs successful innovations for its continued growth and global competitiveness. The recent Communication 'For a European Industrial Renaissance' ([1]) provides a comprehensive overview of the Commission industrial policy strategy, including innovation promotion. The Commission has had constructive cooperation with the European Parliament in the development of its industrial policy. This is reflected in the Parliament's report 'on reindustrialising Europe to promote competitiveness and sustainability' adopted on 15 January 2014.

As concerns the role of the EIB, the Commission cooperates closely with the EU Bank. EIB support to industry has been substantial: since 2008 the EIB has made available about EUR 70 billion of lending volume — mainly for RDI and environmental projects. Reinforced investments in RDI, but also venture capital and SME support are key priorities for the EIB Group.

In particular, financing for key enabling technologies has so far benefited from this cooperation. Following the memorandum of understanding signed in February 2013 between the European Commission and the EIB, EIB lending to KETs projects has increased by 60% (from EUR 2.7 billion in 2012 to EUR 4.4 billion in 2013).

No proposal has been made to set up an innovation and reindustrialisation Agency.

([1]) COM(2014) 014 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005305/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Recours collectifs en matière de droit à la concurrence

Plusieurs États membres ont adopté une législation autorisant les actions de groupe. Cependant, au niveau du droit européen de la concurrence, ces recours collectifs ne sont pas reconnus.

Les actions collectives auraient des effets positifs en dehors même du domaine de la concurrence, puisqu'elles peuvent contribuer à soulever des dysfonctionnements dans le marché intérieur, et renforceraient la confiance des consommateurs dans le commerce transfrontalier.

La Commission envisage-t-elle de formuler des propositions législatives allant dans le sens de cette reconnaissance des recours collectifs en matière de droit de la concurrence?

Réponse donnée par M. Almunia au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

En ce qui concerne les recours collectifs, la Commission a adopté, le 11 juin 2013, une recommandation ([1]) invitant les États membres à instaurer des mécanismes nationaux de recours collectif en cessation et en réparation. Ces mécanismes doivent garantir que les procédures sont objectives, équitables et rapides, sans que leur coût ne soit prohibitif, et respecter les principes de base énoncés dans la recommandation. Celle-ci couvre tous les domaines d'action, y compris le droit de la concurrence.

Les États membres doivent mettre en œuvre les principes énoncés dans la recommandation d'ici le 26 juillet 2015 au plus tard. Ils doivent ensuite recueillir et communiquer à la Commission, pour la première fois le 26 juillet 2016 au plus tard, leurs statistiques annuelles sur les affaires de recours collectifs. La Commission évaluera la mise en œuvre de la recommandation sur la base de l'expérience pratique acquise dans les États membres d'ici le 26 juillet 2017 au plus tard. Dans le cadre de cette évaluation, la Commission déterminera également s'il convient de proposer d'autres mesures en vue de consolider et de renforcer l'approche horizontale reflétée dans la recommandation.

Dans la mesure où les États membres ont déjà adopté des législations introduisant des actions collectives spécifiquement applicables ou conçues, au niveau horizontal, pour le domaine de la concurrence, ils peuvent bien entendu les utiliser aussi pour faire respecter le droit de la concurrence de l'UE. La proposition de directive relative aux actions en dommages et intérêts pour infraction aux règles concernant les ententes et les abus de position dominante, dont un texte révisé a été approuvé par le Parlement européen le 17 avril 2014 ([2]), s'appliquera, une fois qu'elle aura été adoptée et mise en œuvre, à tous les types d'actions en dommages et intérêts, y compris les actions collectives lorsqu'elles sont prévues dans le droit national.

([1]) Recommandation de la Commission relative à des principes communs applicables aux mécanismes de recours collectif en cessation et en réparation dans les États membres en cas de violation de droits conférés par le droit de l'Union, JO L 201 du 26.7.2013, pp. 60 et 65; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013H0396&from=EN

([2]) Proposition de directive du Parlement européen et du Conseil relative à certaines règles régissant les actions en dommages et intérêts en droit interne pour les infractions aux dispositions du droit de la concurrence des États membres et de l'Union européenne, PE A7-0089/14/P7_TA-PROV(2014)0451; http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+AMD+A7-2014-0089+002-002+DOC+PDF+V0//FR

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005305/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Collective redress (class actions) in matters relating to competition law

Several Member States have adopted legislation to permit class actions. However, these class actions are not recognised under EU competition law.

Class actions would have positive effects even outside the competition sector, as they can help draw attention to malfunctioning in the internal market and increase consumer confidence in cross-border trade.

Is the Commission considering making any legislative proposals with a view to recognising class actions in matters relating to competition law?

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

As regards collective redress, the Commission adopted on 11 June 2013 a recommendation ([1]) which invites Member States to introduce mechanisms of injunctive and compensatory collective redress at national level. Such mechanisms should ensure fair, equitable, timely and not prohibitively expensive procedures and should respect basic principles set out in the recommendation. The recommendation covers all policy fields, including competition law.

Member States should implement the principles set out in the recommendation by 26 July 2015 at the latest. They are then expected to collect and communicate to the Commission, for the first time not later than 26 July 2016, annual statistics on collective redress cases. The Commission will assess the implementation of the recommendation on the basis of practical experience in the Member States by 26 July 2017 at the latest. As part of this assessment, the Commission will also consider whether further measures to consolidate and strengthen the horizontal approach reflected in the recommendation should be proposed.

To the extent that Member States have already adopted legislation introducing collective actions which are horizontally applicable or designed specifically for the competition field, these can naturally be used also for the purposes of enforcing EU competition law. The proposal for a directive on antitrust damages actions, a revised text of which was approved by the European Parliament on 17 April 2014 ([2]), will, once adopted and implemented, apply to all types of damages actions, including collective actions where they are available under national law.

([1]) Commission Recommendation on common principles for injunctive and compensatory collective redress mechanisms in the Member States concerning violations of rights granted under Union Law, OJ L 201, 26.7.2013, p. 60-65; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1398263020823&uri=OJ:JOL_2013_201_R_NS0013

([2]) Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on certain rules governing actions for damages under national law for infringements of the competition law provisions of the Member States and of the European Union, EP A7-0089/14/P7_TA-PROV(2014)0451; http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+AMD+A7-2014-0089+002-002+DOC+PDF+V0//EN

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-005307/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(23. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: Potencijalne manipulacije novim okvirom za postavljanje elektroničkih komunikacijskih mreža velike brzine

Prema prijedlogu Uredbe Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o mjerama za smanjivanje troškova postavljanja elektroničkih komunikacijskih mreža velike brzine mrežni operater ima obvezu udovoljiti svim razumnim zahtjevima za pristup njegovoj fizičkoj infrastrukturi pod poštenim odredbama i uvjetima.

Prijedlog nalaže da se svako odbijanje pristupa mora temeljiti na objektivnim kriterijima kao što su pitanja zaštite okoliša i javnog zdravlja, sigurnost kritičnih nacionalnih infrastruktura, integritet i sigurnost bilo koje već izgrađene mreže, opasnost od dokazanih interferencija planiranih elektroničkih komunikacijskih usluga s pružanjem drugih usluga putem iste fizičke infrastrukture te mnogi drugi navedeni u tekstu.

Prema mojem skromnom mišljenju „objektivni razlozi" za odbijanje navedeni u prijedlogu su previše brojni i podložni subjektivnim tumačenjima i manipulacijama te bi u praksi mogli neutralizirati obvezu mrežnog operatera da udovolji razumnim zahtjevima za pristup njegovoj mrežnoj infrastrukturi i tako negativno utjecati na tržišno natjecanje.

Stoga želim pitati Europsku komisiju kako namjerava kontrolirati poštuju li doista mrežni operateri navedenu obvezu, odnosno je li u izradi mehanizam kojim će se jamčiti da se uvedenim okvirom neće manipulirati preširokim tumačenjem okolnosti koje mogu opravdati odbijanje pristupa fizičkoj infrastrukturi operatera.

Odgovor gospođe Kroes u ime Komisije
(11. lipnja 2014.)

Dana 15. svibnja 2014. suzakondavci su donijeli Direktivu 2014/61/EU ([1]) o mjerama za smanjenje troškova postavljanja elektroničkih komunikacijskih mreža velikih brzina. Konačnim se tekstom predviđa mogućnost odbijanja pristupa na temelju objektivnih, transparentnih i razmjernih mjerila te on uključuje okvirni popis razloga za odbijanje pristupa fizičkoj infrastrukturi.

Iako sadržaj tog popisa nije sveobuhvatan, Direktivom se mrežnog operatora obvezuje da u svojem odgovoru u kratkom roku obrazloži te razloge. Njome se daju ovlasti tražitelju pristupa da ospori to odbijanje pred tijelom za rješavanje sporova koje imenuje država članica, koje mora biti u mogućnosti donijeti odluku s obzirom na specifične činjenice o kojima je riječ. Tim se uravnoteženim mehanizmom za obvezujuće rješavanje sporova osigurava da mrežni operatori ne mogu manipulirati tim objektivnim razlozima za odbijanje pristupa.

U slučaju neopravdanog odbijanja da se udovolji svim razumnim zahtjevima za pristup, ili u slučaju zlouporabe uvjeta, tijelo za rješavanje sporova imat će ovlasti da odredi pristup pod razumnim uvjetima, uključujući cijenu. Naposljetku, u tom pogledu u uvodnim izjavama teksta pružaju se dodatne naznake na koje se tijelo za rješavanje sporova može pozvati kako bi odlučilo o zahtjevu za pristup i povezanim uvjetima. Odluka tijela za rješavanje sporova obvezujuća je za stranke i podliježe žalbi pred nacionalnim sudom, dok se postupkom rješavanja sporova ne dovodi u pitanje pravo svake stranke da predmet uputi nacionalnom sudu.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOL_2014_155_R_0001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005307/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Potential manipulation of the new framework for establishing high-speed electronic communications networks

A proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks requires network operators to grant all reasonable requests for access to their physical infrastructure under fair terms and conditions.

The proposal stipulates that any refusal must be based on objective criteria, such as protecting the environment and public health, security of vital national infrastructure, integrity and security of any existing networks, risk of serious interference to other services over the same physical infrastructure caused by the planned electronic communications, and many others.

In my humble opinion, the 'objective criteria' for refusal set out in the proposal are too numerous and susceptible to subjective interpretation and manipulation. In practice, therefore, they could be used to neutralise the network operator's obligation to grant reasonable requests for access to their network's infrastructure, thereby having a negative impact on competition.

In this connection, how does the Commission intend to verify whether network operators are genuinely upholding the aforementioned obligation? Is a mechanism being prepared that would guarantee that the legal framework cannot not be manipulated by interpreting circumstances in an excessively broad way in order to justify the refusal of access to the operator's physical infrastructure?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

On 15 May 2014, the co-legislators adopted the directive 2014/61/EU ([1]) on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks. The final text allows for the possibility to refuse access on the basis of objective, transparent and proportionate criteria and includes an indicative list of reasons to refuse access to the physical infrastructure.

While the content of this list is not exhaustive, the directive does impose an obligation for the network operator to substantiate these reasons in its reply within a short deadline. It also empowers the access seeker to challenge this refusal in front of the dispute settlement body designated by the Member State, which must be able to decide in view of the specific facts at stake. This balanced mechanism for the binding resolution of dispute ensures that the network operators cannot manipulate these objective reasons to refuse access.

In case of unjustified refusal to meet reasonable requests for access, or in case of abusive terms and conditions, the dispute resolution body will have the power to impose access on reasonable terms and conditions, including price. Finally, the text provides further indications in this respect in its recitals on which the dispute resolution authority may rely in order to decide on the access request and on the relative terms and conditions. The decision of the dispute resolution body is binding upon the parties and subject to an appeal before the national judge, while the dispute resolution procedure is without prejudice to the right of each party to refer the case to a national Court.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:JOL_2014_155_R_0001

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005309/14
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Limiti ai tassi di interesse nel mercato comune e introduzione dell'usura anche per gli istituti bancari europei

La difficoltà di accesso al credito da parte di imprese e famiglie resta uno dei maggiori ostacoli al rilancio dell'economia europea, ed è paradossale che questa stretta creditizia permanga nonostante le misure adottate negli ultimi anni dalla Banca centrale europea per dare ossigeno all'economia reale.

Ricordiamo che già alla fine del 2011 la BCE aveva condotto due operazioni di rifinanziamento del sistema bancario immettendo oltre 1 000 miliardi di euro nel circuito finanziario europeo, con l'intento di garantire liquidità al sistema finanziario e rilanciare l'accesso al credito. Purtroppo, queste risorse non sono state utilizzate dalle banche per dare ossigeno all'economia reale, ma sono state investite in attività finanziarie che garantivano loro un ritorno facile e privo di rischi. Anche il tasso di interesse di riferimento della BCE è sceso notevolmente, passando dal 4 % del 2007, anno precedente allo scoppio della crisi, allo 0,25 % attuale, per permettere alle banche di rifinanziarsi più agevolmente e favorire un'apertura del credito verso l'economia reale. Però, non solo i tassi medi praticati dalle banche non sono scesi affatto, ma sono perlopiù aumentati, come ad esempio in Italia, dove sono cresciuti i tassi «limite», ossia quelli fissati dalla Banca d'Italia ogni tre mesi e oltre i quali scatta il reato di «usura bancaria». Prendendo sempre come anno di riferimento il 2007, quando il tasso applicato dalla BCE era del 4 %, il tasso «usura» in Italia su base annua era dell'8,3 %. Attualmente, e qui sta il paradosso italiano, mentre il tasso BCE è sceso allo 0,25 %, la soglia di usura in Italia è addirittura salita all'8,6 % per i mutui a tasso variabile e al 10,4 % per i mutui a tasso fisso. Emerge pertanto una evidente incongruenza tra i tassi applicati dalle banche e il tasso che esse sfruttano per rifinanziarsi dalla BCE, lasciando alle stesse banche un intollerabile margine discrezionale, garantito dalla crescente soglia dei tassi di «usura», per definire i tassi da applicare alla clientela. Una situazione simile è presente all'interno di altri Stati europei. Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. se ravvisi la presenza di un'anomalia all'interno del sistema creditizio europeo e italiano in particolare, laddove, a fronte di continue diminuzioni del tasso di riferimento della BCE, i tassi di interesse applicati dagli istituti di credito nei diversi Stati membri continuano a salire?

2. se non ritenga opportuno dover intervenire per imporre alle banche che i tassi da esse applicati per la contrazione di mutui da parte di famiglie e imprese siano proporzionali alle fluttuazioni del tasso di riferimento della BCE?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(9 luglio 2014)

La Commissione riconosce che un'ampia parte del settore bancario europeo si trova ancora in difficoltà, il che crea correnti contrarie alla nascente ripresa economica ([1]). Inoltre, persiste in tutta l'UE la frammentazione finanziaria e, nonostante abbia iniziato a ridursi, persiste una notevole dispersione delle quote dei prestiti tra gli Stati membri, che riflette costellazioni differenti del rischio specifico di ogni paese ([2]). Le possibili disfunzioni del meccanismo di trasmissione della politica monetaria possono avere varie determinanti ([3]). Inoltre, l'aumento delle perdite su prestiti ha contribuito a deprimere la redditività di tutto il settore ([4]). Di conseguenza, l'aumento della quota dei prestiti non si è tradotto nel complesso in un aumento dei margini di profitto delle banche. Al riguardo, l'*ESRB Risk Dashboard* (il quadro operativo sul rischio del Comitato europeo per il rischio sistemico) indica che i margini bancari (vale a dire la differenza tra i tassi sui prestiti e i tassi sui depositi) sui prestiti alle famiglie italiane sono relativamente bassi rispetto al resto dell'area dell'euro ([5]). Dall'analisi del rendimento delle attività delle banche emerge che la redditività delle banche italiane in particolare è piuttosto bassa rispetto alle omologhe negli altri Stati membri dell'Unione europea ([6]). La politica dei prestiti rientra tra le decisioni commerciali degli amministratori delle banche.

([1]) Cfr. ad esempio, European Economic Forecast Spring 2014, pubblicato dalla Commissione europea nel maggio 2014, disponibile al seguente indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2014/pdf/ee3_en.pdf

([2]) ECB Financial Stability Review, maggio 2014, www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/financialstabilityreview201405en.pdf

([3]) Per una panoramica, cfr. BCE: «Assessing the retail bank interest rate pass-through in the euro area at times of financial fragmentation», Bollettino mensile, agosto 2013.

([4]) Cfr. Banca d'Italia, Rapporto sulla stabilità finanziaria, maggio 2014, capitolo 3.

([5]) Cfr. figura 3.3 dell'ESRB Risk Dashboard, disponibile all'indirizzo www.esrb.europa.eu.

([6]) Cfr. la figura 1.4.10 e l'analisi associata della direzione generale del Mercato interno e dei servizi, disponibile all'indirizzo: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/economic_analysis/docs/efsir/140428-efsir-2013_en.pdf e.
Autorità bancaria europea, Risk Assessment of the European Banking System, disponibile all'indirizzo: http://www.eba.europa.eu/documents/10180/556730/EBA+January+2014+Risk+Assessment+Report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005309/14
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Capping interest rates in the common market and the introduction of a usury rate for European banks

The squeeze on lending to businesses and households is a major obstacle to the recovery of the European economy, yet, despite the measures taken in recent years by the European Central Bank to breathe life into the real economy, there does not appear to be an end to the credit crunch in sight.

At the end of 2011, the ECB launched two refinancing operations with a cash injection of over one trillion euro, with the aim of pumping liquidity to the European financial system and boosting access to credit. However, these resources have not been used by the banks to kick-start the real economy, but instead have been invested in financial assets that have guaranteed the banks themselves an easy, risk-free path to recovery. The ECB benchmark interest rate has been slashed from 4% in 2007, the year before the start of the financial crisis, to the current rate of 0.25%, to allow banks to refinance more easily and promote lending to the real economy. However, not only have the average rates charged by banks not fallen at all, but they have largely increased, as in the case of Italy, which has seen a rise in 'usury' rates (the maximum legal interest rates banks can charge before they are deemed usurious, set quarterly by the Bank of Italy). Again taking 2007 as the year of reference, when the ECB rate was 4%, the annual 'usury' rate in Italy stood at 8.3%. Currently — and herein lies the Italian paradox — whereas the ECB rate has fallen to 0.25%, the usury threshold in Italy has actually risen, to 8.6% for variable rate mortgages and 10.4% for fixed-rate mortgages. There is therefore a clear discrepancy between the rates charged by the banks and the rate granted to them by the ECB to help with refinancing, which allows the banks an unacceptable margin of discretion, ensured by the rising usury threshold rate, in setting the rates to be charged to customers. The situation is similar in other European countries. Therefore:

1. does the Commission believe that there is a fault within the European banking system, and the Italian system in particular, where, despite the falling ECB benchmark interest rate, the interest rates charged by credit institutions in various Member States continue to rise?

2. does the Commission not consider it time to intervene, by forcing the banks to charge rates on loans to households and businesses which are proportional to fluctuations in the ECB benchmark rate?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(9 July 2014)

The Commission recognises the challenges still faced by large parts of the European banking sector, which contribute to headwinds to the nascent economic recovery ([1]). Further, financial fragmentation across the EU still persists and though it has started receding, notable dispersion remains in lending rates between Member States, reflecting different country-specific risk constellations ([2]). Possible impairments to the transmission of monetary policy can have several determinants ([3]). Moreover, heightened loan losses contributed to depressed profitability across the sector ([4]). Thus, the higher lending rates, by and large, did not translate into higher profit margins for banks. In this regard, the ESRB Risk Dashboard indicates that bank margins (i.e. the difference between lending and deposit rates) on loans to Italian households are relatively low in the euro area ([5]). Analysis of banks' return on assets indicates that the profitability of Italian banks in particular is rather weak compared to peers in other European Member States ([6]). Banks' lending policy falls within the remit of commercially-driven decisions by the management of each institution.

([1]) See, for example, European Economic Forecast Spring 2014, published by the European Commission in May 2014, available at http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2014/pdf/ee3_en.pdf
([2]) ECB Financial Stability Review May 2014, www.ecb.europa.eu/pub/pdf/other/financialstabilityreview201405en.pdf
([3]) For an overview, see ECB: 'Assessing the retail bank interest rate pass-through in the euro area at times of financial fragmentation', Monthly Bulletin August 2013.
([4]) See Banca d'Italia, Financial Stability Report May 2014, Chapter 3.
([5]) See figure 3.3 of the ESRB Risk Dashboard, available at www.esrb.europa.eu
([6]) See figure 1.4.10 and associated analysis by Directorate-General Internal Market and Services available at http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/economic_analysis/docs/efsir/140428-efsir-2013_en.pdf and the European Banking Authority (EBA) Risk Assessment of the European Banking System, available at http://www.eba.europa.eu/documents/10180/556730/EBA+January+2014+Risk+Assessment+Report.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005310/14
alla Commissione
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Difesa dei diritti umani in Nigeria

Secondo fonti giornalistiche, il 14 aprile più di un centinaio di ragazze di un collegio nel nordest della Nigeria sarebbero state rapite da un gruppo di uomini armati. L'azione sembra essere stata organizzata e attuata da un gruppo estremista islamico chiamato «Boko Haram», che tradotto letteralmente significa «l'educazione occidentale è un peccato».

— Considerando che nella medesima regione sembra si siano registrati atti simili in passato, ad esempio quando nel 2012 pare siano state uccise venti donne nelle loro abitazioni a Maiduguri;

— considerando lo stato di emergenza dichiarato dal presidente nigeriano in tre Stati del nordest del paese a causa della grave situazione di guerriglia;

— considerando che spesso sono le categorie più deboli della società come le donne e i bambini a soffrire maggiormente dell'instabilità di un paese;

— considerando i principi enunciati dalla Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo del 10 dicembre 1948, e in particolar modo l'articolo 3 che afferma il diritto di ogni persona «alla vita, alla libertà ed alla sicurezza della propria persona»;

— considerando i principi tutelati dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo (CEDU), specialmente quelli enunciati agli articoli 1, 2, 3 e 5,

l'interrogante desidera porre alla Commissione i quesiti di seguito riportati.

1. È a conoscenza della situazione descritta?

2. Quali iniziative intende adottare per condannare gli atti in questione?

3. Che tipo di azioni intende intraprendere a tutela dei sopraenunciati diritti, che devono andare ben oltre i confini della sola Unione europea?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

Gli episodi di violenza che si verificano attualmente in Nigeria destano grande preoccupazione.

Nelle sue conclusioni del 12 maggio, il Consiglio Affari esteri dell'Unione europea ha condannato fermamente il rapimento di oltre 200 studentesse nello Stato nord-orientale del Borno, facendo seguito alla preoccupazione e alla condanna già espresse dall'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Ashton in una dichiarazione del 15 aprile.

L'Unione europea collabora con le autorità nigeriane per contribuire a porre fine alla spirale di violenza, agendo su numerosi fronti tra cui un dialogo politico costante e aiuti mirati volti ad eliminare le cause profonde della violenza.

Nell'ambito del dialogo politico con le autorità nigeriane viene ribadita la necessità per la Nigeria di affrontare l'attuale crisi di sicurezza secondo un approccio globale, in modo da evitare e prevenire l'alienazione. Tale approccio deve comprendere riforme socioeconomiche, la creazione di posti di lavoro e l'erogazione di servizi, il buon governo e lo Stato di diritto.

Il 10° FES sostiene un'ampia gamma di interventi a livello di democratizzazione, Stato di diritto, risorse idriche, impianti igienico-sanitari e salute materna. Lo strumento per la stabilità sostiene numerosi programmi e progetti di pacificazione e mediazione che contribuiscono a migliorare la sicurezza e a riformare la giustizia penale. Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani finanzia azioni a tutela dei diritti umani, destinate in particolare agli elementi più vulnerabili della società. L'11° FES è attualmente in fase di programmazione, con un forte accento sulla regione nord-orientale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005310/14
to the Commission
Lorenzo Fontana (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Defence of human rights in Nigeria

According to press sources, on 14 April more than 100 teenage girls were abducted from a school in north-eastern Nigeria by a group of armed men. The abduction was orchestrated and carried out by an Islamic extremist group known as 'Boko Haram' (literally translated as 'western education is a sin').

Similar acts have been recorded in the same region, for example an incident in 2012 when 20 women were killed in their homes at Maiduguri. A state of emergency has been declared by the Nigerian President in three north-eastern States because of serious guerrilla warfare.

It is frequently the weaker sections of society, such as women and children, who suffer most from instability in a country. In view of this, and the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, in particular Article 3, which affirms the right of every person 'to life, liberty and security of person' and in view of the principles enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), with particular reference to Articles 1, 2, 3 and 5;

1. Is the Commission aware of the situation described above?

2. What measures does it intend to take to condemn the acts in question?

3. What type of action does it intend to take to safeguard the above rights, which should be understood to extend well beyond the confines of the European Union?

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

The on-going violence in Nigeria is of great concern.

The European Union Foreign Affairs Council strongly condemned the abduction of more than 200 schoolgirls in the north eastern state of Borno in its Conclusions of 12th of May.

This came after the statement of the High Representative/Vice-president Ashton of 15th of April expressing also concern and condemnation.

The European Union is working with the Nigerian authorities to help bring an end to the cycle of violence. It does so through many actions including continuous political dialogue and targeted aid interventions focusing on the underlying root causes of violence.

In our political dialogue with the Nigerian authorities we emphasise the need for Nigeria to address the current security crisis with a comprehensive approach to avoid and prevent alienation. Such a comprehensive approach should include socioeconomic reforms, job creation and provision of services, good governance and the rule of law.

The 10th EDF is supporting a broad range of actions in the field of democratisation, rule of law, water, sanitation and maternal health. The Instrument for Stability is supporting several peace and mediation programmes and projects contributing to security and the reform of the criminal justice system. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights funds actions to protect human rights, in particular targeting the most vulnerable of society. The 11th EDF is currently being programmed, with a strong focus on the N/E.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005311/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Cambio di cognome di bambini residenti in Germania e Austria all'insaputa del padre di altra nazionalità

In Germania e in Austria, dove i padri non sposati non vedono riconosciuti i propri diritti naturali sui figli in maniera automatica come nei restanti paesi dell'Unione, i figli naturali subiscono per questo un pregiudizio e un trattamento discriminatorio rispetto ai figli nati all'interno di un matrimonio.

Inoltre, ci è stato segnalato e documentato che in questi paesi viene cambiato il cognome dei bambini binazionali nati al di fuori della Germania e dell'Austria; è stato cioè sostituito il cognome paterno con quello materno all'insaputa del padre e sono stati modificati i documenti di identità.

I bambini risultano portare un cognome nel paese di nascita e un altro in Germania e Austria.

Può la Commissione indicare:

1. se concorda nel ritenere questa pratica, pur supportata dal diritto di famiglia dei due paesi in questione, una violazione del diritto al nome e all'identità personale sancito dall'ordinamento europeo?

2. se, in caso affermativo, non ritiene di dover chiedere ai due Stati membri di volersi adeguare ai principi condivisi da tutta l'Unione e nel rispetto della non discriminazione e al diritto alla propria identità, soprattutto trattandosi di minori?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(7 luglio 2014)

L'interrogazione presentata dall'onorevole parlamentare solleva questioni quali il diritto applicabile alla filiazione, alla responsabilità genitoriale e all'attribuzione e al cambiamento del cognome di un minore.

Non esiste attualmente alcun atto legislativo dell'UE su tali materie, che sono disciplinate dal diritto interno di ogni Stato membro, ivi comprese le rispettive norme di diritto internazionale privato.

Per quanto riguarda la responsabilità genitoriale, la convenzione dell'Aia del 1996 ([1]) è stata ratificata sia dalla Germania sia dall'Austria. In virtù di tale convenzione, l'attribuzione, l'esercizio e l'estinzione della responsabilità genitoriale sono disciplinate dal diritto dello Stato in cui il minore risiede abitualmente.

Nel 2010 la Commissione ha pubblicato un Libro verde ([2]) in cui si esaminano iniziative volte a promuovere la libera circolazione dei documenti pubblici e il reciproco riconoscimento dello stato civile, compreso il cognome, in situazioni transfrontaliere. Come primo passo la Commissione ha proposto un regolamento che semplifica l'accettazione dei documenti pubblici tra Stati membri ([3]), attualmente sottoposto all'esame dei colegislatori.

Occorre tener presente che, in virtù dell'articolo 51, paragrafo 1, della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea, le disposizioni della Carta si applicano agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione. In ogni altro caso spetta agli Stati membri garantire il rispetto dei diritti fondamentali conformemente alla rispettiva legislazione nazionale e agli obblighi internazionali in materia di diritti umani. Se un cittadino ritiene che i propri diritti fondamentali non siano stati rispettati, può farli valere a livello nazionale rivolgendosi alle autorità competenti, come il difensore civico o gli organi giurisdizionali. Inoltre, chi ritenga che siano stati violati i propri diritti sanciti dalla Convenzione europea dei diritti dell'uomo, quando siano stati esauriti tutti i mezzi di ricorso nazionali può presentare ricorso ([4]).

([1]) Convenzione dell'Aia del 1996 sulla competenza, la legge applicabile, il riconoscimento, l'esecuzione e la cooperazione in materia di responsabilità genitoriale e di misure di protezione dei minori.

([2]) «Meno adempimenti amministrativi per i cittadini. Promuovere la libera circolazione dei documenti pubblici e il riconoscimento degli effetti degli atti di stato civile». (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0747&rid=1).

([3]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che promuove la libera circolazione di cittadini e imprese semplificando l'accettazione di alcuni documenti pubblici nell'Unione europea e che modifica il regolamento (UE) n. 1024/2012. (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013PC0228&rid=1).

([4]) Presso la Corte europea dei diritti dell'uomo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005311/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Change of surname of children resident in Germany and Austria without the knowledge of a father of different nationality

In Germany and Austria, unmarried fathers are not automatically accorded natural rights over their children as in the remaining countries in the Union. Such children therefore suffer prejudice and discriminatory treatment compared with children born within a marriage.

We have also received documented reports that the surnames of bi-national children born outside Germany and Austria are being changed in these countries. This means the paternal surname is being replaced with the maternal surname without the knowledge of the father and the identity documents changed accordingly.

The outcome is that children carry one surname in their country of birth and another in Germany or Austria.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does it agree that, although supported by the family law of the two countries concerned, this practice is a breach of the right to a name and personal identity enshrined in the European judicial system?

2. If so, does it not consider it necessary to ask the two Member States concerned to adhere to the principles of non-discrimination and the right to personal identity, in particular in the case of minors, shared throughout the Union?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 2014)

The question asked by the Honourable Member potentially concerns matters such as the law applicable to filiation, parental responsibility and the attribution and change of a child's name.

Currently there is no EC law governing these matters, which fall under each Member State's national law, including its private international law rules.

With regard to parental responsibility, the 1996 Hague Convention ([1]) has been ratified by both Germany and Austria. Under this Convention, the attribution, extinction and exercise of parental responsibility is governed by the law of the State of the child's habitual residence.

In 2010 the Commission published a Green Paper ([2]) which considered initiatives to promote the free movement of public documents and the mutual recognition of civil status, including name, in cross-border situations. As a first step the Commission proposed a regulation simplifying the acceptance of public documents between Member States ([3]) which is currently being examined by the co-legislators.

It should be noted that, according to Article 51(1) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing EC law. Otherwise, it is for Member States to ensure that fundamental rights are protected in accordance with their national legislation and international human rights obligations. Citizens who believe that their fundamental rights have not been respected may seek redress at national level through the competent authorities, such as an ombudsman or the courts. In addition, citizens who consider that their rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights have been violated may lodge a complaint ([4]) once all domestic remedies have been exhausted.

([1]) 1996 Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

([2]) 'Less bureaucracy for citizens: promoting free movement of public documents and recognition of the effects of civil status records' (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0747:FIN:EN:PDF).

([3]) Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on promoting the free movement of citizens and businesses by simplifying the acceptance of certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012 (http://ec.europa.eu/justice/civil/files/com_2013_228_en.pdf).

([4]) With the European Court of Human Rights.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005312/14
alla Commissione
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Limiti ai tassi di interesse nel mercato comune e introduzione dell'usura anche per gli istituti bancari europei

La difficoltà di accesso al credito da parte di imprese e famiglie resta uno dei maggiori ostacoli al rilancio dell'economia europea, ed è paradossale che questa stretta creditizia permanga nonostante le misure adottate negli ultimi anni dalla Banca centrale europea per dare ossigeno all'economia reale.

Ricordiamo che già alla fine del 2011 la BCE aveva condotto due operazioni di rifinanziamento del sistema bancario immettendo oltre 1 000 miliardi di euro nel circuito finanziario europeo, con l'intento di garantire liquidità al sistema finanziario e rilanciare l'accesso al credito. Purtroppo, queste risorse non sono state utilizzate dalle banche per dare ossigeno all'economia reale, ma sono state investite in attività finanziarie che garantivano loro un ritorno facile e privo di rischi.

Anche il tasso di interesse di riferimento dalla BCE è sceso notevolmente, passando dal 4 % del 2007, anno precedente allo scoppio della crisi, allo 0,25 % attuale, per permettere alle banche di rifinanziarsi più agevolmente e favorire un'apertura del credito verso l'economia reale. Però, non solo i tassi medi praticati dalle banche non sono scesi affatto, ma sono perlopiù aumentati, come ad esempio in Italia, dove sono cresciuti i tassi «limite», ossia quelli fissati dalla Banca d'Italia ogni tre mesi e oltre i quali scatta il reato di «usura bancaria». Prendendo sempre come anno di riferimento il 2007, quando il tasso applicato dalla BCE era del 4 %, il tasso «usura» in Italia su base annua era dell'8,3 %. Attualmente, e qui sta il paradosso italiano, mentre il tasso BCE è sceso allo 0,25 %, la soglia di usura in Italia è addirittura salita all'8,6 % per i mutui a tasso variabile e al 10,4 % per i mutui a tasso fisso.

Emerge pertanto una evidente incongruenza tra i tassi applicati dalla banche e il tasso che esse sfruttano per rifinanziarsi dalla BCE, lasciando alle stesse banche un intollerabile margine discrezionale, garantito dalla crescente soglia dei tassi di «usura», per definire i tassi da applicare alla clientela. Una situazione simile è presente all'interno di altri Stati europei.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

— se non ritenga opportuno dover proporre all'interno dell'Unione europea l'istituzione di un limite ai tassi di interesse applicati dalle banche oltre il quale scatti il reato di usura bancaria?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(4 luglio 2014)

Il livello dei tassi degli interessi debitori applicati ai consumatori non è disciplinato dal diritto dell'Unione. Tuttavia la direttiva 2008/48/CE ([1]) impone ai creditori di fornire informazioni su tutti i costi pertinenti di un credito al consumo nella pubblicità e nelle informazioni precontrattuali. La direttiva 2014/17/UE ([2]) contiene disposizioni analoghe.

La Commissione ritiene che la trasparenza delle informazioni e la comparabilità delle offerte previste dalle predette direttive permettano ai consumatori di decidere in modo informato se sottoscrivere o no un dato contratto di credito e di comparare le diverse offerte.

Inoltre la direttiva 2005/29/CE ([3]), pur non proibendo le pratiche di usura in quanto tali, vieta ai professionisti qualsiasi pratica contraria alle norme di diligenza professionale e in grado di falsare il comportamento economico del consumatore. Nel settore dei servizi finanziari, gli Stati membri sono autorizzati a adottare norme più rigorose, ad esempio per vietare il prestito ad usura in qualsiasi circostanza. In quest'ottica sono liberi di fissare la soglia dei tassi di usura.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/48/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2008, relativa ai contratti di credito ai consumatori e che abroga la direttiva 87/102/CEE (GU L 133 del 22.5.2008, pag. 66).

([2]) Direttiva 2014/17/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 4 febbraio 2014, in merito ai contratti di credito ai consumatori relativi a beni immobili residenziali e recante modifica delle direttive 2008/48/CE e 2013/36/UE e del regolamento (UE) n. 1093/2010 (GU L 60 del 28.2.2014, pag. 34).

([3]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2005, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori nel mercato interno e che modifica la direttiva 84/450/CEE del Consiglio e le direttive 97/7/CE, 98/27/CE e 2002/65/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e il regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio (GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005312/14
to the Commission
Giommaria Uggias (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Capping interest rates in the common market and the introduction of a usury rate for European banks

The squeeze on lending to businesses and households is a major obstacle to the recovery of the European economy, yet, despite the measures taken in recent years by the European Central Bank to breathe life into the real economy, there does not appear to be an end to the credit crunch in sight.

At the end of 2011, the ECB launched two refinancing operations with a cash injection of over one trillion euro, with the aim of pumping liquidity to the European financial system and boosting access to credit. However, these resources have not been used by the banks to kick-start the real economy, but instead have been invested in financial assets that have guaranteed the banks themselves an easy, risk-free path to recovery.

The ECB benchmark interest rate has been slashed from 4% in 2007, the year before the start of the financial crisis, to the current rate of 0.25%, to allow banks to refinance more easily and promote lending to the real economy. However, not only have the average rates charged by banks not fallen at all, but they have largely increased, as in the case of Italy, which has seen a rise in 'usury' rates (the maximum legal interest rates banks can charge before they are deemed usurious, set quarterly by the Bank of Italy). Again taking 2007 as the year of reference, when the ECB rate was 4%, the annual 'usury' rate in Italy stood at 8.3%. Currently — and herein lies the Italian paradox — whereas the ECB rate has fallen to 0.25%, the usury threshold in Italy has actually risen, to 8.6% for variable rate mortgages and 10.4% for fixed-rate mortgages.

There is therefore a clear discrepancy between the rates charged by the banks and the rate granted to them by the ECB to help with refinancing, which allows the banks an unacceptable margin of discretion, ensured by the rising usury threshold rate, in setting the rates to be charged to customers. The situation is similar in other European countries.

Therefore,

— does the Commission not agree that it is time to set, within the European Union, a cap on the interest rates charged by banks beyond which the interest is deemed usurious?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2014)

The level of borrowing rates offered to consumers is not regulated by Union law. However Directive 2008/48/EC ([1]) obliges creditors to provide information on all the relevant costs of a consumer credit in advertising and pre-contractual information. Directive 2014/17/EU ([2]) contains similar provisions.

The Commission believes that transparency of information and comparability of offers as provided for in the abovementioned Directives should allow consumers to make an informed decision whether to enter in a given credit contract or not and enable them to compare offers.

In addition Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]), while not prohibiting usurious practices *per se*, prevents traders from acting contrary to the requirements of professional diligence and distorting the economic behaviour of consumers. In the area of financial services, Member States are allowed to adopt more prescriptive rules with a view, for instance, to prohibit in all circumstances usurious credit. In this respect they are free to set the level of usurious rates.

([1]) Directive 2008/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23.4.2008 on credit agreements for consumers and repealing Council Directive 87/102/EEC, OJ L133, 22.5.2008, p. 66.

([2]) Directive 2014/17/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4.2.2014 on credit agreements for consumers relating to residential immovable property and amending Directives 2008/48/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, OJ L60, 28.2.2014, p.34.

([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.5.2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC, 98/27/EC and 2002/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-005313/14
Komisijai
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(2014 m. balandžio 23 d.)

Tema: Alerginiai susirgimai

Daugiau nei 150 mln. ES piliečių kenčia nuo chroniškų alerginių susirgimų, o pusė iš jų nėra diagnozuoti dėl informuotumo ir medicinos specialistų trūkumo. Daugiau nei 100 mln. Europos gyventojų kenčia nuo alerginio rinito, o 70 mln. nuo astmos. Šios ligos yra dažniausiai pasitaikančios neužkrečiamos vaikų ligos ir pagrindinė jų apsilankymo greitosios pagalbos skyriuose bei hospitalizacijos priežastis. Daugiau nei 17 mln. Europos gyventojų kenčia nuo alergijos maisto produktams arba sunkių alergijų, atsirandančių labai greitai arba keliančių anafilaksijos pavojų, dėl to kyla pavojus gyvybei. Alerginiai susirgimai neigiamai veikia profesinius ir lavinimosi sugebėjimus, ypač vaikų, dėl to kyla socialinė ir ekonominė nelygybė.

Ar Komisija ketina skatinti bendradarbiavimą ir veiksmų koordinavimą tarp valstybių narių, siekiant: stiprinti nacionalines kovos su alerginiais susirgimais programas, skirtas tokių susirgimų sukeliamai naštai ir sveikatos būklės skirtumams mažinti; vykdyti mokymus alerginių susirgimų ir daugiadisciplininės rūpybos planų srityje, siekiant pagerinti ligų valdymą; vadovautis prevenciniu ir tolerancija skatinančiu požiūriu į alerginių susirgimų gydymą; skatinti mokslinius tyrimus tiesioginių ir netiesioginių alergiją sukeliančių faktorių srityje, įskaitant taršą?

T. Borgo atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 13 d.)

Komisijai yra žinoma, kokia našta Europos Sąjungoje patiriama dėl astmos ir alerginių susirgimų.

Nors nacionalinių kovos su alergija programų ir alerginių susirgimų gydymo organizavimas priklauso valstybių narių kompetencijai, Komisija gali atlikti tam tikrą vaidmenį padėdama valstybėms narėms teikti informaciją sveikatos klausimais. Pavyzdžiui, netrukus bus pradėtas pagal ES sveikatos programą finansuojamas komunikacijos kovojant su lėtinėmis ligomis ir vykdant jų prevenciją veiklos apimties tyrimas.

Be to, Europos Komisija atsižvelgia į pagrindinius šios susirgimų grupės rizikos veiksnius formuodama tabako kontrolės ir oro kokybės politiką – tam ji imasi teisėkūros ir informavimo veiksmų. Pasitelkusi sveikatos programą Komisija taip pat prisideda prie projekto „Lėtinių obstrukcinių plaučių ligų ir astmos ES stebėsenos rodikliai“ finansavimo. Vykdant šį projektą parengti atitinkami rodikliai (mirtingumo, sergamumo, rizikos veiksnių, klinikinio valdymo, sveikatos paslaugų ir rezultatų) ir surinkti atitinkami duomenys ([1]).

Dėl bendrųjų su lėtinėmis ligomis susijusių ES veiksmų Komisija 2014 m. balandžio mėn. surengė ES aukščiausiojo lygio susitikimą, skirtą lėtinėms ligoms. Šiame susitikime paraginta įsteigti visų susijusių visuomenės sektorių, pacientų ir piliečių koaliciją lėtinių ligų klausimui spręsti. Komisija ketina dirbti šia kryptimi. Išsamios išvados skelbiamos Komisijos interneto svetainėje ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005121
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_mi_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005313/14
to the Commission
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Allergic diseases

More than 150 million EU citizens suffer from chronic allergic diseases, and half of them have not yet been diagnosed because of a lack of awareness and medical experts. More than 100 million EU residents suffer from allergic rhinitis, and 70 million from asthma. These diseases are the most common infectious diseases in children and the leading cause for visits to emergency departments and hospitalisation. More than 17 million EU residents suffer from food allergies and rapidly emerging severe allergies or allergies that present a risk of anaphylaxis, with all these factors posing a risk to life. Allergic diseases have a negative impact on professional and educational abilities, especially in children, causing social and economic inequality.

Does the Commission intend to promote cooperation and coordination of actions between Member States in order to: strengthen national anti-allergy programmes for reduction of the burden induced by such diseases and of general state differences; provide training in the field of allergic diseases and multidisciplinary care to improve disease management; follow a preventive and tolerance-promoting approach towards treatment of allergic diseases; promote research of direct and indirect allergic factors, including pollution?

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

The Commission is aware of the burden of disease associated with asthma and allergies in the European Union.

While the organisation of national anti- allergy programmes and the treatment of allergies is a matter of the responsibility of the Member States, the Commission can play a role in supporting Member States in communicating health issues. For example, a scoping study on communication to address and prevent chronic diseases will be launched shortly, funded by the EU Health Programme.

Moreover, the European Commission is addressing the key risk factors for this group of diseases in its policies on tobacco control and air quality through legislative action and awareness raising actions. In addition, the Commission has co-financed through the health programme the project 'Indicators for monitoring Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases and asthma in the EU' in which indicators (mortality, prevalence, risk factors, clinical management/health services and outcomes) have been developed and data gathered ([1]).

As regards EU action on chronic diseases in general, the Commission convened an EU summit on chronic diseases in April 2014. The Summit called for a coalition involving all relevant sectors across society, patients and citizens, to address chronic diseases, and the Commission intends to work in this direction. The full conclusions are available on the Commission's website ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005121
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_mi_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005314/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Russische witwasbank

In het artikel in 925.nl „Europese Commissie onderzoekt eigen illegale staatssteun aan Russische witwasbank ([1])" wordt beschreven hoe EUR 7,5 miljard Europese noodhulp is gebruikt om Russische zwartspaarders tegemoet te komen.

1. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke feiten in het artikel op waarheid berusten en welke niet?

2. Kan de Commissie aangeven welke maatregelen het heeft getroffen of zal treffen om de in het artikel beschreven misstanden te rectificeren?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(13 juni 2014)

Het artikel waarvan sprake uit ongefundeerde beschuldigingen over de mogelijk controversiële oorsprong van de deposito's bij Parex en over overeenkomsten tussen de EBWO, het IMF, de EC en Letland. De Commissie geeft geen commentaar op dergelijke volstrekt ongefundeerde beweringen.

Het artikel zaait verwarring over de oorsprong van de financiële steun voor Letland en over hoe deze middelen werden gebruikt. De bijdrage van de Commissie bedroeg 3,1 miljard EUR op het totaal van 7,5 miljard EUR aan multilaterale steun die Letland in 2009 ([2]) heeft ontvangen. Deze bijdrage bevatte geen voorwaarden die verband hielden met de steun die Parex had ontvangen.

Nationale autoriteiten hebben de verantwoordelijkheid om die banken te identificeren die een systeemrisico vormen voor de financiële stabiliteit en de Commissie om goedkeuring te vragen voor alle staatssteun die wordt toegekend. Parex was de tweede grootste bank van Letland, die om de in de besluiten vermelde redenen systeemrelevant was. Hierdoor besloten de Letse autoriteiten goedkeuring te vragen voor het verlenen van staatssteun.

In de besluiten van de Commissie betreffende Parex ([3]) werd geconcludeerd dat de steun met de interne markt verenigbaar was overeenkomstig artikel 107, lid 3, onder b) VWEU en tot doel had een belangrijke verstoring van de Letse economie weg te werken.

Het diepgaand onderzoek dat op 16 april 2014 tegen Parex werd ingeleid, heeft tot doel om te controleren of de bijkomende staatssteun die het ontving in overeenstemming was met de EU-regels voor staatssteun. Aangezien het een zaak betreft die lopende is, kan er geen andere informatie openbaar worden gemaakt dan deze die in het besluit tot inleiding van de procedure ([4]) werd verstrekt.

([1]) http://925.nl/archief/2014/04/16/brekend-europese-commissie-onderzoekt-eigen-illegale-staatsteun-aan-russische-witwasbank.
([2]) Voor meer details zie: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/latvia/index_en.htm
([3]) NN 68/2008, PB C 147 van 27.6.2009; NN 3/2009, PB C 147 van 27.6.2009; N 189/2009, PB C 176 van 29.7.2009; C 26/2009, PB L 163 van 23.6.2011.
([4]) SA.36612 (2014/C) (ex 2013/NN), verschenen in PB C 147, 16.5.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005314/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Russian money-laundering bank

The article 'Europese Commissie onderzoekt eigen illegale staatssteun aan Russische witwasbank [1]' (European Commission investigates its own illegal state aid to a Russian money-laundering bank) in 925.nl describes how EUR 7.5 billion in European emergency aid was used to help Russians with hidden savings accounts.

1. Can the Commission indicate which facts in the article are true and which are not?

2. Can the Commission indicate what measures it has taken or intends to take in order to rectify the abuses described in the article?

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

The article referred to makes unsubstantiated allegations about potentially controversial sources of the deposits in Parex and deals between EBRD, IMF, EC and Latvia. The Commission does not comment on such completely unsubstantiated claims.

The article fosters confusion on the source of financial aid received by Latvia and how the funds were used. The Commission contributed EUR 3.1 billion to the total of EUR 7.5 billion in multilateral assistance received by Latvia starting in 2009 [2], which had no conditionality in relation to the aid received by Parex.

National authorities are responsible for identifying those banks that pose a systemic threat to financial stability and asking for Commission approval for any state aid granted. Parex was the second largest bank in Latvia, with systemic relevance for the reasons presented in the decisions, so the Latvian authorities decided to ask for state aid approval.

The Commission decisions on Parex [3] concluded that the aid was compatible with the internal market under Article 107(3)(b) TFEU, to remedy a serious disturbance in the Latvian economy.

The in-depth investigation opened on 16 April 2014 on Parex aims to assess if the additional state aid granted to it was in line with EU State aid rules. The case is on-going, so no information other than that given in the public opening decision [4] can be disclosed at this time.

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[1] http://925.nl/archief/2014/04/16/brekend-europese-commissie-onderzoekt-eigen-illegale-staatsteun-aan-russische-witwasbank
[2] Details at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/latvia/index_en.htm
[3] NN 68/2008, OJ C 147, 27.6.2009; NN 3/2009, OJ C 147, 27.6.2009; N 189/2009, OJ C 176, 29.7.2009; C 26/2009, OJ L 163, 23.6.2011.
[4] SA.36612 (2014/C) (ex 2013/NN) published in OJ C 147, 16.5.2014.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005315/14
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Benetton en nasleep van Rana Plaza ramp

Na de instorting van het Rana Plaza gebouw in Dhaka, Bangladesh, gaf de Europese Commissie haar volledige steun aan het Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (AFBSB), dat inmiddels door de voornaamste Europese textielfabrikanten werd ondertekend.

De firma Benetton, die in het verleden, al dan niet via onderaannemers, producten uit ateliers in het ingestorte gebouw had besteld, tekende het akkoord pas na een grootschalige online petitie. Tot vandaag heeft Benetton nog steeds niet volledig publiek gemaakt bij welke fabrieken in Bangladesh het producten afneemt, nochtans een verplichting onder het AFBSB.

Bovendien heeft Benetton tot vandaag niet bijgedragen aan het door de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie beheerde Rana Plaza Donors Trust Fund. Nochtans heeft het fonds tot dusver slechts ongeveer 7 miljoen van de beoogde 40 miljoen dollar kunnen ophalen.

Welke actie kan de Europese Commissie ondernemen om deze Europese firma haar verplichtingen onder het Accord on Fire and Building Safety te laten nakomen?

Levert Benetton volgens de Europese Commissie voldoende inspanningen ter financiële vergoeding van de slachtoffers van de ramp met het Rana Plaza gebouw en hun nabestaanden, zoals geëist door het Europees Parlement in zijn resolutie van 23 mei 2013?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(24 juni 2014)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar antwoord op vraag E-364/2014 ([1]), waarin zij aangaf dat zij de compensatie van de slachtoffers via de EU-delegatie in Dhaka volgt.

Hoewel de Commissie steun heeft verleend aan het Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (AFBSB), kan zij geen enkele actie ondernemen om Europese bedrijven ertoe aan te zetten te voldoen aan hun verplichtingen op grond van dat akkoord. Zij kan de partijen echter wel herinneren aan hun toezeggingen.

Het is belangrijk op te merken dat de Commissie geen ondertekenaar van het akkoord is, met name in verband met de verantwoordelijkheidsniveaus en de kostenverdeling. De Commissie verricht geen analyses van de naleving ervan en is niet in staat te beoordelen of een onderneming zich voldoende inspant om financiële compensatie aan de slachtoffers van de Rana Plazaramp en hun nabestaanden te bieden. Het vraagstuk van de compensatie lijkt echter buiten het bestek van dit akkoord te vallen. Het valt evenmin onder het Duurzaamheidspact dat in juli 2014 door Bangladesh, de IAO en de Commissie is overeengekomen.

In het Duurzaamheidspact is afgesproken de situatie na een jaar opnieuw te bekijken. De Commissie zal een inventarisatie maken van de stand van zaken op het gebied van gezondheids-, veiligheids- en arbeidsomstandigheden in de confectiekledingsector in Bangladesh.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-000364&language=NL

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005315/14
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Benetton and the aftermath of the Rana Plaza disaster

After the collapse of the Rana Plaza Building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the Commission lent its full support to the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (AFBSB), which has now been signed by the leading European textile manufacturers.

The firm Benetton, which had in the past, either directly or through subcontractors, ordered products from workshops in the building which collapsed, signed the accord only after a widely supported online petition. To this day, Benetton still has not published full information concerning which factories in Bangladesh it is buying products from, despite the fact that this is a requirement of the AFBSB.

Moreover, to this day Benetton has made no contribution to the Rana Plaza Donors Trust Fund which is being managed by the ILO. So far, however, the Fund has succeeded in collecting only around USD 7 million of the target figure of 40 million.

What action can the Commission take to induce this European firm to comply with its obligations under the AFBSB?

Does the Commission believe that Benetton is making enough effort to provide financial compensation to victims of the Rana Plaza disaster and their surviving dependants, as called for by the European Parliament in its resolution of 23 May 2013?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its reply to Question E-364/2014 ([1]), in which it recalled that it was following the issue of compensation of victims through the EU Delegation in Dhaka.

Although the Commission lent its support to the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (AFBSB), it cannot take any action to induce European firms to comply with its obligations under this Accord. It can however remind parties of their engagements.

It is however important to note that as the Commission is not the signatory of the Accord, notably concerning the levels of responsibility and cost-sharing, the Commission does not analyse its compliance and is not in a position to assess whether a company is making enough efforts to provide financial compensation to victims of the Rana Plaza disaster and their surviving dependants. It seems however that the issue of compensation falls outside the remit of this Accord. It also falls outside the scope of the Sustainability Compact agreed in July 2014 by Bangladesh, the ILO and the Commission.

The Compact provides for a follow-up after one year. The Commission will take stock of the state of play in relation to health and safety and labour conditions in the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2014-000364&language=EN

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005316/14
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Textielsector in Cambodja

Tijdens een staking van textielarbeiders nabij Phnom Penh vielen op 3 januari 2014 door de interventie van het Cambodjaanse leger 4 doden en meer dan 30 gewonden. Bovendien werden 23 militanten gearresteerd en vaardigde de regering een samenscholingsverbod uit.

Op 13 maart 2014 vond de jaarlijkse vergadering van het EU-Cambodja Joint Committee plaats.

1. Wat onderneemt de Commissie om bij de Cambodjaanse regering aan te dringen op de onmiddellijke vrijlating van de 21 nog opgesloten betogers?

2. Kan de Commissie — naar voorbeeld van het Duurzaamheidspact in Bangladesh — in samenwerking met de Cambodjaanse regering en de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie (IAO) een initiatief opstarten dat de inspanningen in het kader van het Better Factories programma van de IAO, om de arbeidsomstandigheden en de gezondheids- en veiligheidsnormen in de textielsector te verbeteren, aanvult en opvoert?

3. Waarom verhoogt de Europese Commissie de druk op de Cambodjaanse regering niet verder door het preferentieel handelsregime „Everything But Arms" voor Cambodjaanse exportproducten uitdrukkelijk afhankelijk te maken van een substantiële verbetering in de arbeidsomstandigheden en de mensenrechten in Cambodja, in het bijzonder de kernnormen van de IAO?

4. Welke stappen onderneemt de Europese Commissie ten aanzien van Europese bedrijven en hun toeleveranciers met activiteiten in Cambodja om ervoor te zorgen dat deze de kernnormen van de IAO en de OESO-richtlijnen voor multinationale ondernemingen respecteren?

Antwoord van de heer De Gucht namens de Commissie
(30 juni 2014)

In recente bijeenkomsten op hoog niveau met de regering van Cambodja heeft de EU grote bezorgdheid geuit over het gebruik van geweld tijdens de protesten van januari en aangedrongen op de onmiddellijke vrijlating van de opgesloten betogers. Daarom is de EU verheugd over hun recente vrijlating. Zij moedigt de regering van Cambodja aan om de vrijheid van vergadering als grondrecht te herstellen en de resultaten van het onderzoek naar de moorden van januari bekend te maken. De EU roept alle betrokken partijen op tot een constructieve dialoog ter verbetering van de arbeidsverhoudingen.

De EU speelt een actieve rol bij de verbetering van de arbeidsomstandigheden in Cambodja. Zij vergemakkelijkte de onderhandelingen tussen de regering en de Internationale Arbeidsorganisatie (IAO) om het „Better Factories"-programma, dat het grootste deel van de kledingindustrie bestrijkt en onder andere inhoudt dat de werking van ondernemingen wordt bekendgemaakt, in 2013 te verlengen. De EU cofinanciert studies met het oog op de instelling van een regelmatig en doeltreffend mechanisme om het minimumloon vast te stellen en te herzien en op de verbetering van de sociale dialoog.

Wat de „Everything But Arms"-regeling betreft, verwijst de Commissie naar haar antwoord op de vragen P-2679/13, E-10792/13 en P-3385/14. De Commissie herinnert Cambodja er regelmatig aan dat de beginselen van de verdragen inzake mensenrechten en arbeidsrechten zoals opgenomen in Verordening (EU) nr. 978/2012 inzake het stelsel van algemene preferenties (SAP) moeten worden geëerbiedigd en onderzoekt voortdurend of aan de voorwaarden voor het behoud van het SAP is voldaan.

De Commissie steunt ook actief het gebruik van verantwoorde zakenpraktijken door ondernemingen, waaronder die welke te vinden zijn in de richtsnoeren voor multinationale ondernemingen van de Organisatie voor Economische Samenwerking en Ontwikkeling, het „Global Compact" van de VN en de tripartiete verklaring van de IAO ([1]), die allemaal betrekking hebben op fundamentele arbeidsnormen.

([1]) Tripartiete verklaring van de IAO betreffende multinationale ondernemingen en sociaal beleid.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005316/14
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Textile industry in Cambodia

On 3 January 2014, during a strike by textile workers near Phnom Penh, four people were killed and more than 30 injured due to intervention by the Cambodian army. In addition, 23 activists were arrested, and the government issued a ban on public gatherings.

On 13 March 2014, the annual meeting of the EU-Cambodia Joint Committee was held.

1. What is the Commission doing to urge the Cambodian Government to immediately release the 21 demonstrators who are still detained?

2. Can the Commission — by analogy with the Sustainability Compact in Bangladesh — launch an initiative, in cooperation with the Cambodian Government and the ILO, to supplement and increase the efforts being made under the ILO's Better Factories programme to improve working conditions and health and safety standards in the textile industry?

3. Why does the Commission not further step up pressure on the Cambodian Government by expressly making the 'Everything But Arms' preferential trade regime for Cambodian exports conditional on a substantial improvement in working conditions and human rights in Cambodia, particularly with reference to key ILO standards?

4. What steps will the Commission take in relation to European businesses and their suppliers operating in Cambodia to ensure that they respect the ILO's key standards and the OECD guidelines for multinationals?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(30 June 2014)

In recent high-level meetings with the Government of Cambodia, the EU voiced strong concerns about the use of violence during the January protests and urged the immediate release of the detained demonstrators. Therefore, the EU welcomes their recent release. It encourages the the Government of Cambodia to restore freedom of assembly as a fundamental right and issue results of the investigation on the January killings. The EU calls on all stakeholders for a constructive dialogue to improve industrial relations.

The EU plays an active role to improve working conditions in Cambodia. It has facilitated negotiations between the government and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to renew in 2013 the Better Factories Programme, which covers most of the garment industry and includes disclosure on the performance of companies. The EU co-funds studies aiming to set up a regular and effective minimum wage determination and revision mechanism, and to improve social dialogue.

As to Everything But Arms, the Commission refers to its response to questions P-2679/13, E-10792/13 and P-3385/14. The Commission regularly reminds Cambodia of the need to respect the principles contained in human and labour rights Conventions as listed in the EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP) regulation 978/2012 and continuously examines whether the conditions for keeping GSP are met.

The Commission also actively supports company uptake of responsible business practices, including those laid out in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, the UN Global Compact and the ILO Tripartite Declaration ([1]), which all refer to core labour standards.

([1]) ILO Tripartite Declaration on Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005317/14
à Comissão (Vice-Presidente/Alta Representante)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: VP/HR — Guiné-Bissau — rescaldo das eleições e perspetivas de futuro

As eleições realizadas recentemente na Guiné-Bissau têm o potencial de encerrar o período denominado de transição após o golpe de Estado de 12 de abril de 2012 e devolver a normalidade constitucional ao país.

Não obstante este primeiro passo, simultaneamente cívico e formal, os problemas guineenses não desapareceram após a consulta popular e, após serem conhecidos os resultados, poderão até agravar-se.

A União Europeia deve participar deste esforço de reconstrução do Estado e colaborar com os órgãos de soberania democraticamente eleitos — se as eleições forem qualificadas livres e justas e cumpridoras das melhores práticas internacionais, como parece ser o caso — de modo a promover uma profunda reforma que não pode deixar de passar pelas questões militares e de segurança.

Assim, pergunto à Alta Representante:

1. Que balanço faz das eleições na Guiné-Bissau?

2. Está disponível para colaborar com as futuras autoridades legítimas da Guiné-Bissau de modo a contribuir para repor efetivamente a ordem constitucional no país? Em que medida e através de que instrumentos?

3. Não julga que, face à dimensão dos problemas que afligem a Guiné-Bissau, o país apenas conseguirá rumar à paz, ao progresso, ao desenvolvimento e à estabilização social e institucional, se for objeto de uma ajuda empenhada e relevante por parte da comunidade internacional? E que esta deve desenvolver-se de forma coordenada?

4. Considera que a União Europeia deve dar um sinal de comprometimento com os valores da democracia e do Estado de Direito na Guiné-Bissau e procurar um novo relacionamento, mais persistente e consistente, com este país? Nomeadamente quanto às questões militares e de segurança, está disponível para promover um maior envolvimento da comunidade internacional na reforma destes setores?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(18 de junho de 2014)

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente congratula-se com a conclusão satisfatória das eleições legislativas e presidenciais e saúda o povo da Guiné-Bissau pelo seu empenhamento na paz e na democracia. A missão de observação eleitoral da UE que se deslocou ao país concluiu que o processo eleitoral tinha decorrido de forma transparente e organizada, tendo sido conforme com a legislação.

A Alta Representante/Vice-Presidente manifesta a sua plena disponibilidade para colaborar com as autoridades recentemente eleitas e para apoiar, em coordenação com outros doadores internacionais, os seus esforços no sentido de construir um país mais estável, democrático e próspero. As autoridades recentemente eleitas devem estar dispostas e em condições de executar as reformas necessárias em setores fundamentais, tais como a justiça e a segurança. A UE está a examinar a possibilidade de prestar um apoio rápido e eficaz às autoridades legítimas para a prossecução deste objetivo.

Um apoio internacional, de caráter sustentado e coordenado, será efetivamente essencial. A UE continuará a colaborar com a Cedeao, as Nações Unidas e outros parceiros internacionais, a fim de ajudar o país a realizar progressos em direção à estabilidade política e ao desenvolvimento socioeconómico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005317/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Guinea-Bissau — aftermath of elections and future outlook

The recent elections in Guinea-Bissau potentially mark the end of the so-called transition period following the coup d'état of 12 April 2012 and a return to constitutional normality in the country.

Despite this initial step, which is both civic and formal, the country's problems are not going to disappear after the elections and, once the results are known, might even worsen.

The European Union must engage in this attempt to rebuild the country and — if the elections were free, fair and in compliance with international best practices, which appears to be the case — work with the democratically elected government to promote profound reforms, which will have to include military and security issues.

I therefore ask the High Representative:

1. What is her assessment of the elections in Guinea-Bissau?

2. Is she willing and able to work with the future legitimate authorities of Guinea-Bissau to help restore genuine constitutional rule in the country? How and with what measures does she intend to do this?

3. Does she not think that, given the extent of the problems facing Guinea-Bissau, the country will be able to move towards peace, progress, development and social and institutional stability only if it receives committed, appropriate aid from the international community? And that this aid needs to be provided in a coordinated fashion?

4. Does she think the European Union should signal its commitment to democratic values and the rule of law in Guinea-Bissau and seek a new, closer and more consistent relationship with the country? With particular regard to military and security issues, is she willing and able to encourage the international community's greater involvement in reforms in these areas?

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

The HR/VP welcomes the successful conduct of the legislative and presidential elections and commends the people of Guinea Bissau for their commitment to democracy and peace. The EU Election Observation Mission deployed in the country assessed that the electoral process was conducted in a transparent and orderly way and in conformity to the legislation.

The HR/VP stands ready to fully engage with the new elected authorities and to support, in coordination with other international donors, their efforts to build a more stable, democratic and prosperous country. New elected authorities should be able and willing to implement the necessary reforms in key sectors, such as justice and security. The EU is considering possibilities to provide a rapid and effective support to legitimate authorities to pursue this goal.

Sustained and coordinated international support will indeed be essential. The EU will continue working with Ecowas, the UN and other international partners in helping the country to move towards political stability and socioeconomic development.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005318/14
à Comissão
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Timor-Leste — Reforço da capacidade parlamentar

Recebi no passado dia 24 de março, em Bruxelas, a primeira delegação parlamentar timorense ao Parlamento Europeu.

Na ocasião, os parlamentares integrantes da respetiva delegação manifestaram o seu agradecimento às instituições europeias pelo apoio prestado à causa da independência de Timor-Leste e deram nota de que gostariam de poder contar com um maior envolvimento destas instituições no reforço das capacidades do Parlamento Nacional de Timor-Leste.

Em particular, os deputados timorenses demonstraram o desejo de terem formação por parte de parlamentares europeus e deputados dos parlamentos nacionais de Estados-Membros, em particular dos falantes das línguas oficiais do seu país, de modo a reforçarem as suas competências e capacidade de ação política e legislativa.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Está na disposição de contribuir para dar uma resposta positiva ao apelo dos deputados timorenses?

2. Em que medida já promove a capacitação dos quadros políticos timorenses? Através de que instrumentos e de que meios? E com que resultados?

3. Admite apoiar um maior intercâmbio de experiências e contribuir para dinamizar ações de formação como as pretendidas? Em que termos?

4. Está disposta a ouvir os pedidos e as preocupações dos deputados do Parlamento Nacional Timorense e a contribuir para a melhoria da sua capacidade de intervenção política?

Resposta dada pela Alta Representante /Vice-Presidente Catherine Ashton em nome da Comissão
(10 de junho de 2014)

1. A União Europeia tem apoiado a evolução democrática em Timor-Leste desde os primeiros dias da restauração da independência nacional, nomeadamente através do projeto de *Reforço da capacidade institucional do parlamento de Timor-Leste* (4 milhões de EUR a título do 10.° FED) executado pelo PNUD. No final de 2014 será efetuada uma avaliação para se analisar o apoio que poderá ser concedido a título do 11.° FED. Além disso, no ano passado foi assinado um novo acordo com o PNUD, no montante de 6,4 milhões de EUR destinado a *Reforçar as Qualificações Técnicas das Instâncias Superiores de Controlo Financeiro, dos Parlamentos Nacionais e da Sociedade Civil em matéria de Controlo das Finanças Públicas nos PALOP e em Timor-Leste*.

2. A UE tem apoiado o reforço das capacidades dos parlamentares timorenses. O referido projeto financiou o destacamento de 14especialistas e conselheiros internacionais (assistência técnica) em vários domínios, nomeadamente o direito, o orçamento, as TI e os recursos humanos, para prestarem apoio às comissões e ao pessoal local. Uma parte da assistência técnica é prestada pelo parlamento português. O Parlamento Europeu ainda não deu qualquer contributo enquanto fonte de *know-how*, mas essa situação poderá mudar caso o PE decida envolver-se no processo.

3. Um dos resultados do referido projeto foi a melhoria das relações interparlamentares com os países lusófonos e do Pacífico, nomeadamente através de: 1) prestação de consultoria à unidade responsável pelo protocolo e as relações internacionais; 2) apoio à componente nacional da Organização Mundial de Parlamentares contra a Corrupção (GOPAC) em matéria de intercâmbios e eventos internacionais, 3) apoio à participação de grupos de parlamentares femininos nas instâncias regionais e internacionais, e 4) apoio ao reforço das relações parlamentares com a CPLP.

4. A União Europeia tem mantido reuniões periódicas em Timor com o presidente do parlamento, o secretário-geral e vários membros do parlamento, tentando satisfazer os pedidos que lhe foram apresentados. O Serviço Europeu para a Ação Externa (SEAE) reuniu-se, em março último, com uma delegação parlamentar timorense, tendo debatido as necessidades dos deputados e a eventual concessão de apoio ao abrigo do FED ou de outros instrumentos. O SEAE decidiu igualmente incluir Timor-Leste enquanto «país piloto para o apoio à democracia».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005318/14
to the Commission
Diogo Feio (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: East Timor — Parliamentary capacity building

On 24 March, I received the first parliamentary delegation from East Timor to the European Parliament in Brussels.

On this occasion, the members of the delegation expressed their thanks to European institutions for supporting East Timor's move towards independence, and said they would like to be able to count on these institutions' greater involvement in building the parliamentary capacities of East Timor's National Parliament.

In particular, the Timorese MPs said they would like to receive training from MEPs and Member States' national MPs, particularly from speakers of their country's official languages, to improve their skills and capacity for political and legislative action.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Is the Commission willing and able to help provide a positive response to the appeal made by the Timorese MPs?

2. In what ways is the Commission already promoting capacity building for Timorese politicians? What means and methods are being used? And what results have been achieved?

3. Is the Commission prepared to support a greater exchange of experiences and help promote training activities such as the ones requested? Under what terms and conditions?

4. Is the Commission willing and able to hear the requests and concerns of members of East Timor's National Parliament and help to improve their capacity for political action?

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

1. EU has supported TL's democratic progress since the early days of restored independence currently — through the Strengthening Institutional Capacity of the NP in TL project — EUR 4 million, EDF10 — implemented by UNDP. An evaluation is scheduled for the end of 2014 to provide guidance for our support under EDF11. In addition, a new Agreement amounting to EUR 6.4 million was signed with UNDP last year for Strengthening Technical Skills of Supreme Audit Institutions, National Parliaments and Civil Society for the Control of Public Finances in the PALOP-TL.

2. EU promotes capacity building for Timorese politicians of the NP. The above project is funding 14 International Advisors and Specialists (TA) in different areas, ranging from Law, to Budget, IT & Human Resource. They provide advice to Committees & the local staff. Some of the TA are from the Portuguese Assembly. The EP has not yet been considered as a source of expertise, but that could change, if the EP is willing to engage.

3. One of the outputs of the project is to improve inter-parliamentary relations with lusophone and Pacific countries, through: (1) Advisory Support to the protocol & international relations unit, (2) Assistance to the GOPAC National Chapter in international exchange and knowledge events, (3) Support participation of Women MPs` caucus in regional and international fora, and (4) Support to strengthening of parliamentary relations with ACPLP.

4. EU has regular meetings with the Speaker, the S-G & MPs in situ, trying to accommodate their requests. The EEAS met the Parliamentary Delegation last March and discussed with MPs their needs & possible forthcoming support under the EDF & other Instruments. The EEAS has also decided to include TL as a 'pilot country for democratic support'.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005319/14
à la Commission
Nessa Childers (NI), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Marian Harkin (ALDE) et Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Santé mentale et sommet de l'Union sur les maladies chroniques organisé en avril 2014

En tant que coprésidents du groupe d'intérêt sur la santé mentale, le bien-être et les troubles cérébraux, nous accueillons favorablement le sommet sur les maladies chroniques organisé à l'initiative de la Commission les 3 et 4 avril 2014.

Cependant, nous sommes surpris de constater que l'accent est uniquement mis sur la santé physique. En effet, les troubles de la santé mentale sont à peine effleurés. Il s'agit là d'une omission grave: si les troubles de la santé mentale constituent une importante catégorie au sein des maladies chroniques, de récentes études ont largement démontré qu'ils sont en outre inextricablement liés à la santé physique.

Cette omission est d'autant plus surprenante au vu de la déclaration de Vilnius, qui découle de la conférence sur la santé mentale organisée par la présidence lituanienne, et de ses conclusions récentes, et compte tenu des efforts récemment déployés par la Commission pour convaincre l'Organisation mondiale de la santé d'inclure la santé mentale dans son plan d'action en matière de maladies non transmissibles.

Par conséquent, la Commission peut-elle:

1. Expliquer les raisons de cette omission?

2. Remédier à cet état des choses et s'assurer que la santé mentale figure dans les activités actuelles et futures liées aux maladies chroniques?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

La question de la santé mentale a été évoquée de manière spécifique lors du sommet sur les maladies chroniques et notamment à l'occasion d'une intervention ayant eu lieu dans l'atelier 5, le 3 avril 2014. En outre, cette question, précisément, a été soulevée dans le cadre d'un certain nombre d'exposés tout au long de la conférence.

La Commission souhaite apporter son aide pour lutter contre l'obstacle que constitue l'ensemble de ces maladies chroniques principales et, conformément aux conclusions de la conférence du sommet ([1]), a l'intention de continuer à mettre l'accent sur la prévention et la gestion de ces affections.

La Commission reconnaît l'importance du lien entre santé physique et santé mentale, ainsi qu'il est explicitement indiqué dans les conclusions du sommet et, dans le cadre des activités menées en vue de lutter contre les maladies chroniques, inclut tous les groupes de maladies chroniques principales.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_mi_en.pdf (en anglais uniquement).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005319/14
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI), Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE), Marian Harkin (ALDE) and Françoise Grossetête (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Mental health and April 2014 EU chronic disease summit

We, in our role as co-chairs of the Interest Group on Mental Health, Well-being and Brain Disorders, welcome the Commission's initiative to host a summit on chronic disease on 3 and 4 April 2014.

However, we are surprised to note that the focus is on physical health only. Mental health disorders are hardly referred to. This is a serious omission: while mental health disorders constitute an important chronic disease category in themselves, they are also inextricably linked with physical health — and this has been amply demonstrated by recent research.

Not including mental health in the summit is all the more surprising in view of the recent conclusions and 'Vilnius Declaration' resulting from the Lithuanian Presidency Conference on mental health and the Commission's own recent efforts to convince the WHO to include mental health in its action plan on non-communicable diseases.

Can the Commission therefore:

1. provide its rationale for this omission?

2. remedy this situation and ensure that mental health will feature in the current and future activities addressing chronic disease?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The topic of mental health was specifically addressed at the chronic diseases summit, notably in an intervention in workshop 5 on 3 April 2014, and was raised in a number of presentations throughout the conference.

The Commission is keen to help tackle the burden of all major chronic diseases and, as mentioned in the conference conclusions of the summit ([1]), intends to continue focusing on prevention and management of major chronic diseases.

The Commission recognises the important link between physical and mental health as explicitly mentioned in the summit conclusions and includes all groups of major chronic diseases in its activities addressing chronic diseases.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/major_chronic_diseases/docs/ev_20140403_mi_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005320/14
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Eisen van de EU inzake biometrisch visum

Al meer dan 25 jaar sinds de ramp in Tsjernobyl organiseren ngo's als de Nederlandse „Stichting Rusland Kinderhulp" uitwisselingsprogramma's ter bevordering van de gezondheid en het welzijn van kinderen uit gebieden in Oekraïne, Belarus en westelijk Rusland die zwaar getroffen zijn door het ongeval in Tsjernobyl.

Het werk van deze ngo's komt niet alleen de gezondheid van de betrokken kinderen ten goede, maar draagt ook in aanzienlijke mate bij aan de ontwikkeling van het maatschappelijk middenveld in de regio en bevordert partnerschappen en cultureel begrip over grenzen heen. Op deze wijze dragen de uitwisselingsprojecten bij aan het verwezenlijken van de doelstellingen van het Oostelijk Partnerschap. Tussen 500 000 en 1 miljoen kinderen uit Oost-Europa hebben aan uitwisselingsprojecten deelgenomen met een verblijf in Duitsland of Nederland.

Helaas worden de ngo's in hun activiteiten belemmerd door de nieuwe eisen van de EU inzake biometrische paspoorten en visa. Om een visum te verkrijgen en aan de EU-eisen te voldoen, moeten mensen een reis maken naar een ambassade die vaak meer dan 500 km ver weg is. De daaraan verbonden reiskosten brengen de projecten in gevaar, omdat 80 tot 90 % van de kinderen uit plattelandsgebieden komt.

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van de problemen die ngo's in hun werk ondervinden als gevolg van de eisen van de EU inzake het biometrische visum?

2. Kan de Commissie nader aangeven welke vrijstellingen van de visumvereisten van de EU er bestaan?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat vrijstelling van de visumvereisten kan worden verleend voor kinderen die een officiële uitnodiging van ngo's als de Stichting Rusland Kinderhulp ontvangen?

Antwoord van mevrouw Malmström namens de Commissie
(24 juni 2014)

De Commissie is ervan op de hoogte dat het verplicht verzamelen van vingerafdrukken bij visumaanvragers een bezoek aan een consulaat inhoudt (of aan een aanvraagcentrum van een externe dienstverlener) op die plaatsen waar het visuminformatiesysteem (VIS) reeds wordt gebruikt en het indienen van visumaanvragen dus niet vergemakkelijkt. Deze verplichting geldt echter enkel voor eerste aanvragers.

De vingerafdrukken zullen voor een periode van vijf jaar worden bewaard. Indien er kinderen zijn die tijdens deze periode opnieuw deelnemen aan het uitwisselingsprogramma, zullen er bij hun nieuwe aanvragen geen vingerafdrukken worden verzameld.

Enkel kinderen die twaalf jaar of ouder zijn, moeten hun vingerafdrukken laten nemen; jongere kinderen zijn vrijgesteld van deze verplichting (artikel 13, lid 7, onder a), van de visumcode ([1])).

Het VIS zal in Wit-Rusland, Rusland en Oekraïne niet ten uitvoer worden gelegd voor 2015.

Het VIS is een belangrijk instrument voor de tenuivoerlegging van het gemeenschappelijk visumbeleid van de EU. Het zal visumprocedures vereenvoudigen voor herhaalde aanvragen en de veiligheid verbeteren door identiteitsfraude te voorkomen.

Verordening 539/2001 ([2]) bevat in bijlage I een lijst van derde landen waarvan de burgers geen visum nodig hebben om de buitengrenzen van de EU te overschrijden. Deze visumverplichting is in principe van toepassing op alle burgers van de betrokken landen, ongeacht hun leeftijd.

([1]) Verordening (EG) nr. 810/2009 2009 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 13 juli 2009 tot vaststelling van een gemeenschappelijke visumcode (Visumcode) (PB L 243 van 15.9.2009, blz. 1-58).

([2]) Verordening (EG) nr. 539/2001 van de Raad van 15 maart 2001 tot vaststelling van de lijst van derde landen waarvan de onderdanen bij overschrijding van de buitengrenzen in het bezit moeten zijn van een visum en de lijst van derde landen waarvan de onderdanen van die plicht zijn vrijgesteld (PB L 81/1 van 21.3.2001).

Artikel 4, lid 1 van Verordening 539/2001 geeft lidstaten de mogelijkheid om voor één of meer derde landen uitzonderingen vast te stellen op de visumplicht voor bepaalde categorieën personen (de specifieke categorieën worden uitgebreid vermeld). De EU voorziet ook in visumvrijstellingen voor bepaalde categorieën personen via visaversoepelingsovereenkomsten. Op grond van de huidige visumregels is het niet mogelijk om visumvrijstelling toe te staan voor burgers van derde landen die visumplichtig zijn en die naar de EU komen met een visum dat is afgegeven op basis van een uitnodiging door een ngo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005320/14
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: EU biometric visa requirements

Over more than twenty-five years and in the wake of the Chernobyl disaster, NGOs (such as the Dutch organisation 'Stichting Rusland Kinderhulp') have been organising exchange programmes to promote the health and wellbeing of children living in the areas in Ukraine, Belarus and western Russia that have been hit hard by Chernobyl.

The work of NGOs not only brings health benefits to these children, but also makes a significant contribution to the development of civil society in the region and fosters partnerships and cultural understanding across borders. In this way, exchange projects are contributing to the objectives of the EU's Eastern Partnership. Between 500 000 and one million children from Eastern Europe have participated in exchange projects involving visits to Germany or the Netherlands.

Unfortunately, owing to the new EU requirements concerning biometric passports and visas, NGOs are being hampered in their activities. In order to obtain a visa and meet the EU requirements, people need to travel to embassies which are often more than 500 km away. These travel costs are endangering the projects, as 80 to 90% of the children come from rural areas.

1. Is the Commission aware of the problems that EU biometric visa requirements pose for the work of NGOs?

2. Could the Commission specify which exemptions exist from EU visa requirements?

3. Does the Commission think that exemptions could be granted from the visa requirements for children who receive an official invitation from NGOs such as Stichting Rusland Kinderhulp?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

The Commission is aware that the requirement to collect fingerprints of visa applicants, applied where the Visa Information System (VIS) has been rolled-out, requires travelling to a consulate (or an application centre run by an external service provider) and thus does not facilitate lodging applications. But this requirement only applies to first time applicants.

The fingerprints will be kept for 5 years. If during that period children participate again in the exchange programme, fingerprints will not be collected again for their new applications.

Only children of 12 years or above must provide fingerprints; younger children are exempt from the requirement (Article 13.7.a) of the Visa Code ([1])).

The VIS will not be rolled out in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine before 2015.

The VIS is an important instrument for the implementation of the common EU visa policy. It will facilitate visa procedures in cases of renewed applications and enhance security by preventing identity fraud.

Regulation 539/2001 ([2]) lists in its Annex I the third countries whose citizens need visas when crossing the external borders of the EU. This visa requirement in principle applies to all citizens, whatever their age, of the third countries concerned.

Article 4(1) of Regulation 539/2001 authorises Member States to provide for exemptions from this visa requirement for one or more third countries for certain categories of persons (exhaustively listed). The EU also provides for such visa waivers for certain categories of persons in Visa Facilitation Agreements. However, under the current visa rules it is not possible to grant visa exemptions to citizens of third countries that are under a visa obligation and that travel to the EU with a visa granted on the basis of an invitation of an NGO.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13.7.2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code); OJ L 243, 15.9.2009, p. 1-58.

([2]) 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 81/1 of 21.3.2001.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005321/14
an die Kommission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Latente Steueransprüche

Im November 2013 verabschiedete die spanische Regierung die Königliche Gesetzesverordnung 14/2013 zur Abänderung des Körperschaftssteuergesetzes (Königliche Gesetzesverordnung 4/2004 vom 5. März), mit der es Banken gestattet ist, ab Januar 2014 etwa 60 % der latenten Steueransprüche in Höhe von 50 Mrd. EUR in direkt rückerstattungsfähige Steuervergünstigungen umzuwandeln.

Dadurch werden latente Steueransprüche, die von einer künftigen Rentabilität abhängen, in Steueransprüche umgewandelt, bei denen dies nicht der Fall ist. Dies hat zur Folge, dass diese umgewandelten Steueransprüche gemäß Verordnung (EU) Nr. 575/2013 (Verordnung über Eigenkapitalanforderungen) für die Eigenkapitalklasse 1 infrage kommen.

Die Kommission hat in der 5. Überprüfung des Finanzhilfeprogramms zur Rekapitalisierung von Finanzinstituten in Spanien festgestellt, dass „die jüngsten Gesetzgebungsmaßnahmen in Bezug auf latente Steueransprüche die Zahlungsfähigkeit des Bankensektors gemäß den neuen EU-Vorschriften zu Eigenkapitalanforderungen unterstützen sollten".

Wir sind angesichts der anscheinenden Bereitschaft besorgt, Formen der staatlichen Unterstützung von Banken zu akzeptieren, die sehr nach staatlichen Beihilfen mittels buchhalterischer Tricks aussehen.

Bei den dadurch entstandenen Steuervergünstigungen handelt es sich in der Praxis um 30 Mrd. EUR, die von der spanischen Regierung unmittelbar zur Kapitalzufuhr an Banken verwandt werden, und wir sehen keinen Unterschied zwischen dieser und anderen Formen der Kapitalunterstützung von Banken durch die öffentliche Hand.

Wir bitten Sie höflichst um Auskunft, ob diese Unterstützung im Hinblick auf staatliche Beihilfen überprüft wurde und welche Gründe die Kommission dafür anführt, falls sie diese Art der Unterstützung nicht als staatliche Beihilfe betrachtet.

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

Die Kommission weist darauf hin, dass die Körperschaftssteuersysteme nicht EU-weit harmonisiert wurden, was zu erheblichen Unterschieden beispielsweise bei der Verlustzuweisung führt. Darüber hinaus können Unternehmen in einigen Mitgliedstaaten Verluste gegen in Vorjahren erwirtschaftete Gewinne aufrechnen, was in anderen Steuersystemen nicht zulässig ist. Diese Unterschiede, in Verbindung mit den ausgesprochen hohen Verlusten, die europäische Unternehmen während der gesamten Krise zu verzeichnen hatten, haben zu erheblichen latenten Steueransprüchen geführt, die nicht unmittelbar mit gezahlten Steuern verrechnet werden können. Aus diesen Gründen haben einige Mitgliedstaaten, wie Spanien oder Italien, beschlossen, ihre Steuersysteme, die keine Verlustrückträge zulassen, zu ändern und bestehende latente Steueransprüche in einigen begrenzten Fällen in latente Steuerguthaben umzuwandeln.

Die spanische Regierung vertritt den Standpunkt, dass die Reform als allgemeine steuerliche Maßnahme umgesetzt wurde und damit sämtlichen Unternehmen offensteht. Die Maßnahme wurde bei der Europäischen Kommission nicht gemäß den Vorschriften über staatliche Beihilfen angemeldet.

Gleichwohl ist zu bedenken, dass die Mitgliedstaaten zwar die steuerliche Behandlung von Verlusten frei festlegen, aber keine Vorschriften annehmen können, die den EU-Verträgen widersprechen. Insbesondere müssen sie den in den Verträgen festgeschriebenen Grundsatz der Nichtdiskriminierung und die Grundfreiheiten beachten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005321/14
to the Commission
Sven Giegold (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Deferred tax assets

In November 2013 the Spanish Government took the decision to pass the Royal Decree-Law 14/2013 that amends the Law on Corporate Income Tax (RDL 4/2004 of 5 March) allowing banks to transform around 60% of the EUR 50 billion of deferred tax assets (DTAs) into directly refundable tax credits from January 2014.

The effect of this is to convert DTAs that depend on future profitability into tax credits that do not. The result is that, under Regulation (EU) No 575/2013 (Capital Requirements Regulation), these converted DTAs are eligible as Tier 1 capital.

The Commission stated in the fifth review of the Financial Assistance Programme for the Recapitalisation of Financial Institutions in Spain that 'the recent legislative measures on deferred tax assets should support the solvency of the banking sector under the new EU rules on capital requirements'.

We are concerned with the apparent willingness to accept forms of government support to banks that appear very much like state aid through accounting manoeuvres.

The resulting tax credits effectively represent EUR 30 billion for the Spanish Government, to be used directly to boost bank capital, and we see no economic difference between this and other forms of public capital support for banks.

We kindly ask you to inform us if such support has been assessed from the perspective of state aid and, if the Commission deems it not to be state aid, on what grounds it defends that view.

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

The Commission points out that corporate tax regimes have not been harmonised across the EU, giving rise to material differences in, for instance, loss allocation. Moreover, whereas some Member States allow companies to carry back losses against past profits, other tax system do not. This difference, taken together with the very significant level of losses acumulated by European companies throughout the crisis, has generated a hefty amount of deferred tax assets (DTAs) that cannot be inmediately offset against paid taxes. For these reasons, some Member States, like Spain or Italy, have decided to amend their tax systems, which were not making it possible to carry back losses, to convert existing DTAs into deferred tax credits under some limited circumstances.

The Spanish Government has implemented the reform on the basis that the reform is a general fiscal measure and claims that is effectively open to all undertakings. The measure was not notified to the European Commission under state aid rules.

Having said that, it should be reminded that Member States, being free to design the tax regime applicable to losses, they cannot adopt rules contrary to the EU Treaties; in particular, they do have to respect the Treaty principle of non-discrimination and the fundamental freedoms.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005322/14
to the Council
Nessa Childers (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Scope of the EU action plan on alcohol

On 12 February 2014, during the ENVI Committee discussion on the EU Alcohol Strategy, the Commission suggested that, contrary to what it had agreed on 22 October 2013 at the 12th meeting of the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA), the upcoming EU action plan on alcohol would exclude measures to tackle heavy drinking.

At the same time, the recent answer to Question E-014098/2013 states that 'specific efforts are under way to reinforce action on youth, binge drinking and heavy drinking'.

Then on the 4 March, the CNAPA Flash Report was released, neglecting to mention heavy drinking in its areas for action.

It is fair to say that recent messages coming from the Commission and Council are incoherent on this matter.

Alcohol-related harm is not limited to youth or binge drinkers. The Commission's own 'Assessment of the added value of the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm', acknowledged the harm caused by heavy drinking.

If the scope of the upcoming EU action plan on alcohol is to remain so limited, can the Council confirm that a renewed and comprehensive EU Alcohol Strategy is needed, covering all aspects of alcohol-related harm?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

It is not for the Council to comment on statements made by the Commission, nor to speculate on the content of Commission documents not submitted to the Council.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005323/14
to the Commission
Nessa Childers (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Scope of the EU action plan on alcohol

On 12 February 2014, during the ENVI Committee discussion on the EU alcohol strategy, the Commission suggested that, contrary to what it had agreed on 22 October 2013 at the 12th meeting of the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action (CNAPA), the upcoming EU action plan on alcohol would exclude measures to tackle heavy drinking.

At the same time, the recent answer to Question E-014098/2013 states that 'specific efforts are under way to reinforce action on youth, binge drinking and heavy drinking'.

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It is fair to say that recent messages coming from the Commission and the Council are incoherent on this matter.

Alcohol-related harm is not limited to youth or binge drinkers. The Commission's own 'Assessment of the added value of the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm' acknowledged the harm caused by heavy drinking.

If the scope of the upcoming EU action plan on alcohol is to remain so limited, can the Commission confirm that a renewed and comprehensive EU alcohol strategy is needed, covering all aspects of alcohol-related harm?

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

The Commisison would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to 2378/2014. Based on the view that the objectives and priority themes of the EU strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm are still valid, the Commission continues to implement comprehensive initiatives in particular with the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action and the European Alcohol and Health Forum.

One such initiative is a 2-year Action Plan which is currently being prepared by the Committee on National Alcohol Policy and Action and focuses on youth and heavy episodic drinking. This Action Plan will provide a reference for Member States and other stakeholders to implement actions on a voluntary basis.

The Commission also intends to continue work on the other priority themes of the strategy. In t his context, in cooperation with the Member States and stakeholders, ongoing work to reduce alcohol related harm — targeting among others heavy drinking — will continue.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005325/14
to the Commission
Nirj Deva (ECR)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Unintended consequences of the waste disposal directive

I have been approached by a business in my constituency concerned about the impact of the waste disposal directive.

The business is a producer of chemical tests (in the form of glass 'cuvette tests') to ascertain water quality during lab analysis. It has, since 1979, operated a voluntary 'take-back' system whereby the chemical tests provided by the company are, following their use by their customers, collected and returned to a facility in Germany where (a) harmful chemicals are safely disposed of and (b) glass, cardboard and plastic components of the cuvette tests are recycled. The recycling centre is officially certified according to the terms of Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006. The shipment of new (unused) cuvette tests is handled legally by ordinary parcel service firms. During the analysis, reagents inside the cuvette tests are diluted by the water sample itself. As a consequence, packages of used cuvette tests are less harmful than new tests.

Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 demands that my constituents must seek specific 'notifications' from the government of each Member State across which the used cuvette tests are being transported for recycling. In the case of collection from the United Kingdom and transportation to Germany, this would require notifications to be obtained from the authorities in the United Kingdom and the applicable transit country, France, when on the way to the receiver country, Germany.

Would the Commissioner agree that:

1. In line with the spirit of the internal market, successfully obtaining a notification from one Member State ought to demonstrate a sufficient level of adherence with environmental standards in the EU?

2. The costly process of seeking multiple notifications for different jurisdictions for the carrying of used cuvette tests to a central recycling centre places an unacceptable bureaucratic burden upon business?

3. The Commission should be engendering a regulatory environment that encourages rather than discourages firms wishing to take back their products from customers for safe disposal and recycling?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006 on shipments of waste ([1]) does not require multiple notifications to the authorities of every country through which the waste is shipped. A notifier is required to submit a notification only to the competent authority in the country from where the waste is shipped, but not to authorities in other countries. The national competent authorities communicate with each other so that they can take the necessary measures for the protection of human health and the environment. The authorities of dispatch, transit and destination may only raise specific objections to the shipment as set out by EU legislation.

Take-back schemes for recycling can be very beneficial for the environment, and one would not want to see them hampered by excessive cost or unjustified barriers. Waste destined for recycling shall as part of a take-back system enjoy free movement within the EU based on the regulation (EC) No 1013/2006. In addition, the procedures can be simplified, for example, through a general notification covering several shipments and pre-consents may be granted to specific recovery facilities ([2]).

Moreover, the possibility for options to reduce administrative burden and facilitate the operation of take-back schemes can be raised for discussion within the network of Waste Shipment Correspondents ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 190, 12.7.2006.
([2]) Articles 13-14 of the regulation.
([3]) Article 57 of the regulation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005326/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per attività di apicoltura

L'apicoltura e le imprese agricole che la praticano sono attività fondamentali per il mantenimento dell'ecosistema. Purtroppo negli anni abbiamo assistito alla sindrome dello spopolamento degli alveari (SSA, in inglese CCD, ovvero Colony Collapse Disorder), un fenomeno ancora poco conosciuto, causa della morte improvvisa delle colonie di api (Apis mellifera). La SSA/CCD è stata riscontrata per la prima volta nelle popolazioni di api del Nord America alla fine del 2006.

Gli apicoltori europei hanno costatato un fenomeno simile in Belgio, Francia, Olanda, Grecia, Italia, Portogallo e Spagna. Anche in Svizzera e Germania sono stati registrati casi di minore entità.

Alla luce di quanto precede e tenuto conto dell'importanza che riveste l'apicoltura nel mantenimento dell'equilibrio biologico e ambientale, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se è al corrente della situazione e quali misure intende prendere per contrastare questo fenomeno (SSA/CCD);

2. se esistono programmi o finanziamenti comunitari per la realizzazione di nuove aziende apicole in modo da contribuire al ripopolamento degli alveari?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rimanda alla sua risposta all'interrogazione scritta P-012225/2013 ([1]), con la quale sono state fornite informazioni esaustive sulle azioni da essa intraprese a favore delle api mellifere, nonché alla sua conferenza del 7 aprile 2014 per una migliore salute delle api ([2]) ([3]) ([4]). La Commissione richiama inoltre l'attenzione su un recente studio di sorveglianza paneuropea condotto dal laboratorio di riferimento dell'UE per la salute delle api mellifere e riguardante la mortalità nelle colonie di api mellifere ([5]), che riporta dati affidabili e comparabili sulla reale portata del fenomeno.

La Commissione desidera chiarire che, in base alle informazioni scientifiche disponibili, la cosiddetta sindrome dello spopolamento degli alveari (SSA, in inglese *Colony Collapse Disorder* — CCD) è una sindrome estremamente specifica, caratterizzata da una rapida scomparsa delle api adulte dall'alveare in presenza di grandi quantità di cibo, dall'assenza di api mellifere adulte morte all'interno o intorno all'alveare, mentre nella colonia rimangono le larve vive, la regina e solo poche api operaie. La SSA può verificarsi durante tutto l'anno e può essere confusa con la più significativa mortalità invernale ([6]) ([7]). Il succitato studio di sorveglianza ha confermato che nell'UE la mortalità invernale si verifica con differenze significative a livello regionale e, eventualmente, temporale; non ha tuttavia riscontrato alcun episodio di SSA nell'UE.

Gli articoli da 55 a 57 del regolamento (UE) n. 1308/2013 ([8]) stabiliscono le regole in materia di aiuti nel settore dell'apicoltura. Gli Stati membri possono elaborare programmi nazionali a sostegno del proprio settore dell'apicoltura. Le misure a sostegno del ripopolamento del patrimonio apicolo nell'Unione sono tra le misure ammissibili che possono essere incluse in tali programmi.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://sanco-bee-health-conference2014.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_pres_2014_en.htm#20140407_bee
([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-260_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/study_on_mortality/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/27e.pdf, pagg. 79-82.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/archive/animal/liveanimals/bees/docs/annex_i_pilot_project_en.pdf, pagg. 3-6
([8]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1308&rid=2

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005326/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Prospective funding for apiculture

Apiculture and apiculturists are fundamental for the maintenance of the ecosystem. Unfortunately we have for some years been experiencing the CCD (Colony Collapse Disorder) syndrome, a phenomenon whose cause is still largely unknown, which has caused the sudden death of bee colonies (apis mellifera). CCD was first discovered in bee populations in North America in late 2006.

European beekeepers have also recorded the syndrome in Belgium, France, Holland, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Switzerland and Germany have recorded cases on a smaller scale.

In the light of the above and the importance of apiculture in preservation of the biological and environmental equilibrium, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of this situation and what measures does it intend to take to combat the CCD syndrome?

2. Does the Community have programmes or funding for the construction of new apiaries to assist in repopulation?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The Commission refers to its answer to Written Question P-012225/2013 ([1]) where comprehensive information on Commission actions for honeybees was given, as well as to its Conference on 7 April 2014 for Better Bee Health ([2]) ([3]) ([4]). The Commission also draws attention to a recent pan-European surveillance study by the EU Reference Laboratory for bee health into honeybee colony mortality ([5]) with reliable and comparable data on its true extent.

The Commission wishes to clarify that according to the available scientific information, so-called colony collapse disorder (CCD) is a very specific syndrome characterised by rapid disappearance of adult bees from the hive in the presence of large amount of food, the absence of dead adult honeybees in or around the hive, while living larvae, the queen and only a few worker bees remain in the colony. CCD can happen throughout the year and may be confused with the more significant winter mortality ([6]) ([7]). The surveillance study referred to above confirmed that winter mortality occurs in the EU with significant regional and possibly temporal differences; however, it did not find any occurrence of CCD in the EU.

Articles 55 to 57 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 ([8]) lay down the rules for the aid in the apiculture sector. Member States may draw up national programmes to support their apiculture sector. Measures to support the restocking of hives in the Union are among the eligible measures which can be included in these programmes.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://sanco-bee-health-conference2014.eu/
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/information_sources/ahw_events_pres_2014_en.htm#20140407_bee
([4]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-260_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/bees/study_on_mortality/index_en.htm
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/doc/27e.pdf, p. 79-82
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/food/archive/animal/liveanimals/bees/docs/annex_i_pilot_project_en.pdf, p. 3-6
([8]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1308&rid=2

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005327/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Possibili finanziamenti per la realizzazione di un progetto di acquaponica sul Lago di Como

L'acquaponica è una tipologia sostenibile di agricoltura mista ad allevamento di pesci basata su una combinazione di acquacoltura e coltivazione volta a ottenere un ambiente perfettamente sostenibile e pulito che andrebbe a rivalorizzare il lago di Como insieme alla sua cultura e tradizione. Essa si inserisce nel più ampio campo della biologia, e in particolare nella fitodepurazione.

Ciò premesso l'interrogante chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai quesiti di seguito riportati.

1. Esistono programmi o finanziamenti dell'UE per la realizzazione del tipo di agricoltura/allevamento detto acquaponica?

2. Qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di Maria Damanaki a nome della Commissione
(25 giugno 2014)

L'acquaponica è una pratica che combina l'allevamento di pesci (l'acquacoltura) con la coltivazione di piante. È disponibile un sostegno per ciascuna delle attività di cui si compone l'acquaponica.

L'acquacoltura è disciplinata da una serie di disposizioni stabilite nel Fondo europeo per gli affari marittimi e la pesca, che intendono promuovere nuove imprese, stimolare l'innovazione e la diversificazione delle attività, ridurre l'impatto ambientale e migliorare la sostenibilità. Le opportunità di finanziamento sono a favore di quelle imprese che mirano a conseguire questi obiettivi, centrali nella disciplina dell'acquaponica.

In alternativa, a seconda del tipo di attività e del loro contesto, nonché della delimitazione tra gli strumenti di finanziamento dell'UE, alcune forme di sostegno possono essere fornite dal Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale (FEASR) ([1]).

Le decisioni concrete in materia di finanziamento di progetti specifici sono prese dalle autorità negli Stati membri, sulla base dei loro programmi operativi.

Secondo la valutazione della Commissione sulla situazione attuale, i sistemi di acquaponica per uso commerciale sono pochi e di piccole dimensioni rispetto alle aziende agricole e di acquacoltura. La popolarità dei sistemi di acquaponica di piccole dimensioni è in aumento, in particolare perché vi è un interesse a garantire l'autosufficienza e la sostenibilità ambientale. I sistemi di acquaponica per uso commerciale dispongono del potenziale per contribuire alla diversificazione delle attività e possono generare ulteriori fonti di reddito per gli agricoltori, rispondendo alle nuove esigenze e opportunità.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1305/2013; GU L 347 del 20.12.2013, pag. 487.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005327/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Prospective funding for the creation of an aquaponics system on Lake Como

Aquaponics is a sustainable mixture of farming techniques and fish-breeding based on a combination of aquaculture and plant cultivation designed to achieve a clean and fully sustainable environment, which would regenerate Lake Como and revitalise its tradition and culture. Aquaponics is part of the broader field of biology, in particular phytopurification.

In the light of the above, the questioner asks the Commission to answer the following questions:

1. Does the EU have programmes or funding to establish an aquaponics system which combines aquaculture with plant cultivation?

2. What is the Commission's overview of the situation?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2014)

The practice of aquaponics combines the farming of fish (aquaculture) and the cultivation of plants. Support for aquaponics is available for each of its component activities.

Aquaculture is covered by a number of provisions in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, which include encouraging new enterprises, fostering innovation, business diversification, reducing environmental impact and improving sustainability. Funding opportunities are favourable for enterprises meeting these objectives, which are central to the discipline of aquaponics.

Alternatively, depending on the type of activities and their context, as well as the demarcation between EU funding instruments, certain support could be provided by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) ([1]).

Concrete decisions on the funding of specific projects are taken by the authorities in the Member States, on the basis of their operational programmes.

The Commission's assessment of the current situation is that commercial aquaponic schemes are small in scale and few in number by comparison to aquaculture and agricultural enterprises. Small-scale aquaponic systems are becoming increasingly popular, particularly in the interest of self-sufficiency and environmental sustainability. Commercial aquaponic schemes have the potential to contribute to business diversification and may provide additional sources of income to farmers, meeting new demands and opportunities.

([1]) Regulation (EU) 1305/2013; OJ L-347 of 20.12.2013, page 487.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005328/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Tasso di soglia e usura bancaria

Sempre più spesso gli italiani, a causa della crisi, si rivolgono a istituti di credito e società finanziarie per chiedere prestiti di varia natura ed entità.

Al di là della crescente difficoltà e dei parametri sempre più stringenti per aver accesso al credito, a volte si vengono a creare controversie tra banca e cliente riguardanti la questione dell'usura bancaria e segnatamente del superamento del tasso soglia nell'ambito dei rapporti contrattuali in essere.

In Italia il metodo di calcolo del «tasso soglia» o «tasso di usura», in precedenza disciplinato dalla legge 108/1996, è stato modificato dal decreto legge n. 70 del 13 maggio 2011, in modo da adeguarsi alla normativa europea. Mentre prima il metodo di calcolo stabiliva semplicemente di aumentare del 50 % il valore del Tasso effettivo globale medio (TEGM) per ottenere la soglia di usura, ora in base alla nuova normativa si aumenta il TEGM del 50 %, aggiungendoci un margine fisso di un ulteriore 4 %.

Inoltre è prevista una limitazione al tasso di usura in base alla quale la differenza tra la soglia di usura calcolata e il TEGM non può superare gli 8 punti percentuali. Dato il periodo attuale con tassi piuttosto bassi, la norma non trova applicazione nella pratica poiché ha effetto solo per TEGM superiori al 16 %; ciò provoca quindi un aumento dei costi per i clienti e garantisce agli istituti di credito e alle società finanziarie margini più ampi degli interessi passivi da applicare ai prestiti.

L'anomalia italiana del 4 % è segno di una totale indifferenza nei confronti dei tassi applicati dalla Bce, che sono uno dei parametri usati per definire il tasso soglia e sono tenuti bassi proprio per favorire il credito.

I consumatori possono rivolgersi a un Organismo di Mediazione accreditato dal Ministero della Giustizia e riottenere quanto ingiustamente versato entro sei mesi.

Può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza della situazione e se intende armonizzare i parametri di calcolo del tasso soglia, in modo che sparisca questa anomalia italiana dell'ulteriore 4 %?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza del fatto che in Italia vige una normativa sui tassi di usura.

La Commissione non intende armonizzare le restrizioni sui tassi d'interesse a livello di Unione europea, perché ritiene che la trasparenza delle informazioni e la comparabilità delle offerte, previste dalle direttive 2008/48/CE ([1]) e 2014/17/UE ([2]), permettano ai consumatori di decidere in modo informato se sottoscrivere o no un dato contratto di credito e di comparare le diverse offerte.

La direttiva 2005/29/CE ([3]), inoltre, pur non proibendo le pratiche di usura in quanto tali, vieta ai professionisti qualsiasi pratica contraria alle norme di diligenza professionale e in grado di falsare il comportamento economico del consumatore. Gli Stati membri sono autorizzati a adottare norme più rigorose nel settore dei servizi finanziari, ad esempio per vietare il prestito ad usura in qualsiasi circostanza. A tal fine gli Stati membri sono liberi di fissare la soglia dei tassi di usura.

La Commissione non ritiene infine che si possano mettere in raffronto diretto il tasso ufficiale a breve termine e i tassi effettivi di prestito, date le differenze che li separano in termini di scadenze, garanzie e rischi.

([1]) Direttiva 2008/48/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 aprile 2008, relativa ai contratti di credito ai consumatori e che abroga la direttiva 87/102/CEE (GU L 133 del 22.5.2008, pag. 66).

([2]) Direttiva 2014/17/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 4 febbraio 2014, in merito ai contratti di credito ai consumatori relativi a beni immobili residenziali e recante modifica delle direttive 2008/48/CE e 2013/36/UE e del regolamento (UE) n. 1093/2010 (GU L 60 del 28.2.2014, pag. 34).

([3]) Direttiva 2005/29/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 maggio 2005, relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali tra imprese e consumatori nel mercato interno e che modifica la direttiva 84/450/CEE del Consiglio e le direttive 97/7/CE, 98/27/CE e 2002/65/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio e il regolamento (CE) n. 2006/2004 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio (GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005, pag. 22).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005328/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Threshold rate and bank usury

Because of the current crisis, Italian citizens are to a growing extent applying to banks and finance companies for loans of various kinds and in various amounts.

Credit is increasingly difficult to obtain and increasingly stringent parameters are being applied. There are also instances where disputes arise between banks and customers with regard to bank usury, in particular where the threshold rate is exceeded in existing contractual dealings.

In Italy, the method of calculation of the 'threshold rate' or 'usury rate', previously regulated by Law 108/1996, was amended by Decree Law 70 of 13 May 2011 in line with European regulations. Whereas previously the usury threshold was calculated simply by adding 50% to the annual percentage rate of charge, under the new regulations 50% is added to the annual percentage of charge plus a fixed margin of 4%.

A cap has also been imposed on the usury rate, which means the difference between the usury rate calculated and the annual percentage rate of charge cannot exceed 8 percentage points. Given the current low rates, in practice this provision is not applied and would not come into effect unless the annual percentage rate of charge rose above 16%. This situation increases the cost to the customer and provides banks and finance companies with higher margins on interest payable on loans.

The Italian anomaly of the 4% margin is indicative of total indifference to the rates applied by the ECB (one of the parameters applied to define the threshold rate), kept low to encourage borrowing.

Consumers have the right to approach a mediation body accredited by the Ministry of Justice to obtain reimbursement of unfair payments within six months.

Can the Commission indicate whether it is aware of this situation and intends to harmonise the parameters for calculation of the threshold rate to eliminate the anomaly of the 4% margin?

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

The Commission is aware that a framework on usurious rates is in place in Italy.

The Commission does not intent to harmonise interest rates restrictions at Union level. The Commission considers that transparency of information and comparability of offers as provided for in Directives 2008/48/EC ([1]) and 2014/17/EU ([2]) should allow consumers to make an informed decision on whether to enter in a given credit contract or not and enable them to compare offers.

In addition Directive 2005/29/EC ([3]), while not prohibiting usurious practices *per se*, prevents traders from acting contrary to the requirements of professional diligence and distorting the economic behaviour of consumers. In the area of financial services, Member States are allowed to adopt more prescriptive rules with a view, for instance, to prohibit in all circumstances usurious credit. In this respect Member States have the freedom to set the level of usurious rates.

Finally, the Commission does not consider that there is a direct comparability between the short-term policy rate and the effective lending rates, due to different maturity, collateralization and risks.

([1]) Directive 2008/48/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23.4.2008 on credit agreements for consumers and repealing Council Directive 87/102/EEC, OJ L133, 22.5.2008, p. 66.

([2]) Directive 2014/17/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4.2.2014 on credit agreements for consumers relating to residential immovable property and amending Directives 2008/48/EC and 2013/36/EU and Regulation (EU) No 1093/2010, OJ L60, 28.2.2014, p.34.

([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.5.2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC, 98/27/EC and 2002/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-005335/14
till kommissionen
Jens Nilsson (S&D)
(23 april 2014)

Angående: Förslag gällande nya regler för ekologisk odling i växthus

Ekologisk produktion av livsmedel står för ett viktigt och växande bidrag till Europas livsmedelsförsörjning. Det är en växande bransch som skapar hållbara jobb och en bättre miljö runt om i Europas regioner. Statistik visar att världsmarknaden för ekologiska livsmedel har fyrdubblats sedan 1999. Likaså den areal som tas i anspråk för ekologisk produktion i EU. Det finns därför ett uppenbart behov av att säkerställa att relevant lagstiftning uppmuntrar sektorns fortsatta expansion genom att undanröja hinder och minska producenternas administrativa börda.

Att EU-kommissionen nu presenterat en reviderad lagstiftning för ekologisk produktion är välkommet, även om denna självfallet kommer behöva behandlas och förbättras i enlighet med EU:s medbeslutandeförfarande.

Vi svenska socialdemokrater oroar oss dock för de förslag som EU-kommissionens expertpanel för teknisk rådgivning om ekologisk produktion lagt fram gällande nya regler för ekologisk odling i växthus.

Enligt expertgruppens rapport skulle odling i avgränsade växtbäddar komma att förbjudas, användningen av torv kraftigt begränsas och belysningen begränsas till max 12 timmar per dygn.

Dessa förslag skulle försvåra, för att inte säga omöjliggöra ekologisk odling i växthus i Europas norra regioner. Med anledning av denna allvarliga risk vill vi veta följande;

1. Hur kommer kommissionen säkerställa att full hänsyn tas till de odlingsförhållanden, med färre soltimmar och ett kallare klimat, som råder i EU:s norra regioner?

2. Vilka åtgärder ämnar kommissionen vidta i sitt arbete med lagstiftning som täcker ekologisk odling och produktion för att säkerställa att reglerna skapar gynnsamma utvecklingsmöjligheter för ekologisk odling i alla Europas regioner?

3. Hur ämnar kommissionen ta till sig och bemöta den allvarliga kritik som svenska jordbruksverket framfört kring expertpanelens regelförslag för ekologisk odling i växthus?

4. Ämnar kommissionen gå vidare med expertpanelens förslag om förbud mot avgränsade växtbäddar, begränsad användning av torv och max 12 timmars belysning?

Svar från Dacian Çioloş på kommissionens vägnar
(11 juni 2014)

1. En av principerna för ekologisk produktion är den direkt kopplingen till jorden. Ekologisk växtodling ska i själva verket bibehålla eller öka mängden organiskt material i jorden, öka jordmånens stabilitet och biologiska mångfald samt förebygga jordkompaktering och jorderosion. ([1]) En annan viktig princip är hållbar energianvändning. ([2]) Kommissionen håller för närvarande på att överväga olika alternativ för att behandla frågan om avgränsade plantsängar. Att upprätthålla producenters och konsumenters förtroende för det ekologiska produktionssystemet är ett av de kriterier som ska beaktas vid valet av lämpligast alternativ.

2. När det gäller åtgärderna för att garantera en gynnsam utveckling för ekologisk livsmedelsproduktion i alla EU-regioner, presenteras i handlingsplanen ([3]) om framtiden för ekologisk produktion i Europa några åtgärder för att stärka banden mellan EU:s forsknings- och innovationsprojekt och ekologisk produktion och för att uppmuntra användningen av ekologiska livsmedel.

3. och 4. Expertgruppen för teknisk rådgivning om ekologisk produktion har beaktat frågan om de avgränsade plantsängarna i sin rapport för år 2012. ([4]) De anser att ”skördade ekologiska grönsaker eller frukt bör komma från plantor som växer i jorden och inte från odlingar i jordsubstrat.” Rapporten återger de uppfattningar oberoende experter som är medlemmar av gruppen har och avspeglar inte nödvändigtvis kommissionens uppfattningar.

([1]) Artikel 12a i rådets förordning (EG) nr 834/2007 av den 28 juni 2007 om ekologisk produktion och märkning av ekologiska produkter och om upphävande av förordning (EEG) nr 2092/91 (EGT L 189, 20.7.2007, s. 1).
([2]) Artikel 12a iii i rådets förordning (EG) nr 834/2007 av den 28 juni 2007 om ekologisk produktion och märkning av ekologiska produkter och om upphävande av förordning (EEG) nr 2092/91 (EGT L 189, 20.7.2007, s. 1).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/documents/eu-policy/european-action-plan/act_en.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/final-reports/final_report_egtop_on_greenhouse_production_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005335/14
to the Commission
Jens Nilsson (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Proposal concerning new rules on organic production in greenhouses

Organic food production makes a vital, and rising, contribution to Europe's food supply. It is a growing industry, which creates sustainable jobs and a better environment in Europe's regions. Statistics show that the world market for organic food has quadrupled since 1999. So has the area used for organic food production in the EU. There is therefore a manifest need to ensure that relevant legislation encourages the industry to continue to expand by eliminating obstacles and reducing administrative burden on producers.

It is welcome that the Commission has now presented a proposal for revised legislation on organic food production, even though the proposal will of course need to be considered and improved in accordance with the EU's codecision procedure.

However, we Swedish Social Democrats are concerned about the proposals which the Commission's Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production has submitted with regard to new rules on organic production in greenhouses.

According to the Expert Group's report, production in demarcated beds should be banned, the use of peat should be drastically limited, and lighting should be limited to a maximum of 12 hours in every 24.

These proposals would render organic production in greenhouses in northern regions of Europe more difficult, if not impossible. In view of this serious risk:

1. How will the Commission ensure that full account is taken of the growing conditions, fewer hours of sunlight and colder climate which prevail in the EU's northern regions?

2. What measures will the Commission take in its legislative work on organic cultivation and production in order to ensure that the rules create favourable development opportunities for organic food production in all regions of Europe?

3. How will the Commission respond to and counter the Swedish Board of Agriculture's serious criticisms of the Expert Group's proposed rules on organic production in greenhouses?

4. Will the Commission proceed with the Expert Group's proposal for a ban on demarcated beds, limited use of peat and a maximum of 12 hours of lighting?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

1. One of the principles on which the organic production is based is the direct link to the soil. In fact, organic plant production shall maintain or increase soil organic matter, enhance soil stability and soil biodiversity, prevent soil compaction and soil erosion ([1]). Another essential principle is the sustainable use of the energy ([2]). The Commission is currently reflecting on different options to address the issue of demarcated beds. Maintaining producers' and consumers' confidence in the organic scheme is one of the criteria that will be taken into account to select the most appropriate option.

2. Regarding the measures to ensure a favourable development for organic food production in all regions of the Union, the action plan ([3]) on the future of Organic Production in Europe, presents some actions to strengthen links between EU research and innovation projects and organic production and to encourage the use of organic food.

3 and 4. The Expert Group for technical advice on organic production has considered the demarcated beds issue in its 2012 report ([4]). They consider that 'harvested organic vegetables or fruits should come from plants grown in the soil, and not from substrate cultures'. This report presents the views of the independent experts, who are members of the Group, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission.

([1]) Article 12(a) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28.6.2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007, p. 1).
([2]) Article 3(a)(iii) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28.6.2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007, p. 1).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/documents/eu-policy/european-action-plan/act_en.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/final-reports/final_report_egtop_on_greenhouse_production_en.pdf

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005336/14
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(23. april 2014)

Om: Opfølgende spørgsmål om retningslinjerne for fremme af anvendelsen af energi fra vedvarende energikilder

Som opfølgning på Kommissionens svar E-001834/2014 den 10. april 2014 kan jeg oplyse, at følgende produkter anvendes:

1. intelligent lampe i farestalde (automatisk regulering af varmelampe, op til 70 % besparelse)

2. intelligent overdækning i fravænningsstalde (automatisk regulering af varmelampe og overdækningsposition, op til 90 % besparelse)

3. CO_2-styret ventilation, som regulerer indtaget af frisk luft i øjeblikkelig overensstemmelse med dyrenes behov (testet i Schweiz med 30 % energibesparelse). Alle disse teknologier regulerer på baggrund af dyrenes spildvarme. Vil Kommissionen derfor svare på, hvilke bestemmelser der gælder for disse produkter?

Desuden bedes Kommissionen svare på, hvilke andre EU-instrumenter eller retsakter der kunne være relevante i denne type energieffektivitetsforanstaltninger?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Günther Oettinger
(11. juni 2014)

I EU findes der energieffektivitetskrav til lyskilder (forordning (EF) nr. 244/2009 vedrørende ikke-retningsbestemte lyskilder i boliger, forordning (EF) nr. 245/2009 vedrørende lysstofrør uden indbygget forkobling og højtryksdamplamper samt forkoblinger og armaturer samt forordning (EF) nr. 1194/2012 vedrørende retningsbestemte lyskilder) og til ventilationsprodukter (forordning (EU) nr. 327/2011 vedrørende industrielle ventilatorer samt forordning (EU) nr. 206/2012 vedrørende klimaanlæg og komfortventilatorer).

Sådanne foranstaltninger kan understøttes af EU's finansielle instrumenter, såsom de europæiske struktur- og investeringsfonde, under hvilke medlemsstaterne skal tildele mindst 20 % af de finansielle midler til lavemissionsøkonomiforanstaltninger.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005336/14
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Follow-up question on guidelines on promoting the use of energy from renewable sources

Further to the Commission's answer of 10 April 2014 to Question E-001834/2014, I can say that the following products are used:

1. intelligent lamps in farrowing houses (automatic heating-lamp regulation; up to 70% energy saving);

2. intelligent canopies in weaner houses (automatic heating-lamp regulation and canopy positioning; up to 90% energy saving);

3. CO_2-controlled ventilation systems regulating fresh-air intake immediately in line with animals' requirements (tested in Switzerland; 30% energy saving). All these regulating products are based on animals' waste heat. Will the Commission therefore say what provisions apply to these products?

Will the Commission also say what other EU instruments or legislation could be relevant to this type of energy efficiency measure?

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

In the EU, energy efficiency requirements exist for lamps (Regulation 244/2009 for non-directional household lamps; Regulation 245/2009 for fluorescent lamps without integrated ballast, for high intensity discharge lamps and for ballasts and luminaires; and Regulation 1194/2012 for directional lamps) and ventilation products (Regulation 327/2011 for industrial fans; and Regulation 206/2012 for air conditioners and comfort fans).

Such measures may be supported by EU financial instruments, such as the structural and investments funds under which Member States have to allocate at least 20% of the available funding to low carbon economy measures.

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-005337/14
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(23. april 2014)

Om: International transport og ansættelsesvilkår

Kim Johansen International Transport A/S ligger i Danmark. I januar havde Kim Johansen Transport Group cirka 714 ansatte. Ingen af disse havde bopæl i Danmark. Koncernen har i alt ca. 374 lastbiler indregistreret. Ca. 300 er indregistreret i Danmark. Udbetaling af løn, pension og arbejdsløshedsunderstøttelse sker på estiske vilkår.

Arbejdsretten i Danmark har fradømt dansk fagbevægelse ret til konflikt om dansk løn til cirka 700 østeuropæiske chauffører hos vognmand Kim Johansen. Begrundelsen er, at der ikke foregår nok transport i Danmark, og at chaufførerne er ansat igennem et estisk datterselskab Kim Johansen Transport OÜ.

Der arrangeres transport fra chaufførens bopælsland til det sted, hvor chaufføren skal starte, og transport hjem igen fra det sted, hvor chaufføren skal slutte. Chaufførerne flyves ofte til og fra Amsterdam, Frankfurt og København ([1]).

Chaufførerne kører derfor i Nordvesteuropa og presser således lønvilkårene for danske, tyske og franske og hollandske chauffører. Romkonventionen siger, at transportaftaler skal være underlagt loven i det land, hvor transportøren har sit sædvanlige opholdssted. Videre siges det, at lovvalget i forbindelse med aftaler angående varetransport afgøres ud fra det sted, hvor varerne lastes eller losses, eller ud fra afsenderens hovedforretningssted.

Kan Kommissionen på den baggrund svare på, om den finder det hensigtsmæssigt og legalt at Kim Johansen har sine chauffører ansat på estiske vilkår, mens arbejdet udføres i Nordvesteuropa, og bilerne er indregistreret i Danmark?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne Af László Andor
(18. juni 2014)

Ifølge Romkonventionens artikel 6, stk. 1 ([2]), kan parternes lovvalg i arbejdsaftaler ikke medføre, at arbejdstageren berøves den beskyttelse, der tilkommer ham i medfør af ufravigelige regler i den lov, som ville finde anvendelse i arbejdsaftalen i mangel af et lovvalg. Artikel 6, stk. 2, fastsætter, at en arbejdsaftale i mangel af et lovvalg er undergivet loven i det land, hvor arbejdstageren »sædvanligvis udfører sit arbejde«. Hvis dette ikke kan bestemmes, er den lov, der finder anvendelse, loven i det land, hvor det forretningssted, som har antaget arbejdstageren, er beliggende. Hvis det af omstændighederne fremgår, at aftalen har en nærmere tilknytning til et andet land, fastsætter artikel 6, stk. 2, at loven i dette land finder anvendelse.

Det første punkt, der skal undersøges, er det land, hvor arbejdstageren sædvanligvis udfører sit arbejde. I betragtning af arten af arbejdet i den internationale transportsektor skal de nationale domstole tage hensyn til alle forhold vedrørende arbejdstagerens aktiviteter. De skal afgøre, i hvilket land arbejdstageren udfører sine transportopgaver, modtager instrukser vedrørende opgaverne og organiserer sit arbejde. De bør også fastslå bl.a., hvor transporten hovedsagelig udføres, og det sted, arbejdstageren vender tilbage til efter at have udført opgaverne ([3]). Hvis den lov, der skal finde anvendelse, ikke kan bestemmes ud fra det land, hvor arbejdstageren sædvanligvis udfører sit arbejde, henviser »det forretningssted, som har antaget arbejdstageren« udelukkende til det forretningssted, som har foretaget antagelsen af arbejdstageren ([4]). Det land, hvor arbejdstageren eller arbejdsgiveren har sit sædvanlige opholdssted, er irrelevant for bestemmelsen af, hvilken lovgivning finder anvendelse.

([1]) http://www.arbejdsretten.dk/media/1111466/dom%20ar2014.0028.pdf
([2]) Konvention om, hvilken lov der skal anvendes på kontraktlige forpligtelser, åbnet for undertegnelse i Rom den 19. juni 1980 (EFT L 266 af 9.10.1980, s. 1). Rom I-forordningen, som har erstattet Romkonventionen i de andre medlemsstater, finder ikke anvendelse i Danmark, der således fortsat anvender Romkonventionen.
([3]) Sag C-29/10 Koelzsch [2011] Sml. I, s. 1595.
([4]) Sag C-384/10 Voogsgeerd mod Navimer SA [2011] Sml. I, s. 13275.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005337/14
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: International transport and employment conditions

The firm Kim Johansen International Transport A/S is located in Denmark. As at January 2014, Kim Johansen Transport Group had some 714 employees, none of whom was resident in Denmark. The concern has 374 registered goods vehicles; some 300 are registered in Denmark. Pay, pensions and unemployment benefits are subject to Estonian terms and conditions.

The Employment Tribunal in Denmark has denied a Danish trade union the right to take industrial action to secure Danish pay levels for some 700 eastern European drivers working for the haulier Kim Johansen. The reason given is that the firm does not conduct a sufficient volume of haulage operations within Denmark and that the drivers are employed through an Estonian subsidiary, Kim Johansen Transport OÜ.

Arrangements are made to transport drivers from their countries of residence to the localities where they are to start their haulage assignments, and subsequently back home from where their assignments end. Drivers are often flown to and from Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Copenhagen ([1]).

The drivers are therefore operating in north-west Europe and, as a result, pay is being squeezed for Danish, German, French and Dutch drivers. According to the Rome Convention, transport contracts are subject to the law of the country where the haulier has his habitual residence. It is further laid down that the law applicable to contracts for the carriage of goods is determined on the basis of the place where the goods are loaded or unloaded or of the consignor's principal place of business.

In the light of this, does the Commission regard it as appropriate and lawful that Kim Johansen should employ its drivers on the basis of Estonian terms and conditions while its operations take place in north-west Europe and its vehicles are registered in Denmark?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

Article 6(1) of the Rome Convention ([2]) states that a choice by the parties of the law applicable to a contract of employment cannot deprive the employee of the protection laid down by the non-derogable provisions of the law which would be applicable to the contract in the absence of a choice. Article 6(2) stipulates that, in the absence of a choice, the law applicable is that of the country in or from which the employee 'habitually carries out his work'. If this cannot be determined the law applicable is that of the country in which the place of business through which he was engaged is situated. When it appears from the circumstances that the contract is more closely connected with another country, Article 6(2) designates the law of that country.

The first point to consider is the country in or from which the employee habitually carries out his work. Given the nature of work in the international transport sector, the national courts must take account of all the factors which characterise the activity of the employee. They must determine in which country the employee carries out his transport tasks, receives instructions concerning his tasks and organises his work. They must also determine, among others, the places where the transport is principally carried out and the place to which the employee returns after completing his tasks ([3]). If the applicable law cannot be determined by the country in or from which the employee habitually carries out his work, 'the place of business through which the employee was engaged' means exclusively to the place of business which engaged the employee ([4]). The country in which the employee or employer is habitually resident is of no relevance as such in determining the applicable law.

([1]) http://www.arbejdsretten.dk/media/1111466/dom%20ar2014.0028.pdf
([2]) Convention on the law applicable to contractual obligations, opened for signature in Rome on 19.6.1980 (OJ 1980 L 266, p. 1). The Rome I Regulation, which has replaced the Rome Convention in the other Member States, does not apply in Denmark, which thus continues to apply the Rome Convention.
([3]) Case C-29/10 Koelzsch [2011] ECR I-1595.
([4]) Case C-384/10 Voogsgeerd v Navimer SA [2011] ECR I-13275.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005338/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Sri Lanka

On Thursday, 27 March 2014, the UN Human Rights Council adopted its latest resolution on Sri Lanka. This provides a mandate to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to investigate the alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both parties in Sri Lanka in the final years of the country's armed conflict. Additionally, in recent weeks, there has been a crackdown on Tamils and human rights defenders in Sri Lanka. Prominent human rights defenders were arrested and detained in the north of the country whilst the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council was taking place.

Accordingly:

1. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking, or what steps will she take, to support the investigation by the OHCHR?

2. What consideration has the Vice-President/High Representative given to the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka has already confirmed that it will not cooperate with the inquiry?

3. What steps is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to ensure that the Government of Sri Lanka complies with its international obligations?

4. What recent assessment has the Vice-President/High Representative made of the human rights situation in Sri Lanka, particularly in the former conflict areas in the north?

5. What action is the Vice-President/High Representative taking to ensure that the Government of Sri Lanka works towards ensuring that a lasting political solution is secured?

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

The EU remains concerned about the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. According to reports, harassment targeting human rights defenders and civil society organisations has worsened in recent months in the North of the country. Many of these activities seem to be carried out under the pretext of the fear of revival of the LTTE ('Tamil Tigers').

Besides the past crimes, the on-going human rights concerns in Sri Lanka were in focus of the 25th session of the UN Human Rights Council. EU Member States played a significant role by co-sponsoring a resolution, which urges the Government of Sri Lanka amongst others to address the human rights violations. We have invited the government to cooperate closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the implementation of the resolution.

Human rights issues, and the importance of finding durable solutions for moving out of the post-conflict situation, were also given prominence in the EU dialogue with Sri Lanka at the Joint Commission meeting in December 2013. This was the first high-level officials meeting between the EU and Sri Lanka in five years, following the temporary withdrawal of the GSP+ trade preferences by the EU. We consider it paramount that such dialogues be continued on a regular basis.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005339/14
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: London air pollution

A recent report by Public Health England estimated that in London, 3 389 deaths were linked to air pollution and that there were 41 404 'life years' lost in 2010. Air pollution in London is at an all-time high, and this was exacerbated by the recent smog and resulted in a heightened state of alert and evacuations. At the same time, air pollution was high in south Belgium and Paris, but this prompted emergency measures including free public transport and car bans. However, no such actions were taken in the UK despite almost identical pollution concentrations. The Mayor has failed to keep up with cities like Berlin and scrapped the plan in his air quality strategy to tighten the existing low emission zone from 2015. Accordingly:

1. What action is the Commission taking to ensure that all Member States make progress towards tackling pollution black spots?

2. What action is the Commission taking to ensure that the UK and other Member States put measures in place to reduce the long-term exposure of urban citizens to air pollution?

3. What steps will the Commission take to ensure that London and other EU cities take emergency measures when air pollution levels are dangerously high?

4. Will the Commission be following the progress and outcomes of the findings of the recently launched inquiry by the Commons Environmental Audit Committee?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

1. The Commission has already launched infringement procedures against 17 Member States for their failure to ensure compliance with the PM_{10} limit values laid down by Directive 2008/50/EC ([1]). On 20 February 2014, the Commission also launched an infringement procedure against the UK for its failure to ensure compliance with the NO_2 limit values laid down by the same Directive.

2. As regards long-term exposure, the Commission strategy has been outlined in the Clean Air Programme for Europe adopted on 18 December 2013 ([2]).

3. As a general rule, the content of emergency measures is left to the appreciation of the Member States and their local authorities. Such measures are compulsory when there is a risk that the levels of pollution exceed an 'alert threshold' and such thresholds at the EU level have been laid down only for NO2, SO_2 and ozone (Annex XII of the directive). For the other pollutants, Article 24 of the directive stipulates that Member States 'may', where appropriate, draw up short-term action plans.

4. The Commission will be following the progress of the inquiry launched by the Commons Environmental Audit Committee.

([1]) OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/air/clean_air_policy.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005340/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Voortgang bij de uitvoering van de EU-strategie op het gebied van biodiversiteit

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van 3 mei 2011 (COM(2011)0244) verklaart de Commissie dat de lidstaten en de Commissie ervoor zullen zorgen dat de fase van de totstandbrenging van Natura 2000 in 2012 grotendeels is afgerond, ook wat het mariene milieu betreft.

Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de stand van de voltooiing per lidstaat, opgesplitst naar gebieden op land en op zee? Hoe luiden de percentages voor de EU als geheel en per lidstaat? Beschouwt de Commissie dit als grotendeels afgerond? Welke stappen zal de Commissie ondernemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de voltooiing volledig is, met name wat betreft het mariene milieu?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(18 juni 2014)

De barometer die in de laatste Natura 2000-nieuwsbrief ([1]) is gepubliceerd, bevat een overzicht van de stand van zaken van de op grond van de Vogelrichtlijn ([2]) en de Habitatrichtlijn ([3]) aangewezen Natura 2000-gebieden, wat betreft de omvang en het aantal van die gebieden. De barometer geeft een overzicht per lidstaat, en maakt onderscheid tussen land- en zeegebieden.

De realisatie van Natura 2000 op het land is grotendeels voltooid. Wat betreft aangewezen zeegebieden is de afgelopen jaren aanzienlijke vooruitgang geboekt, maar in de meeste zeeregio's blijft het netwerk, vooral offshore, erg onvolledig. Bijgewerkte informatie over de resterende onvolledigheden met betrekking tot de in het kader van de Habitatrichtlijn voor te stellen gebieden kan per lidstaat online geraadpleegd worden ([4]).

De Commissie pakt de resterende onvolledigheden momenteel op bilaterale basis met de betrokken lidstaten aan en zal zonodig juridische actie overwegen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/nat2000newsl/nat35_en.pdf
([2]) Richtlijn 2009/147/EG (gecodificeerde versie ter vervanging van Richtlijn 79/409/EEG), PB L 20 van 26.1.2010.
([3]) Richtlijn 92/43/EEG van de Raad van 21 mei 1992 inzake de instandhouding van de natuurlijke habitats en de wilde flora en fauna, PB L 206 van 22.7.1992.
([4]) https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/0c011fbc-edd4-49a6-8f3d-b67901a2084d.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005340/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of 3 May 2011 (COM(2011)0244), the Commission states that Member States and the Commission will ensure that the phase to establish Natura 2000, including in the marine environment, is largely complete by 2012.

Can the Commission give an overview of completion per Member State, differentiating between land and marine sites? What are the percentages reached for the EU as a whole and per Member State? Does the Commission consider this as largely complete? What action will the Commission undertake to ensure completion, especially regarding the marine environment?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

An overview of the state of play with Natura 2000 site designations under the Birds ([1]) and Habitats ([2]) Directives, in terms of area and number of sites, is provided in the barometer published on the latest Natura 2000 newsletter ([3]). The barometer provides a breakdown by Member State and differentiates between terrestrial and marine sites.

The establishment of Natura 2000 on land is largely complete. As regards marine designations, significant progress has been achieved over the last years but the network remains substantially incomplete in most marine regions, especially offshore. Updated information about the remaining insufficiencies per Member State, as regards sites to be proposed under the Habitats Directive, can be found online ([4]).

The Commission is currently dealing with all the remaining insufficiencies on a bilateral basis with the Member States concerned and, if need be, it will consider legal action.

([1]) Directive 2009/147/EC (codified version replacing Directive 79/409/EEC), OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21.5.1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/nat2000newsl/nat35_en.pdf
([4]) https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/0c011fbc-edd4-49a6-8f3d-b67901a2084d

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005341/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Voortgang bij de uitvoering van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van 3 mei 2011 (COM(2011)0244) stelt de Commissie dat de lidstaten moeten zorgen voor de tijdige ontwikkeling en uitvoering van beheerplannen of soortgelijke instrumenten waarin instandhoudings- en herstelmaatregelen uiteen worden gezet voor alle Natura 2000-gebieden.

Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de geboekte vooruitgang per lidstaat? Indien dergelijke gegevens niet beschikbaar zijn, om welke redenen niet? Hoe kan een lidstaat goed beheer waarborgen zonder over deze gegevens te beschikken?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(26 juni 2014)

De Commissie heeft de lidstaten om informatie verzocht over de vooruitgang die zij hebben geboekt bij het vaststellen van de nodige instandhoudingsmaatregelen in de zin van artikel 6, lid 1, van de Habitatrichtlijn ([1]). Deze informatie houdt verband met lopende onderzoeken waarbij het om mogelijke inbreuken op het EU-recht zou kunnen gaan. Sommige lidstaten zijn hun verplichtingen in het kader van artikel 6, lid 1, volledig nagekomen, terwijl er in verscheidene andere lidstaten sprake is van aanzienlijke vertragingen of onvolledigheden. De Commissie zal passende maatregelen nemen tegen deze tekortkomingen in de uitvoering en naleving. De Commissie garandeert vertrouwelijkheid tijdens onderzoeken die tot een inbreukprocedure zouden kunnen leiden.

([1]) PB L 206 van 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005341/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of 3 May 2011 (COM(2011)0244), the Commission states that Member States will ensure that management plans or equivalent instruments which set out conservation and restoration measures are developed and implemented in a timely manner for all Natura 2000 sites.

Can the Commission give an overview of the progress per Member State? If such data is not available, what are the reasons for this? How can a Member State ensure good management without having this data available?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

The Commission has requested information from Member States on the progress achieved on the establishment of the necessary conservation measures pursuant to Article 6.1 of the Habitats Directive ([1]). This information relates to ongoing investigations that might involve possible infringements of EC law. Whereas some Member States have fully complied with their obligations under Article 6.1, in several Member States there are considerable delays or deficiencies. The Commission will take appropriate measures to address these implementation and compliance gaps. The Commission guarantees confidentiality during investigations which could lead to an infringement procedure.

([1]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005343/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Uitvoering van de biodiversiteitsstrategie van de EU

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van mei 2011 verklaart de Commissie dat de Commissie en de lidstaten voor de nodige gelden en stimuleringsmaatregelen zullen zorgen, o.a. via EU-financieringsinstrumenten van de EU in het kader van het volgende meerjarig financieel kader. De Commissie zou haar ideeën over de financiering van Natura 2000 krachtens het volgende meerjarig financieel kader in 2011 uiteenzetten.

Volgens de eigen berekeningen van de Commissie is jaarlijks ongeveer 5,8 miljard Euro nodig uit nationale en Europese financieringsbronnen. Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de beschikbare financiering in de EU per lidstaat en op Europees niveau? Zijn de beschikbare gelden volgens de Commissie toereikend om de gestelde doelen te bereiken? Zo niet, wat gaat de Commissie doen om de doelstellingen te halen?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(10 juni 2014)

De Commissie heeft haar ideeën hierover uiteengezet in haar werkdocument „Natura 2000 financieren — investeren in Natura 2000: Voordelen scheppen voor de natuur en de mensen" ([1]).

De Commissie beschikt niet over volledige gegevens over de beschikbare financiering voor Natura 2000 in de afzonderlijke lidstaten. De meeste lidstaten hebben hun prioritaire actiekaders bij de Commissie ingediend waarin de prioriteiten voor het financieren van Natura 2000 zijn aangegeven. De beschikbaarheid van EU-financiering voor Natura 2000 zal afhangen van het resultaat van de huidige programmering voor de periode 2014-2020. Alle ESI-fondsen en het LIFE-programma zullen verschillende mogelijkheden bieden voor het financieren van Natura 2000. De lidstaten zullen moeten voorzien in verdere nationale of regionale financiering. Zij kunnen ook innovatieve financieringsinstrumenten gebruiken (zoals betalingen voor ecosysteemdiensten), bijvoorbeeld door middel van de steun die de faciliteit voor de financiering van natuurlijk kapitaal van het nieuwe LIFE-programma ([2]) moet bieden. Om de lidstaten te helpen bij het vinden van financieringsmogelijkheden voor Natura 2000 heeft de Commissie een nieuw „Handbook on Financing Natura 2000" opgesteld en een externe contractant opdracht gegeven studiedagen in 24 lidstaten te organiseren.

([1]) SEC(2011)1573 of 12.12.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/about/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005343/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication of May 2011 entitled 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020', the Commission stated that both it and the Member States would provide the necessary funds and incentives for Natura 2000, including through EU funding instruments, under the next multiannual financial framework. The Commission was to set out its views in 2011 on how Natura 2000 would be financed under the next multiannual financial framework.

According to the Commission's own calculations, approximately EUR 5.8 billion per year is needed from national and European sources. Can the Commission give an overview of the funding available in the EU per Member State and at European level? Does the Commission consider the funds available to be sufficient for reaching the targets? If not, what will the Commission do to reach the targets?

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

The Commission has set out its views on the matter in its Staff Working Paper 'Financing Natura 2000 — Investing in Natura 2000: Delivering benefits for nature and people' ([1]).

The Commission does not have comprehensive data on funding available for Natura 2000 in the individual Member States. Most Member States have submitted to the Commission their Prioritised Action Frameworks indicating priorities for financing Natura 2000. The availability of EU funding for Natura 2000 will depend on the outcome of the current programming exercise carried out for the period 2014-2020. All the ESI Funds as well as the LIFE Programme will provide multiple possibilities for financing Natura 2000. Member States will have to provide further national/regional funding. They can also use innovative financing instruments (e.g. payments for ecosystem services), for example through the support to be provided by the Natural Capital Financing Facility under the new LIFE programme ([2]). To assist the Member States in identifying funding opportunities for Natura 2000 the Commission has been preparing a new 'Handbook on financing Natura 2000' and has contracted an external contractor to organise seminars in 24 Member States.

([1]) SEC(2011)1573 of 12.12.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/about/

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005344/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Uitvoering van de biodiversiteitsstrategie van de EU

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van mei 2011 verklaart de Commissie dat de Commissie samen met de lidstaten in 2013 een grootschalige voorlichtingscampagne over Natura 2000 zal opzetten en lanceren.

Heeft deze campagne plaatsgevonden? Zo niet, waarom niet? Is de Commissie nog steeds van plan samen met de lidstaten een campagne te lanceren? Wanneer vindt de campagne plaats en wat is de aard van de campagne?

Is de Commissie het ermee eens dat het geen technische campagne moet zijn maar een campagne die de burgers voorlicht over het belang van de natuur voor de kwaliteit van het bestaan en de manier waarop Natura 2000 hieraan bijdraagt?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(18 juni 2014)

In november 2013 gaf de Commissie het startsein voor de nieuwe „Natura 2000-prijs" om de beste praktijken voor natuurbehoud in Europa te huldigen en te promoten. De prijs is bedoeld om het publiek beter vertrouwd te maken met Natura 2000 door het succes van het Natura 2000-netwerk onder de publieke aandacht te brengen, waarbij wordt aangetoond dat het belangrijk is de biodiversiteit in heel Europa te beschermen, en waarbij uitmuntendheid in het beheer en de promotie van het netwerk en haar doelstellingen wordt beloond.

Bij deze eerste editie hebben wij 163 inzendingen in 5 verschillende categorieën ontvangen. Op 21 mei 2014 overhandigde commissaris Potočnik tijdens een plechtigheid in Brussel de prijzen aan 5 winnaars. De winnaars kwamen uit België, Bulgarije, Tsjechië, Roemenië en Spanje. Voor meer informatie kunt u terecht op de website van de prijs ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005344/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication of May 2011 entitled 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020', the Commission stated that, together with the Member States, it was going to develop and launch a major communication campaign on Natura 2000 by 2013.

Has this campaign taken place? If not, why not? Is the Commission still planning to launch such a campaign together with the Member States? When will it take place, and what will be its nature?

Does the Commission agree that this should not be a technical campaign but one focused on explaining to citizens the importance of nature for quality of life, and how Natura 2000 contributes to that?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

In November 2013 the Commission launched a new Natura 2000 Award initiative designed to celebrate and promote best practices for nature conservation in Europe. The Award aims to enhance public awareness on Natura 2000 by bringing the success of the Natura 2000 network to the public's attention, demonstrating its importance for protecting biodiversity across Europe and rewarding excellence in the management and promotion of the network and its objectives.

In this inaugural edition 163 applications were submitted in 5 different categories. Commissioner Potočnik awarded the prizes to 5 winners at a ceremony in Brussels on 21 May 2014. The winners were from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania and Spain. More information is available at the Award website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005345/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Uitvoering van de biodiversiteitsstrategie van de EU

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van mei 2011 verklaart de Commissie dat de Commissie en de lidstaten de samenwerking met sleutelsectoren zullen verbeteren en richtsnoeren zullen blijven ontwikkelen voor een beter begrip van de voorschriften van de EU-natuurwetgeving en de waarde hiervan voor de bevordering van de economische ontwikkeling.

Zijn deze richtsnoeren ontwikkeld, en zo ja, voor welke sleutelsectoren? Voor welke sectoren die door de Commissie als sleutelsectoren worden beschouwd zijn nog geen richtsnoeren opgesteld? Waarom zijn er nog geen richtsnoeren opgesteld? Wanneer kunnen deze sectoren richtsnoeren verwachten?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(16 juni 2014)

De Commissie heeft voor de meest relevante sectoren specifieke richtsnoeren gepubliceerd inzake de tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-natuurwetgeving, of is bezig met de voorbereiding van die richtsnoeren. Richtsnoeren zijn gepubliceerd voor de sectoren aquacultuur, de binnenvaart, havens en baggerwerken in estuaria, windenergieprojecten en winningsindustrieën van niet-energetische delfstoffen. Momenteel worden drie andere richtsnoeren opgesteld, respectievelijk inzake landbouwgrond, bosbouw en waterkracht. Deze richtsnoeren zullen in 2014 beschikbaar worden. Ook zijn verschillende andere algemene richtsnoeren gepubliceerd of bijgewerkt, zoals voor het vaststellen van instandhoudingsmaatregelen voor Natura 2000, voor de bescherming van soorten, voor het beheersen van het populatieniveau van grote carnivoren en voor Natura 2000 en klimaatsverandering. Alle richtsnoeren zijn ontwikkeld in samenwerking met vertegenwoordigers van de lidstaten en de voornaamste belanghebbendengroepen en zijn beschikbaar op de website van de Commissie voor natuur en biodiversiteit ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005345/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication of May 2011 entitled 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020', the Commission stated that both it and the Member States would improve cooperation with key sectors and continue to develop guidance documents to improve their understanding of the requirements of EU nature legislation and its value in promoting economic development.

Have these guidance documents been developed, and, if so, for which key sectors? For which sectors considered as key by the Commission has no guidance been produced yet? Why has there been no guidance? When can these sectors expect guidance?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The Commission has produced or is producing specific guidance documents on the implementation of the EU Nature legislation covering the most relevant sectors. Guidance documents have been published for the sectors aquaculture, inland waterway transport, ports and dredging operations in estuaries, wind energy developments and non-energy mineral extraction industries. Three more documents are currently under preparation: one on farmland, one on forestry and one on hydropower. These documents will become available in 2014. Several more general guidance documents have also been published or updated, for example on establishing conservation measures in Natura 2000, on species protection, on population level management of large carnivores and on Natura 2000 and climate change. All documents have been developed in cooperation with representatives of the Member States and the main stakeholders groups and are available on the Commission's Nature & Biodiversity website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005346/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Vooruitgang bij de uitvoering van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie

In haar mededeling getiteld „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" van mei 2011 kondigt de Commissie aan dat zij samen met de lidstaten de handhaving van de natuurrichtlijnen wil verbeteren door speciale opleidingsprogramma's over Natura 2000 voor rechters en openbare aanklagers te organiseren en de capaciteiten voor het bevorderen van de naleving beter te ontwikkelen.

Wat voor opleidingsprogramma's zijn er sinds de goedkeuring van de strategie verzorgd en wat is voor de periode tot 2020 voorzien? Zijn er betere capaciteiten voor het bevorderen van de naleving ontwikkeld? Kan de Commissie een overzicht van deze capaciteiten verstrekken?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(10 juni 2014)

In het kader van haar programma van samenwerking met de nationale rechters op het gebied van milieu heeft de Commissie opleidingsmodules ontwikkeld over diverse onderwerpen van het EU-milieurecht en seminars georganiseerd over de toepassing van het EU-milieurecht, onder meer over Natura 2000. De workshops hebben hoofdzakelijk tot doel meer bekendheid te geven aan de milieuwetgeving en het milieubeleid van de EU en een forum te bieden voor de uitwisseling van kennis en ervaring.

In 2010 vonden drie seminars over de natuurbeschermingswetgeving plaats. In 2012 werden drie seminars georganiseerd over de bescherming van het milieu door middel van het strafrecht. In deze laatste seminars kwam ook Natura 2000 aan bod. In 2013-2014 vonden vier seminars plaats over de samenhang tussen de richtlijn milieueffectbeoordeling (Richtlijn 2011/92/EU ([1])), de vogelrichtlijn (Richtlijn 2009/147/EG ([2])) en de habitatrichtlijn (Richtlijn 92/43/EEG ([3])).

Elk seminar werd bijgewoond door ongeveer 25 nationale rechters en openbare aanklagers. De opleidingsmodules en nadere uitleg zijn te vinden op: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/judges.htm

Dit opleidingsprogramma loopt ten minste tot 2016. Er kunnen verdere seminars over Natura 2000 worden georganiseerd.

([1]) PB L 26 van 28.1.2012.
([2]) PB L 20 van 26.1.2010.
([3]) PB L 206 van 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005346/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication entitled 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of May 2011, the Commission states that it and the Member States will facilitate enforcement of the nature directives by providing specific training programmes on Natura 2000 for judges and public prosecutors, and by developing better compliance promotion capacities.

What training programmes have been provided since the adoption of the strategy and what is anticipated for the period until 2020? Have better compliance promotion capacities been developed? Can the Commission provide an overview of these capacities?

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

Under its programme of cooperation with national judges in the field of environment, the Commission has developed training modules on various topics of EU environmental law and organised seminars on the implementation of EU environmental law, including on Natura 2000. The main purpose of these workshops is to raise awareness of EU environmental law and policy and to provide a forum for exchange of knowledge and experience.

Three seminars on nature protection law took place in 2010. In 2012, there were three seminars on the protection of the environment through criminal law. The latter also dealt with Natura 2000. In 2013 and 14, there were four seminars on the links between the Environmental Impact Assessment (2011/92/EU ([1])), Birds (2009/147/EC ([2])) and Habitats (92/43/EEC ([3])) Directives.

Each seminar was attended by approximately 25 national judges and prosecutors. The training modules and further explanations can be found here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/law/judges.htm

This training programme runs at least until 2016. Natura 2000 may be the subject of further seminars.

([1]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.
([2]) OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([3]) OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005347/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Vooruitgang bij de tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" stelt de Commissie dat de lidstaten, bijgestaan door de Commissie, tegen 2014 de staat van ecosystemen en ecosysteemdiensten op hun nationale grondgebied in kaart brengen en deze evalueren, de economische waarde van die diensten bepalen en de opname daarvan in systemen voor boekhouding en rapportage op nationaal en EU-niveau tegen 2020 bevorderen.

Hoe staat het met deze evaluaties? Verwacht de Commissie alles tegen 2014 in kaart te hebben gebracht en geëvalueerd? Oefent de Commissie druk uit op die lidstaten die onvoldoende meewerken? Kan de Commissie openbaar maken welke lidstaten er onvoldoende meewerken?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(16 juni 2014)

Het in kaart brengen en beoordelen van de ecosystemen en ecosysteemdiensten (MAES) worden momenteel uitgevoerd door de lidstaten, die worden bijgestaan door de Commissie en het Europees Milieuagentschap (EMA). De resultaten worden eind 2014 verwacht.

De Commissie en het EMA steunen de lidstaten via de MAES-werkgroep, en stellen instrumenten en deskundigheid ter beschikking, in het bijzonder op het gebied van modellering en kartering.

In juni 2014 hebben twee lidstaten (Spanje en het Verenigd Koninkrijk) hun nationale beoordelingen van biofysische ecosystemen al voltooid als nationale overheidsinitiatieven. Een meerderheid van de lidstaten is ook begonnen aan het in kaart brengen en beoordelen en heeft meegedaan/bijgedragen aan het gezamenlijke voorbereidende werk met de Commissie. De Commissie beschouwt MAES-werkzaamheden als prioriteit en zal lidstaten blijven stimuleren actief aan het proces deel te nemen, ter ondersteuning van een doeltreffende tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie.

De tot op heden behaalde resultaten werden op 22 mei 2014 in Brussel gepresenteerd tijdens de MAES-conferentie op hoog niveau, waar alle lidstaten werden aangespoord om hun betrokkenheid bij het proces te versterken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005347/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of 3 May 2011 (COM(2011)0244), the Commission states that Member States, with the assistance of the Commission, will map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory by 2014, assess the economic value of such services, and promote the integration of these values into accounting and reporting systems at EU and national level by 2020.

What is the status of these assessments? Is the Commission expecting to have everything mapped and assessed by 2014? Is the Commission putting pressure on those Member States that are not cooperating sufficiently? Can the Commission make public which Member States are not cooperating sufficiently?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(16 June 2014)

The work on Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES) is currently being carried out by Member States with the assistance of the Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA). The results are expected to be finalised at the end of 2014.

The Commission and the EEA support Member States via the dedicated MAES working group and by providing tools and expertise, in particular on modelling and mapping.

As of June 2014, two Member States (Spain and UK) have already completed their national biophysical ecosystem assessments as national government initiatives. A majority of Member States are also in the process of carrying out mapping and assessment work and have participated/contributed to the joint preparatory work with the Commission. The Commission considers MAES work a priority and will continue to stimulate active Member State engagement in the process, in support of the effective implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

Achievements to date were presented at the MAES high-level conference held on 22 May 2014 in Brussels, where all Member States were encouraged to step up their engagement in the process.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005348/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Vooruitgang bij de tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" stelt de Commissie dat zij de bijdrage van het handelsbeleid aan de instandhouding van de biodiversiteit verhoogt en potentiële negatieve effecten aanpakt door de biodiversiteitsproblematiek systematisch aan de orde te stellen bij onderhandelingen en besprekingen over handel met derde landen en door potentiële effecten van de liberalisering van het handelsverkeer en investeringen op te sporen en te beoordelen via handelsgerelateerde duurzaamheidseffectbeoordelingen vooraf en evaluaties achteraf en dat zij ernaar streeft in alle nieuwe handelsovereenkomsten een hoofdstuk over duurzame ontwikkeling op te nemen met substantiële milieubepalingen die van belang zijn in de context van het handelsverkeer, met inbegrip van biodiversiteitsdoelstellingen.

Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van die tot dusver verhoogde bijdrage? Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van de handelsovereenkomsten waarin een hoofdstuk over duurzame ontwikkeling is opgenomen? Kan de Commissie informatie verschaffen over het aantal recente handelsovereenkomsten zonder een hoofdstuk over duurzame ontwikkeling? En zo ja, kan de Commissie uitleggen hoe dat kan?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(26 juni 2014)

In alle bilaterale handelsovereenkomsten die de EU recentelijk heeft gesloten (zoals met Zuid-Korea, Midden-Amerika, Colombia en Peru) of die zich in de afrondende fase bevinden (Georgië, Moldavië) zijn bepalingen opgenomen inzake duurzame ontwikkeling, met inbegrip van biodiversiteit. Die bepalingen hebben in het bijzonder betrekking op naleving van cruciale internationale arbeids- en milieunormen en -overeenkomsten, het verstandig gebruik van natuurlijke hulpbronnen als hout en vis en het bevorderen van praktijken die gunstig zijn voor duurzame ontwikkeling, zoals maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen en eerlijke en ethische handel.

De EU heeft voorgesteld bepalingen over duurzame ontwikkeling en biodiversiteit op te nemen in de handelsovereenkomsten waarover momenteel wordt onderhandeld (zoals met Canada, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, de VS en Vietnam).

De Europese Commissie maakt een zorgvuldige analyse van de mogelijke gevolgen van handelsovereenkomsten voor de verwezenlijking van de economische, sociale en milieudoelstellingen (waaronder die over biodiversiteit) door middel van duurzaamheidseffectbeoordelingen.

Om deze bepalingen doeltreffend uit te kunnen voeren komt de EU regelmatig samen met de landen waarmee de overeenkomsten zijn gesloten. De eerste ontmoeting in het kader van de handelsovereenkomst met Zuid-Korea vond plaats in juli 2012, en de eerste ontmoeting in het kader van de handelsovereenkomst EU-Colombia-Peru vond plaats in februari 2014. Het maatschappelijk middenveld speelt een belangrijke rol en is nauw betrokken bij het toezicht op en de uitvoering van deze bepalingen, en helpt zo mee problemen en toekomstige actiegebieden te identificeren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005348/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of 3 May 2011 (COM(2011)0244), the Commission states that it will enhance the contribution of trade policy to conserving biodiversity and address potential negative impacts by systematically including it as part of trade negotiations and dialogues with third countries, by identifying and evaluating potential impacts on biodiversity resulting from the liberalisation of trade and investment through ex-ante Trade Sustainability Impact Assessments and *ex-post* evaluations, and seek to include in all new trade agreements a chapter on sustainable development providing for substantial environmental provisions of importance in the trade context including on biodiversity goals.

Can the Commission give an overview of enhancements that have been achieved so far? Can the Commission give an overview of trade agreements that include a chapter on sustainability? Can the Commission also give information on the number of recent trade agreements without a sustainability chapter? If there are any, can the Commission explain why?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

All bilateral trade agreements recently concluded by the EU (e.g. South Korea, Central America, Colombia and Peru) or in the process of conclusion (Georgia, Moldova) contain provisions on Sustainable Development including biodiversity. These cover in particular adherence to key international labour and environment standards and agreements, the prudent use of natural resources such as timber and fish, and the promotion of practices favouring sustainable development such as Corporate Social Responsibility and fair and ethical trade schemes.

The EU has proposed the inclusion of provisions on sustainable development and biodiversity in trade agreements under negotiation (e.g. with Canada, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, USA and Vietnam).

The European Commission carefully examines the potential effects of trade agreements on the pursuit of economic, social and environmental goals (including on biodiversity) through Sustainability Impact Assessments.

In order for these provisions to be effectively implemented, the EU regularly meets partner countries with which it has concluded agreements. The first meeting under the EU-Korea trade agreement took place in July 2012 while the first meeting under the EU-Colombia-Peru agreement took place in February 2014. Civil society has an important role and is closely associated with the monitoring and implementation of these provisions, thus helping to identify issues and future areas of action.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-005349/14
aan de Commissie
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 april 2014)

Betreft: Vooruitgang bij de tenuitvoerlegging van de EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie

In haar mededeling „Onze levensverzekering, ons natuurlijk kapitaal: een EU-biodiversiteitsstrategie voor 2020" stelt de Commissie dat zij haar activiteiten op het gebied van ontwikkelingssamenwerking systematisch blijft screenen om alle negatieve effecten op de biodiversiteit tot een minimum te beperken en strategische milieueffectbeoordelingen en/of milieubeoordelingen ondernemen voor activiteiten waarvan de kans groot is dat ze aanzienlijke effecten op de biodiversiteit hebben.

Kan de Commissie informatie verschaffen over deze screening en de resultaten ervan? Heeft het geleid tot significante wijziging van de EU-activiteiten op het gebied van ontwikkelingssamenwerking?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(20 juni 2014)

Sinds 2007 heeft de EU-ontwikkelingshulp (EuropeAid) een alomvattende benadering ontwikkeld ten aanzien van de integratie van milieu- en klimaatverandering in al haar activiteiten („mainstreaming"). De screeningprocedure voor milieu- en klimaatrisico maakt nu volledig deel uit van het beheer van de project- en programmacyclus (PPCM), waarbij de identificatie en formulering van ieder project of programma wordt onderworpen aan een verplichte screening. Afhankelijk van het resultaat van de screening kan een milieueffectbeoordeling (EIA) of een strategische milieubeoordeling (SEA) vereist zijn.

In het kader van een studie waartoe in oktober 2013 opdracht is gegeven zal een algehele evaluatie worden verricht van het Thematisch Programma milieu en natuurlijke hulpbronnen (ENRTP) in het meerjarig financiële kader van 2007-2013, en zal een beoordeling worden gemaakt van de mainstreaming inspanningen voor alle instrumenten voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking, waarbij de aandacht hoofdzakelijk wordt geconcentreerd op twee sectoren: landbouw en infrastructuur. Deze studie zal naar verwachting duren tot eind 2014.

Een steekproef van acht SEA's werd onderzocht in een eerdere studie (december 2010) over voorgestelde beleidsmaatregelen, plannen of programma's (PPP). In de studie werd erop gewezen dat deze beoordelingen cruciaal zijn voor de verbetering van die PPP's en voor het bewustzijn en de debatten op belangrijke milieu- en klimaatterreinen, zowel binnen de Commissie als in de dialoog met partnerlanden en -instellingen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005349/14
to the Commission
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Progress in implementation of EU biodiversity strategy

In its communication 'Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020' of 3 May 2011 (COM(2011)0244), the Commission states that it will continue to systematically screen its development cooperation action to minimise any negative impact on biodiversity, and undertake strategic environmental assessments and/or environmental impact assessments for actions likely to have significant effects on biodiversity.

Can the Commission provide information about this screening and its results? Has it led to a significant change in the EU's development cooperation action?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

Since 2007, the EU's development cooperation (EuropeAid) has developed a comprehensive approach toward the integration of environment and climate change into all its actions ('mainstreaming'). The Environment and Climate Risk screening procedure is now fully part of the Project and Programme Cycle Management (PPCM), where the identification and formulation of every single project or programme is subject to compulsory screening. Depending on the outcome of the screening, an environmental impact assessment (EIA) or a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) may be required.

A study commissioned in October 2013 will carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the Environment and Natural Resources Thematic Programme (ENRTP) within the 2007-2013 multi-annual financial framework and review mainstreaming efforts made across all the development cooperation instruments, focusing essentially on two sectors: agriculture and infrastructure. This study is expected to be completed by the end of 2014.

An earlier study (December 2010) reviewed a sample of eight SEAs which had been commissioned on proposed policies, plans or programmes (PPP). The study highlighted the critical influence these assessments had on the improvement of those PPP as well as on awareness and debates regarding key environment- or climate-related issues, within the Commission as well as in the dialogue with partner countries and institutions.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005353/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Κλείδωμα κινητών τηλεφώνων (kill switch)

Τα έξυπνα κινητά τηλέφωνα (smartphones) είναι εξαιρετικά δημοφιλή στους καταναλωτές της ΕΕ και αποτελούν συνήθη στόχο για κλέφτες, καθώς αξίζουν εκατοντάδες ευρώ το καθένα. Μόνο στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο εκλάπησαν πέρσι περισσότερες από 100 000 συσκευές, ενώ σύμφωνα με την Ομοσπονδιακή Επιτροπή Επικοινωνιών των ΗΠΑ, το 30 με 40% των ληστειών σε μεγάλες πόλεις των ΗΠΑ αφορούσαν smartphones. Παρόλο που τα κλεμμένα smartphones μπορούν να περιληφθούν σε «μαύρη λίστα» από τις εταιρείες κινητής τηλεφωνίας και να αχρηστευθούν, τα τηλέφωνα αυτά συνήθως πωλούνται σε υπερπόντιες χώρες (στην Αφρική ή την Κίνα) ή απλώς παραβιάζονται για να διαγραφούν τα στοιχεία τους.

Προκειμένου να αντιμετωπιστεί αυτό το ανησυχητικό φαινόμενο, οι ειδικοί πρότειναν έναν μηχανισμό «αυτοκαταστροφής» που θα κλειδώνει τα κινητά τηλέφωνα και θα τα αχρηστεύει οριστικά. Πρόσφατα, το Κογκρέσο των ΗΠΑ πρότεινε νομοθεσία η οποία θα απαιτεί από τους κατασκευαστές συσκευών κινητών τηλεφώνων να τις εξοπλίζουν με τη δυνατότητα οριστικής απενεργοποίησης σε περίπτωση κλοπής.

1. Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή στατιστικά στοιχεία για την έκταση των κλοπών smartphones και τη συμβολή τους στα συνολικά ποσοστά εγκληματικότητας; Διαθέτει η Επιτροπή στατιστικά στοιχεία σχετικά με την αποτελεσματικότητα των ισχυόντων μέτρων (π.χ. μαύρες λίστες των εταιρειών κινητής τηλεφωνίας) για την αντιμετώπιση του προβλήματος;

2. Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά τη θέσπιση νομοθεσίας σε επίπεδο ΕΕ με την οποία θα απαιτείται από τους κατασκευαστές smartphones να καθιερώσουν μηχανισμό «αυτοκαταστροφής»;

3. Ποια είναι η θέση της Επιτροπής όσον αφορά τη θέσπιση νομοθεσίας σε επίπεδο ΕΕ με την οποία θα απαιτείται από τους κατασκευαστές να εξοπλίζουν τα smartphones με μια υπηρεσία διαγραφής δεδομένων από απόσταση, η οποία θα επιτρέπει στους καταναλωτές της ΕΕ που υπήρξαν θύματα κλοπής smartphone να διαγράφουν από απόσταση τα προσωπικά τους δεδομένα και να προστατεύονται από την κλοπή ταυτότητας;

4. Υπήρξε οποιοσδήποτε συντονισμός με τους ομολόγους μας στις ΗΠΑ σχετικά με το ζήτημα (λαμβανομένου υπόψη ότι ένας ομοσπονδιακός νόμος των ΗΠΑ θα ίσχυε και για κατασκευαστές smartphones στην ΕΕ οι οποίοι κατασκευάζουν συσκευές για την αγορά των ΗΠΑ);

Απάντηση της κ. Kroes εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(13 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή δεν διαθέτει στατιστικά στοιχεία που να καταγράφουν την έκταση των κλοπών «έξυπνων τηλεφώνων» (smartphone), καθώς και τη συμβολή τους στα συνολικά ποσοστά εγκληματικότητας.

Η καλύτερη γνωστή λύση, αυτή της καταχώρισης από τους φορείς εκμετάλλευσης δικτύου σε «μαύρη λίστα» των κλεμμένων «έξυπνων τηλεφώνων» και της συνακόλουθης θέσης τους σε αχρησία πρέπει να αποθαρρύνουν την κλοπή των εν λόγω συσκευών. Η λίστα αυτή φυλάσσεται στο κεντρικό μητρώο ταυτότητας εξοπλισμού για τους φορείς εκμετάλλευσης δικτύων, ούτως ώστε για τις συσκευές για τις οποίες έχει απαγορευτεί η πρόσβαση (καταχωρισμένες στη μαύρη λίστα) σε ορισμένο δίκτυο να μπορεί να απαγορευτεί η πρόσβαση σε άλλα δίκτυα. Η συνεργασία κυβερνήσεων και υπηρεσιών επιβολής του νόμου με την κοινότητα των φορέων εκμετάλλευσης του δικτύου συνεχίζεται σε ορισμένες αγορές όπου η κλοπή της συσκευής θεωρείται πρόβλημα, ενώ και η ένωση φορέων εκμετάλλευσης κινητής τηλεφωνίας (GSMA) ενθαρρύνει τη μέγιστη χρήση του μητρώου. Τούτο όμως δεν είναι πλέον επαρκές για να αποθαρρύνει την κλοπή, διότι τα τηλέφωνα αυτά μπορούν πράγματι να πωληθούν σε τρίτες χώρες ή απλώς να παραβιασθούν προκειμένου να διαγραφεί η ταυτότητά τους.

Ένα υλισμικό «kill switch» (διακοπής της πρόσβασης) για κινητά τηλέφωνα που θα μπορούσε να τα αδρανοποιήσει σε μόνιμη βάση είναι μια απλή τεχνική λύση που προτάθηκε από τους εμπειρογνώμονες. Ενδέχεται να υπάρχουν άλλες τεχνικές λύσεις. Η Επιτροπή έχει μέχρι στιγμής προωθήσει οριζόντιες και επί τη βάσει αρχών προσεγγίσεις και όχι μέτρα που συνδέονται άμεσα με την τεχνολογία. Επί του παρόντος, η Επιτροπή δεν προτίθεται να θεσπίσει νομοθεσία που να καθιστά υποχρεωτική τη χρήση υλισμικού «kill switch» (διακοπής της πρόσβασης).

Σύμφωνα με την ισχύουσα οδηγία για την προστασία δεδομένων (ΕΚ 95/46) και εξαιτίας της ευρύτερης εξάπλωσης των «έξυπνων τηλεφώνων» που διαθέτουν υπηρεσίες αποθήκευσης δεδομένων προσωπικού χαρακτήρα, η Επιτροπή ενθαρρύνει τους παρόχους κινητών χειροσυσκευών και τους φορείς εκμετάλλευσης κινητής τηλεφωνίας να καθιερώσουν μια λειτουργία «wipe-all» (συνολικής διαγραφής) η οποία θα καθιστά δυνατή την οριστική διαγραφή όλων των ευαίσθητων δεδομένων που υπάρχουν στην κινητή χειροσυσκευή, όταν είναι αναγκαίο.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005353/14
to the Commission
Ioannis A. Tsoukalas (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Kill switch for mobile phones

Smartphones are extremely popular amongst EU consumers and, with a value of several hundred euro each, are common targets for thieves and pickpockets. In the UK alone, more than 100 000 devices were stolen last year, while, according to the US Federal Communications Commission, 30% to 40% of robberies in major US cities involve smartphones. Although stolen phones can be 'blacklisted' by mobile carriers, making them useless, these phones are usually sold overseas (to Africa or China) or simply hacked in order to erase their identity.

In order to tackle this worrying phenomenon, experts have proposed a hardware 'kill switch' for mobile phones that would incapacitate them permanently. Recently, the US Congress proposed legislation that would require those that make cellular devices to equip them with the ability to be permanently deactivated if stolen.

1. Does the Commission have any statistics measuring the extent of smartphone thefts and how these contribute to overall criminality rates? Does the Commission have any statistics on the effectiveness that current measures (like carrier blacklisting) have on tackling the issue?

2. What is the Commission's position on passing legislation at EU level that would require smartphone makers to introduce a hardware 'kill switch'.

3. What is the Commission's position on passing legislation at EU level that would require smartphone makers to equip smartphones with a 'remote wipe' service that would enable EU consumers that have been victims of smartphone theft to remotely wipe their private data and protect themselves from identity theft?

4. Has there been any kind of coordination with our US counterparts on this issue (taking into consideration that a possible US federal law would also apply to EU smartphone producers that make phones for the US market)?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The Commission does not have statistics measuring the extent of smartphone thefts and how these contribute to the overal criminality rates.

The best known solution of blacklisting the stolen smartphone by network operators and making them useless should discourage the theft of these devices. This list is stored in the Central Equipment Identity Register for network operators so that devices denied service (blacklisted) by one network can be denied access on other networks. The engagement of governments and law enforcement agencies with the network operator community continues in a number of markets where handset theft is perceived to be a problem, and GSMA encourages maximal use of the register. But this is no longer sufficient to discourage theft because these phones can indeed be sold in third countries or simply hacked in order to erase their identity.

A hardware 'kill switch' for mobile phones that would incapacitate them permanently is a simple technical solution proposed by the experts. Other technical solutions may exist. The Commission has so far promoted horizontal and principle-based approaches rather than technology-specific measures. Currently the Commission has no plans to introduce legislation that would make a hardware kill switch mandatory.

In line with the existing data protection Directive (EC 95/46) and in the wake of a larger deployment of smartphones for services storing personal data, the Commission encourages handset providers and mobile operators to introduce a wipe-all functionality that would make it possible to permanently erase all the sensitive data on the mobile handset when needed.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005358/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(23 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Traffikar tal-bnedmin

It-traffikar tal-bnedmin huwa reat u ksur serju tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Spiss huwa marbut mal-kriminalità organizzata u huwa meqjus bħala waħda mill-aktar attivitajiet kriminali fid-dinja li minnha jiġi ġġenerat il-profitt. Il-Kummissjoni tikkalkula li l-għadd ta' persuni traffikati lejn jew fi ħdan l-UE jammonta għal bosta mijiet ta' eluf kull sena. L-approċċ tal-Kummissjoni lejn it-traffikar jiffoka fuq il-prevenzjoni, il-prosekuzzjoni tal-kriminali u l-protezzjoni tal-vittmi. Dan jirrifletti fid-direttiva l-ġdida dwar it-traffikar tal-bnedmin, li ġiet adottata fil-21 ta' Marzu 2011. Din tistabbilixxi dispożizzjonijiet robusti dwar il-protezzjoni tal-vittmi u tappoġġa l-prinċipji li ma jingħatawx pieni għal reati żgħar u li tingħata assistenza mingħajr kundizzjonijiet.

Ir-Rapport intitolat "It-Traffikar tal-Persuni (TiP)" jiġi ppubblikat mill-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika kull sena. Il-pajjiżi kollha huma miġbura fi gradi differenti, bl-ewwel grad jinkludi dawk il-pajjiżi li l-gvernijiet tagħhom huma kompletament konformi mal-istandards mininimi fir-rigward tat-traffikar tal-bnedmin. Madankollu, hemm Stati Membri tal-UE li tpoġġew fit-tieni grad.

Il-Kummissjoni għandha xi pjanijiet biex tħejji rapport TiP proprja tagħha? Fir-rigward ta' din il-kwestjoni, Il-Kummissjoni tqis li għandha rwol proprju tagħha fl-iffaċilitar u l-iskambju tal-aħjar prattiki bejn l-Istati Membri?

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005469/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Traffikar tal-bnedmin

It-traffikar tal-bnedmin huwa delitt serju u ksur kbir tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem. Ta' spiss ikun marbut mal-kriminalità organizzata u jitqies bħala waħda mill-attivitajiet kriminali li l-aktar tħalli qligħ madwar id-dinja. Il-Kummissjoni tipprevedi li l-għadd ta' persuni li jiġu traffikati lejn jew fi ħdan l-UE jammonta għal bosta mijiet ta' eluf fis-sena. L-approċċ tal-Kummissjoni għat-traffikar jiffoka fuq il-prevenzjoni, il-prosekuzzjoni ta' kriminali u l-protezzjoni ta' vittmi. Dan hu rifless fid-direttiva l-ġdida dwar it-traffikar tal-bnedmin, li ġiet adottata fil-21 ta' Marzu 2011. Din tistabbilixxi dispożizzjonijiet robusti dwar il-protezzjoni tal-vittmi u tappoġġja l-prinċipji li ma jingħatawx pieni għal reati żgħar u li tingħata assistenza mingħajr kundizzjonijiet.

Ir-Rapport intitolat "It-Traffikar tal-Persuni (TiP)" jiġi ppubblikat kull sena mill-Istati Uniti tal-Amerika. Il-pajjiżi kollha huma miġbura fi gradi differenti, bl-ewwel grad jinkludi dawk il-pajjiżi li l-gvernijiet tagħhom huma kompletament konformi mal-istandards minimi fir-rigward tat-traffikar tal-bnedmin. Madankollu, dawn l-Istati Membri tal-UE li ġejjin tqiegħdu fit-tieni grad: il-Bulgarija, il-Kroazja, Ċipru, l-Estonja, il-Greċja, l-Ungerija, il-Latvja, il-Litwanja, Malta, il-Portugall u r-Rumanija.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' telabora dwar jekk tqisx li r-rapport TiP jagħti deskrizzjoni ġusta u preċiża tas-sitwazzjoni fil-konfront tal-Istati Membri tal-UE msemmija hawn fuq, li ġew ikklassifikati fit-tieni grad? Il-Kummissjoni kellha xi taħdidiet mal-Istati Uniti u mal-ħdax-il Stat Membru tal-UE msemmija dwar din il-kwistjoni? Jekk dan mhuwiex il-każ, hemm xi pjan li dawn isiru fil-futur qarib?

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni x'azzjoni ulterjuri, dejjem jekk hemm bżonn, tqis li hija meħtieġa sabiex il-ħdax-il Stat Membru tal-UE li ġew ikklassifikati fit-tieni grad jissodisfaw ir-rakkomandazzjonijiet li saru fir-rigward tat-traffikar tal-bnedmin?

Tweġiba konġunta mogħtija mis-Sinjura Malmström f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-UE u l-Istati Uniti jkollhom diskussjonijiet regolari dwar il-kwistjoni ta' Traffikar tal-Bnedmin.

L-UE għandha l-istrumenti ġuridiċi u l-qafas ta' politika tagħha biex jiġi indirizzat it-Traffikar ta-Bnedmin. L-Istati Membri għandhom obbligu ġuridiku biex jimplimentaw id-Direttiva 2011/36/UE dwar il-prevenzjoni u l-ġlieda kontra t-traffikar tal-bnedmin u l-protezzjoni tal-vittmi tiegħu ([1]). Id-Direttiva tipprovdi għal mekkaniżmi ta' rapportar. Il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qiegħda teżamina miżuri ta' traspożizzjoni nnotifikati mill-Istati Membri. Kif meħtieġ mill-Artikolu 19 tad-Direttiva, l-Istati Membri għandhom jistabbilixxu Relaturi Nazzjonali jew Mekkaniżmi Ekwivalenti biex iwettqu, fost kompiti oħrajn, rapportar u ġbir ta' dejta, f'kooperazzjoni ma' organizzazzjonijiet tas-soċjetà ċivili. Skont l-Artikolu 20, tali informazzjoni għandha tiġi trażmessa lill-Koordinatur ta' Kontra t-Traffikar, li jipprovdi orjentazzjoni ta' politika strateġika ġenerali. Skont l-Artikolu 23, il-Kummissjoni se tissottometti rapport lill-PE u lill-Kunsill sa April 2015, li jivvaluta l-punt sa fejn l-Istati Membri jkunu ħadu l-miżuri neċessarji biex jikkonformaw ma' din id-Direttiva, jekk meħtieġa, minn proposti leġiżlattivi. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tuża r-rapporti TIP tal-Istati Uniti bħala sorsi ta' informazzjoni. L-Istrateġija tal-UE lejn l-Eradikazzjoni tat-Traffikar tal-Bnedmin 2012 — 2016 ([2]) tikkumplimenta l-qafas ġuridiku. Il-Kummissjoni se tippreżenta rapport ta' nofs it-terminu dwar l-implimentazzjoni tagħha fil-ħarifa 2014.

Il-Kummissjoni torganizza laqgħat biannwali mal-NREMs ([3]) għall-iskambju tal-esperjenzi u l-aħjar prattiki. Il-Parlament Ewropew huwa sistematikament mitlub jipparteċipa bħala osservatur.

L-aħħar laqgħa saret mis-6 sas-7 ta' Mejju 2014.

([1]) Id-Direttiva 2011/36/UE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-5 ta' April 2011 dwar il-prevenzjoni u l-ġlieda kontra t-traffikar tal-bnedmin u l-protezzjoni tal-vittmi tiegħu, u li tissostitwixxi d-Deċiżjoni Qafas tal-Kunsill 2002/629/ĠAI; ĠU L 15.04, 15.4.2011, L 101.

([2]) COM(2012) 286 finali .

([3]) Netwerk Informali tal-UE ta' Relaturi Nazzjonali jew Mekkaniżmi Ekwivalenti kontra t-Traffikar tal-Bnedmin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005358/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Trafficking in human beings

Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights. It is very often linked with organised crime and is considered as one of the most profitable criminal activities worldwide. The Commission estimates that the number of people trafficked to or within the EU amounts to several hundred thousand a year. The Commission's approach to trafficking focuses on prevention, prosecution of criminals and protection of victims. This is reflected in the new directive on trafficking in human beings, which was adopted on 21 March 2011. It establishes robust provisions on victims' protection and supports the principle of non-punishment for petty crimes and unconditional assistance.

The Trafficking in Persons (TiP) Report is published by the United States of America on a yearly basis. All countries are grouped in different tiers, with tier one being those countries whose governments fully comply with minimum standards in the trafficking of human beings. However, there are Member States which have been placed in the second tier.

Does the Commission have any plans to prepare its own TiP report? Does the Commission see a role for itself in facilitating the exchange of best practice between the Member States on this issue?

Question for written answer E-005469/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Trafficking in human beings

Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights. It is very often linked to organised crime and is considered to be one of the most profitable criminal activities worldwide. The Commission estimates that the number of people trafficked to or within the EU amounts to several hundred thousand a year. The Commission's approach to trafficking focuses on prevention, prosecution of criminals and protection of victims. This is reflected in the new directive on trafficking in human beings, which was adopted on 21 March 2011. It establishes robust provisions on victims' protection and supports the principles of non-punishment for petty crimes and of unconditional assistance.

The Trafficking in Persons (TiP) Report is published by the United States of America on a yearly basis. All countries are grouped into different tiers, with tier 1 comprising those countries whose governments fully comply with minimum standards as regards the trafficking of human beings. However, the following EU Member States have been placed in the second tier: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal and Romania.

Could the Commission elaborate as to whether it considers the TiP Report to give a fair and accurate description of the situation *vis-à-vis* the abovementioned EU Member States, which have been placed in tier 2? Has the Commission held any talks with the US or the 11 EU Member States in question on this issue? If not, are any planned for the near future?

Moreover, what further action, if any, does the Commission consider to be necessary in order for the 11 EU Member States which have been placed in tier 2 to fulfil the recommendations made with regard to the trafficking of human beings?

Joint answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The EU and the US hold regular discussions on the issue of Trafficking in Human Beings (THB).

The EU has its own legal instruments and policy framework addressing THB. Member States have a legal obligation to implement Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims ([1]). The directive provides for reporting mechanisms. The Commission is now examining transposition measures notified by the Member States. As required by Article 19 of the directive, Member States must establish National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms to carry out, among other tasks, reporting and data collection, in cooperation with civil society organisations. Under Article 20, such information is to be transmitted to the Anti-trafficking Coordinator, who provides overall strategic policy orientation. Under Article 23, the Commission will submit a report to the EP and Council by April 2015, assessing the extent to which the Member States have taken necessary measures to comply with the directive, accompanied, if needed, by legislative proposals. The Commission may use US TIP reports as sources of information. The EU Strategy towards the Eradication of THB 2012-2016 ([2]) complements the legal framework. The Commission will present a mid-term report on its implementation in autumn 2014.

The Commission organises biannual meetings with the NREMs ([3]) to exchange experiences and best practices. The European Parliament is systematically invited to participate as an observer.

The latest meeting was held on 6-7 May 2014.

([1]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5.4.2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ L 101, 15.4.2011.

([2]) COM(2012) 286 final.

([3]) Informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms against Trafficking in Human Beings.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005359/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad — Ucrania

Considerando los últimos acontecimientos devenidos en Ucrania y los que están acaeciendo todavía en estos días, y la realidad que llevó a que los acuerdos con la Unión Europea, específicamente el Acuerdo de Asociación iniciado en marzo de 2012, con vistas a un futuro de integración dentro de la Unión, sean, no ya papel mojado, sino de imposible aplicación en esta situación de abierta guerra civil;

Considerando la injerencia que la Federación de Rusia sigue llevando a cabo dentro de la soberanía de Ucrania, atentando contra la legalidad internacional reconocida, promoviendo o amparando el secesionismo o incluso promoviendo la inestabilidad dentro de ese país soberano;

Teniendo en cuenta el proceso de reformas en el que estaba inmersa esta república y los pasos que estaba dando en aras de una estabilidad interna y un desarrollo de sus instrumentos democráticos;

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, ¿qué medidas se deberían adoptar en opinión de la Alta Representante para encauzar una política de apoyo real al Gobierno y al Parlamento de Ucrania, para poder establecer una normalidad democrática y, sobre todo, una salvaguarda de sus ciudadanos?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de junio de 2014)

La UE mantiene su firme compromiso de reforzar la asociación política y la integración económica con Ucrania y anima a todas las partes a contribuir a la distensión.

Las acciones de los separatistas armados a gran escala en Ucrania se limitan, de hecho, a unas pocas regiones del país. Por lo tanto, la aplicación del Acuerdo de Asociación sigue siendo viable y contribuirá a la estabilidad y la prosperidad, sobre todo de medio a largo plazo. En colaboración con otros socios internacionales, la UE prestará asistencia para ayudar a estabilizar el país, así como para apoyar el programa de reforma y aumentar la responsabilización de las autoridades ucranianas.

Las medidas de la UE combinadas podrían aportar una ayuda global de al menos 11 000 millones EUR a lo largo de los próximos años. Cabe destacar 3 000 millones EUR del presupuesto de la UE en los próximos años: 1 600 millones EUR en préstamos de asistencia macrofinanciera y un paquete de subvenciones de 1 400 millones EUR. También están previstos hasta 8 000 millones EUR del Banco Europeo de Inversiones y del Banco Europeo de Reconstrucción y Desarrollo, así como unos posibles 3 500 millones EUR al amparo del Instrumento de Inversión de la Política de Vecindad. Un primer tramo de 100 millones EUR en concepto de ayuda macrofinanciera se desembolsó el 20 de mayo.

La UE se ha comprometido a firmar las disposiciones restantes del Acuerdo de Asociación, que incluye una zona de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo, tan pronto como sea posible después de las elecciones presidenciales del 25 de mayo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005359/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy: Ukraine

Recent and ongoing events have plunged Ukraine into a state of upheaval, and agreements designed to facilitate future integration with the EU — specifically the Association Agreement initialled in March 2012 — are, if not a dead letter, at least at least impossible to implement in the current climate of open civil war.

Russia is constantly undermining Ukraine's sovereignty — a violation of established international law which is fanning the flames of secessionism and even threatening the country's stability.

Ukraine had initiated a reform process and was moving towards internal stability and greater democracy.

In view of this, can the High Representative say what strategies need to be adopted to provide genuine support for the Ukrainian Government and Parliament in a bid to establish a democratic order and, above all, protect the citizens of Ukraine?

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

The EU remains firmly committed to closer political association and economic integration with Ukraine and is encouraging all sides to contribute to de-escalation.

Large-scale armed separatists' actions in Ukraine are in fact limited to only a few regions of Ukraine. Implementation of the Association Agreement therefore remains feasible, and will help bring stability and prosperity notably in the medium to long term. In coordination with other international partners, the EU will provide assistance to help stabilise the country as well as support the reform programme and further enhance ownership by the Ukrainian authorities.

EU measures combined could bring overall support of at least EUR 11 billion over the coming years. Highlights include EUR 3 billion from the EU budget in the coming years: EUR 1.6 billion in macro financial assistance loans and an assistance package of grants of EUR 1.4 billion. Up to EUR 8 billion from the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as a potential EUR 3.5 billion leveraged through the Neighbourhood Investment Facility, are also envisaged. A first tranche of EUR 100 million in Macro-Financial Assistance was disbursed on 20 May.

The EU is committed to signing remaining provisions of the Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, as soon as possible after the 25 May Presidential elections.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005360/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad — Ucrania

Considerando los últimos acontecimientos devenidos en Ucrania y los que están acaeciendo todavía en estos días, y la realidad que llevó a que los acuerdos con la Unión Europea, específicamente el Acuerdo de Asociación iniciado en marzo de 2012, con vistas a un futuro de integración dentro de la Unión, sean, no ya papel mojado, sino de imposible aplicación en esta situación de abierta guerra civil;

Considerando la injerencia que la Federación de Rusia sigue llevando a cabo dentro de la soberanía de Ucrania, atentando contra la legalidad internacional reconocida, promoviendo o amparando el secesionismo o incluso promoviendo la inestabilidad dentro de ese país soberano;

Teniendo en cuenta el proceso de reformas en el que estaba inmersa esta república y los pasos que estaba dando en aras de una estabilidad interna y un desarrollo de sus instrumentos democráticos;

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, ¿qué medidas se deberían adoptar para encauzar una política de apoyo real al Gobierno y al Parlamento de Ucrania, para poder establecer una normalidad democrática y, sobre todo, una salvaguarda de sus ciudadanos?

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de julio de 2014)

Los acontecimientos han evolucionado considerablemente desde que se planteó la pregunta, y la situación cambia a diario. El primer ministro Yatsenyuk firmó, el 21 de marzo, las disposiciones políticas del acuerdo de asociación ([1]), y el nuevo presidente electo Petro Poroshenko firmará en los próximos días el acuerdo íntegro, incluido el acuerdo de libre comercio de alcance amplio y profundo.

Tal y como se señala en la declaración de los Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno de 27 de mayo, la UE acoge favorablemente el Memorando de Paz y Concordia aprobado por el Parlamento ucraniano el 20 de mayo de 2014. La rápida realización de reformas constitucionales y de descentralización, recurriendo al asesoramiento del Consejo de Europa, es clave. Los esfuerzos de reforma relativos al poder judicial, la fiscalía, el sector de la seguridad y la lucha contra la corrupción deben continuar. La UE está dispuesta a apoyar dichos esfuerzos ([2]).

Seguimos prestando asistencia para ayudar a estabilizar la situación macroeconómica y llevar a cabo reformas estructurales. En marzo, la Comisión presentó un paquete financiero de 11 000 millones EUR. Posteriormente, ha creado un grupo de apoyo específico para ayudar a las autoridades a aplicar una agenda europea de reformas acordada conjuntamente, en coordinación con los Estados miembros, los donantes internacionales y la sociedad civil. Se ha establecido una plataforma internacional de donantes dirigida por la UE y, a principios de julio, se debería celebrar una reunión de coordinación de alto nivel en Bruselas. Se han tomado medidas, incluido el primer desembolso de ayuda macrofinanciera, cuyo importe asciende a 1 610 millones EUR, y la Comisión Europea y el Gobierno de Ucrania han firmado un Contrato de Consolidación Estatal. Puede acceder a más información sobre la ayuda de la UE, incluidas las medidas comerciales autónomas, a través de los enlaces que figuran más abajo ([3]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141733.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/142863.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005360/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Ukraine

Recent and ongoing events have plunged Ukraine into a state of upheaval, and agreements designed to facilitate future integration with the EU — specifically the Association Agreement initialled in March 2012 — are, if not a dead letter, at least at least impossible to implement in the current climate of open civil war.

Russia is constantly undermining Ukraine's sovereignty — a violation of established international law which is fanning the flames of secessionism and even threatening the country's stability.

Ukraine had initiated a reform process and was moving towards internal stability and greater democracy.

In view of this, what strategies need to be adopted to provide genuine support for the Ukrainian Government and Parliament in a bid to establish a democratic order and, above all, protect the citizens of Ukraine?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 2014)

Events have evolved considerably since the question was asked, and the situation changes daily. The political provisions of the Association Agreement were signed by Prime Minister Yatsenyuk on 21 March, ([1]) and the complete Agreement, including DCFTA, will be signed in the coming days by newly elected President Petro Poroshenko.

As noted in the 27 May Heads of State and Government statement, the EU welcomes the Memorandum of Peace and Concord adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament on 20 May 2014. The swift conduct of constitutional and de-centralisation reforms, drawing on the Council of Europe's expertise, is key. Reform efforts as regards the judiciary, the prosecutor's office, the security sector and the fight against corruption need to continue. The EU stands ready to support such efforts ([2]).

We continue to lend assistance to help stabilise the macroeconomic situation and conduct structural reforms. In March, the Commission put forward EUR 11 billion financial package. Subsequently, it has created a dedicated Support Group to help authorities implement a jointly agreed European Agenda for Reform, in coordination with Member States, international donors and civil society. An EU led international donors platform has been established and a high-level coordination meeting should be held in Brussels at the beginning of July. Measures have been deployed, including the first disbursement of macro-financial assistance totalling now EUR 1.61 billion and the signature of a State Building contract between the European Commission and the government of Ukraine. More details of EU support, including on autonomous trade measures can be found in the links below ([3]).

([1]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/141733.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/142863.pdf
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-279_en.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005361/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad: Túnez

En el marco del proceso de transición política e institucional que está viviendo Túnez:

¿Qué aspectos innovadores se conoce que se estén implementando con relación a las reformas relativas a la justicia para garantizar el ejercicio independiente de la misma, muy especialmente la relacionada con la justicia militar, donde parece que esta jurisdicción sigue prevaleciendo sobre la civil?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005362/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad: Túnez

En el marco del proceso de transición política e institucional que está viviendo Túnez:

¿Qué aspectos innovadores se conoce que se estén implementando con relación a las reformas relativas a la justicia para garantizar el ejercicio independiente de la misma, muy especialmente la relacionada con la justicia militar, donde parece que esta jurisdicción sigue prevaleciendo sobre la civil?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de junio de 2014)

La nueva Constitución tunecina, adoptada el 26 de enero de 2014, reconoce los principios de independencia del poder judicial, con arreglo a lo dispuesto en diferentes artículos (del artículo 102 al artículo 111). La independencia de los magistrados queda recogida en el artículo 102 y el artículo 109 prohíbe cualquier interferencia externa en el sistema judicial.

Además, Túnez aplicó en 2013 algunas medidas de cara a la reforma de su sistema judicial. Por ejemplo, se adoptó la Ley por la que se crea la «Instance Provisoire pour la Supervision de la Justice Judiciaire (IPSJ)» y se fundó dicha institución.

También se puso en marcha en 2013 la «Instance nationale de lutte contre la corruption». A raíz de la ratificación por parte de Túnez del Protocolo facultativo de la Convención contra la tortura y otros tratos o penas crueles, inhumanos o degradantes, se creó en 2013 la «Instance nationale de la prévention de la torture et autres peines ou traitements cruels, inhumains ou dégradants». Túnez es el primer país árabe en crear un organismo de ese tipo.

Mediante sus programas de cooperación, la UE se ha comprometido a apoyar el proceso de reforma del sector de la justicia, con arreglo a las normas internacionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005361/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy and Tunisia

Tunisia is going through a process of political and institutional transition.

In regard to reforms to the justice system in this context, what innovative aspects are known to be being implemented to ensure the independent working of the justice system, most particularly with regard to the military justice system where it seems that military jurisdiction continues to prevail over the civil one?

Question for written answer E-005362/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy and Tunisia

Tunisia is going through a process of political and institutional transition.

In regard to reforms to the justice system in this context, what innovative aspects are known to be being implemented to ensure the independent working of the justice system, most particularly with regard to the military justice system where it seems that military jurisdiction continues to prevail over the civil one?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(30 June 2014)

The new Tunisian constitution adopted on 26 January 2014 recognises the principles of independence of the judiciary, as specified in different articles (from Article 102 till Article 111). The independence of magistrates is stated in Article 102 and Article 109 prohibits any outside interference in the judiciary.

Moreover in 2013 Tunisia implemented some steps towards a reform of its justice system. For example the law creating the 'Instance Provisoire pour la Supervision de la Justice Judiciaire (IPSJ)' was adopted and the Instance was established.

Additionally 2013 saw the establishment of the 'Instance nationale de lutte contre la corruption'. Following the ratification by Tunisia of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), the 'Instance nationale de la prévention de la torture et autres peines ou traitements cruels, inhumains ou dégradants' was created in 2013. Tunisia is the first Arab country to create such a body.

Through its cooperation programmes the EU is committed to support the reform of the justice sector, according to international standards.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005363/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad y Jordania

En el marco de la cooperación UE-Jordania, ¿qué se está haciendo para mejorar y afianzar los derechos relativos a la libertad de expresión, uno de los derechos fundamentales de la UE, y, en concreto, en lo relacionado con los medios de comunicación?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005364/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad y Jordania

En el marco de la cooperación UE-Jordania, ¿qué se está haciendo para mejorar y afianzar los derechos relativos a la libertad de expresión, uno de los derechos fundamentales de la UE, y, en concreto, en lo relacionado con los medios de comunicación?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de junio de 2014)

Garantizar la libertad de expresión, reunión y asociación, así como reforzar la independencia de los medios de comunicación son prioridades clave en la cooperación entre la UE y Jordania. El Plan de Acción UE-Jordania de 2013 especifica varios ámbitos de cooperación para garantizar y fomentar este derecho fundamental. El informe de situación de la PEV de 2013 invita a Jordania a modificar las disposiciones pertinentes del Código Penal, de modo que las infracciones relativas a la libertad de expresión y la libertad de los medios de comunicación ya no se lleven ante el Tribunal de Seguridad del Estado. También hace hincapié en las enmiendas a la Ley de prensa y publicaciones, que entraron en vigor en junio de 2013 y que los medios de comunicación y la sociedad civil consideran que impone límites a la libertad de expresión.

La UE seguirá apoyando a la sociedad civil y a los medios de comunicación, en particular con un programa de 10 millones EUR. Este programa tiene por objeto fomentar las competencias y las infraestructuras necesarias para un sector de medios de comunicación independiente y de calidad, así como reforzar la capacidad de las organizaciones de las comunidades y de las organizaciones no gubernamentales para concienciar a los ciudadanos sobre la importancia de unos medios de comunicación independientes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005363/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy: Jordan

In the context of EU-Jordan cooperation, what is being done to bolster and guarantee freedom of expression (one of the fundamental rights of the EU) in Jordan, in particular for the media?

Question for written answer E-005364/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Jordan

In the context of EU-Jordan cooperation, what is being done to bolster and guarantee freedom of expression (one of the fundamental rights of the EU) in Jordan, in particular for the media?

Joint answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2014)

Ensuring the freedom of expression, assembly and association and enhancing the independence of the media is a key priority for action in the EU-Jordan cooperation. The 2013 EU/Jordan Action Plan specifies several areas of cooperation to ensure and promote this fundamental right. The 2013 ENP Progress Report invites Jordan to amend the relevant provisions of the Penal Code so that violations relating to freedom of expression and freedom of the media are no longer referred to the State Security Court. It also highlights the amendments to the press and publications law that entered into force in June 2013 and are viewed by media and civil society as imposing limits on freedom of expression.

The EU will continue to support civil society and media notably through a EUR 10 million programme. This programme aims to develop the skills and infrastructure needed for an independent, quality-based media sector, as well as to strengthen the capacity of community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations to build awareness among citizens of the importance of independent media.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005365/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad: Siria

Considerando la extensión de la catástrofe humana que el conflicto sirio sigue produciendo entre la población civil, y el apoyo explícito y material que la Unión está desarrollando para poder sustentar y fomentar el papel de la llamada sociedad civil como instrumento fundamental para estabilizar el país.

¿De qué manera se están llevando a cabo o planeando proyectos *ad hoc* para fortalecer el cometido de la mujer, puntal de cualquier sociedad, y que deje de ser considerada como un mero factor de vulnerabilidad? ¿Se está trabajando ya para que sea este colectivo el que pueda desempeñar un rol fundamental en esta emergencia compleja que están viviendo?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005366/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad: Siria

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Respuesta conjunta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de julio de 2014)

Habida cuenta de la dimensión humanitaria de la crisis siria, la UE y los Estados miembros de manera conjunta han presupuestado hasta el momento más de 2 800 millones EUR para acciones de ayuda humanitaria y al desarrollo en Siria y en los países vecinos, lo que convierte a la UE en el mayor donante de esta crisis. Algunos de los programas benefician a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, tanto en el contexto actual como en la preparación del periodo posconflicto. La UE está apoyando a organizaciones que trabajan en la capacitación de las organizaciones de la sociedad civil sirias en todo el país en los ámbitos de la justicia transicional, los derechos humanos, el diálogo por la paz, la movilización de la comunidad y la prestación de servicios sociales (educación, ayuda psicosocial, apoyo a los medios de subsistencia, etcétera). El empoderamiento de la mujer y la promoción de la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres se integra en la mayoría de estos proyectos.

La UE ha apoyado el papel activo de la sociedad civil siria, incluidas las organizaciones de mujeres, en la reconciliación nacional, la reconstrucción del país y la configuración de su futuro. Con este fin, la UE está dispuesta a seguir prestando apoyo a las mujeres sirias y a las organizaciones de mujeres, a través de la capacitación y la formación que les ayudarán a alcanzar estos objetivos.

Además, la Comisión financia varios proyectos humanitarios centrados específicamente en las mujeres de Siria y de los países vecinos donde residen un gran número de refugiados sirios. Dichos proyectos tratan temas como la prevención y la lucha contra la violencia de género. La financiación humanitaria se canaliza a través de los socios humanitarios con experiencia, incluidas las agencias de las Naciones Unidas, las organizaciones internacionales y las organizaciones no gubernamentales internacionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005365/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy: Syria

Given the scale of the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Syrian conflict, and the aid and assistance the EU is providing with the explicit aim of helping civil society to play a key role in restoring stability to the country, are any specific projects being undertaken to enable women, who are the backbone of any society, to make an active contribution, and no longer be seen merely as a vulnerable group? Have efforts been made to enable them to play a key role in resolving the complex crisis in Syria?

Question for written answer E-005366/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Syria

Given the scale of the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Syrian conflict, and the aid and assistance the EU is providing with the explicit aim of helping civil society to play a key role in restoring stability to the country, are any specific projects being undertaken to enable women, who are the backbone of any society, to make an active contribution, and no longer be seen merely as a vulnerable group? Have efforts been made to enable them to play a key role in resolving the complex crisis in Syria?

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

Given the humanitarian dimension of the Syria crisis, the EU and the Member States have collectively so far mobilised more than EUR 2.8 billion in humanitarian and development assistance for actions in Syria and in neighbouring countries, making the EU the biggest donor in this crisis. Some of the programmes benefit civil society organisations both in the current context and also in preparation of the post conflict period. The EU is supporting organisations working on capacity-building of Syrian Civil Society Organisations throughout the country in the field of transitional justice, human rights, peaceful dialogue, community mobilisation and social service delivery (education, psycho-social support, support to livelihoods, etc.). Women's empowerment and gender equality promotion is mainstreamed in most of these projects.

The EU has supported an active role for the Syrian civil society, including women's organisations, in the national reconciliation, the reconstruction of the country and the shaping of its future. To this end, the EU is ready to continue providing support to Syrian women and women's organisations, through capacity building and training in order to help them achieving these goals.

In addition, The Commission funds several humanitarian projects focusing specifically on women both inside Syria and in the neighbouring countries hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees, including prevention and response to gender-based violence. The humanitarian funding is channelled through experienced humanitarian partners including UN agencies, International Organisations and International Non-Governmental Organisations.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005367/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad con el Líbano

Pese a la dura realidad de la situación en este país, tanto política como de la seguridad en general, y con el añadido de la crisis de refugiados existente, el Líbano ha estado y sigue férreamente comprometido con las directrices de la Unión Europea.

El país está realizando un gran esfuerzo para legislar en la lucha contra la corrupción, el fortalecimiento de las instituciones y los procedimientos democráticos, y por la defensa de los derechos humanos en su aplicación diaria.

Pese a que las medidas que está adoptando están orientadas de manera correcta, son todavía insuficientes para alcanzar las metas previstas en relación con las necesidades o carencias identificadas.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, ¿de qué manera se está llevando a cabo una política orientada hacia una independencia judicial verdaderamente eficaz, eliminando de su sistema la pena de muerte y mejorando el sistema carcelario actual?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005368/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad con el Líbano

Pese a la dura realidad de la situación en este país, tanto política como de la seguridad en general, y con el añadido de la crisis de refugiados existente, el Líbano ha estado y sigue férreamente comprometido con las directrices de la Unión Europea.

El país está realizando un gran esfuerzo para legislar en la lucha contra la corrupción, el fortalecimiento de las instituciones y los procedimientos democráticos, y por la defensa de los derechos humanos en su aplicación diaria.

Pese a que las medidas que está adoptando están orientadas de manera correcta, son todavía insuficientes para alcanzar las metas previstas en relación con las necesidades o carencias identificadas.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, ¿de qué manera se está llevando a cabo una política orientada hacia una independencia judicial verdaderamente eficaz, eliminando de su sistema la pena de muerte y mejorando el sistema carcelario actual?

Respuesta conjunta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de junio de 2014)

La UE es firme en su compromiso de fomentar el Estado de Derecho y los derechos humanos en Líbano.

La cooperación entre la UE y Líbano se ha centrado, entre otras cosas, en el sector de la justicia a lo largo de los últimos años y, a este respecto, la UE se cuenta entre los principales donantes, con proyectos en curso por un importe total de más de 22 millones EUR.

El objetivo global del esfuerzo es la reforma de la justicia, especialmente en los aspectos relacionados con los derechos humanos, mediante proyectos dirigidos a aumentar la independencia del poder judicial, a facilitar el acceso a la justicia a las poblaciones más vulnerables y a mejorar la gestión de las prisiones y las condiciones de los reclusos.

El Plan de Acción de la Política Europea de Vecindad prevé como una de sus primeras prioridades la formulación de una estrategia global para la reforma judicial, incluida la mejora de la independencia y la eficacia del poder judicial.

En el informe de situación de 2013, la UE recordaba las carencias que persisten en el sistema judicial libanés, incluida la pena de muerte (que aún existe *de iure*, a pesar de una moratoria *de facto*). La UE anima constantemente a Líbano, mediante un diálogo periódico en el marco de la Política Europea de Vecindad, a desarrollar la reforma del sistema judicial para que resuelva esas carencias.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005367/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy: Lebanon

Despite the extremely difficult political security situation in the country, and the fact that it is currently having to cope with a refugee crisis, Lebanon remains firmly committed to following the guidelines laid down by the EU.

The country is making determined efforts to bring in anti-corruption laws, bolster its institutions and democratic procedures and uphold human rights on a day-to-day basis.

However, although the measures it is adopting are a step in the right direction, they do not go far enough in addressing the problems and needs that have been identified.

What is being done to establish a truly independent judiciary, abolish the death penalty and improve the prison system?

Question for written answer E-005368/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Lebanon

Despite the extremely difficult political security situation in the country, and the fact that it is currently having to cope with a refugee crisis, Lebanon remains firmly committed to following the guidelines laid down by the EU.

The country is making determined efforts to bring in anti-corruption laws, bolster its institutions and democratic procedures and uphold human rights on a day-to-day basis.

However, although the measures it is adopting are a step in the right direction, they do not go far enough in addressing the problems and needs that have been identified.

What is being done to establish a truly independent judiciary, abolish the death penalty and improve the prison system?

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

The EU is steadfast in its commitment to promoting the rule of law and human rights in Lebanon.

The cooperation between the EU and Lebanon has focused, *inter alia*, on the justice sector over the past years, where the EU is a major donor with ongoing projects totalling over EUR 22 million.

The overall goal of the effort is justice reform, especially in its human rights aspects, with projects aimed at enhancing the independence of the judiciary, at granting access to justice to the most vulnerable populations, and at improving prison management and inmates' conditions.

The action plan under the European Neighbourhood Policy foresees as one of the first priorities to develop a comprehensive strategy for judicial reform, including further enhancement of the independence and efficiency of the judiciary.

In the 2013 Progress Report, the EU recalled the shortcomings still present in the Lebanese judicial system, including death penalty (which still exists de jure, despite a de facto moratorium). The EU consistently encourages Lebanon — via the regular dialogue under the ENP — to proceed with reform in the justice sector that would address these shortcomings.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005369/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad con Libia

Libia ha hecho algunos progresos hacia el establecimiento de un régimen indubitablemente democrático desde la revolución de 2011. La Unión Europea está implicada de manera positiva en esta transición hacia la democracia mediante la provisión de fondos destinados a desarrollar programas específicos tanto para temas de salud como de educación, administración pública o migración, entre otros.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo expuesto,

— ¿Qué resultados se están registrando hacia la vertebración de la población mediante las organizaciones de la llamada sociedad civil, de manera que la población pueda responsabilizarse de su futuro en un clima de estabilidad y de respecto a los derechos humanos?

Respuesta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de julio de 2014)

Tras la revolución de 2011 se crearon muchas nuevas organizaciones de la sociedad civil independientes. La mayoría de las nuevas ONG compensan su falta de experiencia con su entusiasmo y su voluntad de desempeñar un papel en el debate político. Los grupos de mujeres y jóvenes son especialmente activos. Sin embargo, ese entusiasmo está disminuyendo con rapidez a consecuencia de la situación de estancamiento político. La UE ha acompañado desde el primer momento los procesos de transición , cuya finalidad es contribuir a la aparición de una Libia democrática, estable y próspera, fundada en instituciones democráticas y una sociedad civil dinámica.

La UE ha puesto en marcha una serie completa e importante de programas en apoyo de la sociedad civil por un importe total de 26 millones EUR, que apoyan tanto el desarrollo de la dimensión institucional del sector de la sociedad civil como la capacitación de las organizaciones de la sociedad civil.

Por ejemplo, se han creado cuatro centros de formación, que funcionan desde octubre de 2012, en Misrata, Trípoli, Bengasi y Sabha. Al amparo de otro programa, la UE ha prestado apoyo a una red de ONG libias que ha formado a cien «embajadores de la constitución», los cuales organizan a su vez talleres y debates en sus propias circunscripciones. El mismo programa también impartió formación a 500 observadores nacionales de cara a las elecciones a la Asamblea Constituyente que se celebraron el 20 de febrero. Un programa específico aplicado por Gender Concerns International apoya a las ONG libias que abogan por la inclusión de los derechos de las mujeres en la Constitución.

Además, el «Instrumento Europeo para la Democracia y los Derechos Humanos» ha financiado actividades en los ámbitos de la democratización, los derechos de la mujer, la formación en materia de medios de comunicación, la ayuda a las víctimas de la tortura, la reconciliación nacional y la capacitación electoral.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005369/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy and Libya

Since the revolution in 2011, Libya has made some progress towards establishing a regime that is indubitably democratic. The European Union is playing a positive role in this transition to democracy through the provision of funds to develop specific programmes both in the field of health as well as on education, public administration and migration.

— In view of the above, what has been achieved so far through civil society organisations in enabling the population to organise itself, so that it can take responsibility for its own future within a climate of stability and respect for human rights?

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

Following the revolution in 2011, many new independent civil society organisations were created. Most new NGO's compensate their lack of experience with their enthusiasm and willingness to play a role in the political debate. Youth and women groups are particularly active. The abovementioned enthusiasm is, however, rapidly decreasing as a result of the political stalemate. The EU has accompanied the transition process from the very first moment, aiming at supporting the emergence of a democratic, stable and prosperous Libya, built on democratic institutions and a vibrant civil society.

The EU has undertaken a significant and comprehensive series of programmes in support of civil society for a total amount of EUR 26 million, supporting both the development of the institutional dimension of the civil society sector and the capacity building of civil society organisations.

For example, four training centres were set up and have been running since October 2012 in Tripoli, Misrata, Benghazi and Sabha. In another programme EU supported a network of Libyan NGOs which has trained 100 constitution ambassadors which are in turn organising workshops and debates within their own constituencies. The same programme also trained 500 domestic observers for the Constitutional Drafting Assembly elections which took place on 20 February. A specific programme implemented by Gender Concerns International is supporting Libyan NGOs to advocate for the inclusion of women's rights in the constitution.

Moreover, the 'European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights' has funded activities in the areas of democratisation, women's rights, media training, support to torture victims, national reconciliation and capacity-building related to the elections.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005371/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad y Moldavia

La toma de posesión del nuevo Gobierno moldavo en mayo de 2013 permitió la reanudación de relaciones y de un diálogo político entre la Unión Europea y Moldavia con el inicio del Acuerdo de Asociación el pasado noviembre.

Siguiendo las recomendaciones propuestas en su momento por la UE, Moldavia ha llevado a cabo reformas estructurales en la lucha contra la corrupción, el fortalecimiento del sector judicial e incluso en temas relacionados con los derechos humanos. Sin embargo, Moldavia tiene que seguir la senda iniciada como un proceso donde aún quedan etapas importantes por recorrer para alcanzar los objetivos propuestos.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, ¿qué pasos se están tomando con relación al derecho de libre información y al fortalecimiento de un marco adecuado para que la libertad de expresión de los medios de comunicación sea un hecho incontrovertible, convirtiéndose en puntal para la lucha contra la corrupción y los posibles abusos?

Respuesta del Comisario Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(17 de junio de 2014)

Los medios de comunicación de la República de Moldavia disfrutan de un entorno relativamente libre en comparación con otros países de la región. Entre los países de la CEI, la República de Moldavia es el país mejor situado en la Clasificación de la Libertad de Prensa de «Reporteros sin fronteras» en 2014. No obstante, la libertad de información y de los medios de comunicación es un tema que la UE aborda periódicamente en su diálogo político y su diálogo estructurado sobre los derechos humanos con la República de Moldavia. Durante la reciente reunión entre los miembros de la Comisión Europea y los miembros del Gobierno de la República de Moldavia (15 de mayo de 2014), el Presidente Barroso animó al Primer Ministro Leanca a reformar la Ley sobre la propiedad de los medios de comunicación. En el diálogo político bilateral, la UE plantea regularmente al Gobierno de Moldavia la cuestión de no restringir la pluralidad de los medios de comunicación y garantizar un Consejo de Cooperación Audiovisual verdaderamente independiente. Conjuntamente con el Consejo de Europa, la UE ha empezado a financiar este año un proyecto dirigido a fomentar el pluralismo de los medios de comunicación en la República de Moldavia.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005371/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Moldova

The swearing in of a new government in Moldova in May 2013 paved the way for a resumption of relations and political dialogue between the country and the EU, with the initialling of an Association Agreement in November of the same year.

In line with recommendations made by the EU at the time, Moldova has carried out structural reforms to combat corruption, strengthen the judiciary and safeguard human rights. However, a number of major steps still need to be taken if the targets set are to be reached.

What is being done to foster freedom of information and create an environment in which the media are able to enjoy genuine freedom of expression, which would enable them to serve as a bulwark against corruption and abuse of power?

Answer given by Commissioner Füle on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The media in the Republic of Moldova are enjoying a relatively free environment compared to other countries in the region. Among the CIS countries, the Republic of Moldova ranks the highest in the Annual Press Freedom Index of 'Reporters without borders' in 2014. Nonetheless, freedom of information and of the media is a topic that the EU regularly adresses in its political dialogue and the its structured human rights dialogue with the Republic of Moldova. During the recent meeting between Members of the European Commission and Members of the Government of the Republic of Moldova (15 May 2014), President Barroso encouraged Prime Minister Leanca to undertake reforms on the law on media ownership. In the bilateral political dialogue, the EU regularly raises the issue with the Moldovan government not to restrict the plurality of the media and ensure a genuinely independent Audiovisual Cooperation Council. Jointly with the Council of Europe, the EU started funding this year a project to promote the pluralism of the media in the Repbulic of Moldova.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005373/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Política de vecindad con Palestina

La reconciliación y la convivencia entre palestinos e israelíes deberían alcanzarse de manera inmediata y perentoria.

Los medios de comunicación pueden y deben de ser catalizadores para llevar a cabo una labor de concienciación de la ciudadanía ante la realidad que se está viviendo. Sin embargo, estos medios se encuentran con tremendos problemas para realizar y desarrollar lo que el derecho a la libertad de expresión les debiera reconocer, más allá del propio derecho a informar.

Teniendo en cuenta lo expuesto, ¿cómo piensa actuar la Comisión ante una situación que está llevando incluso a la ejecución de periodistas y a que en la Franja de Gaza se sigan dictando sentencias de muerte para quienes tienen la responsabilidad inherente de dar a conocer de lo que está ocurriendo en la zona?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-005374/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Política de vecindad con Palestina

La reconciliación y la convivencia entre palestinos e israelíes deberían alcanzarse de manera inmediata y perentoria.

Los medios de comunicación pueden y deben ser catalizadores para llevar a cabo una labor de concienciación de la ciudadanía ante la realidad que se está viviendo. Sin embargo, estos medios se encuentran con tremendos problemas para realizar y desarrollar lo que el derecho a la libertad de expresión les debiera garantizar, más allá del propio derecho a informar.

Teniendo en cuenta lo expuesto, ¿cómo piensa actuar la Comisión ante una situación que está llevando incluso a la ejecución de periodistas y a que en la Franja de Gaza se sigan dictando sentencias de muerte para quienes tienen la responsabilidad inherente de dar a conocer lo que está ocurriendo en la zona?

Respuesta conjunta de la alta representante y vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de junio de 2014)

La Alta Representante y Vicepresidenta comparte la preocupación de Su Señoría por la situación en Gaza. Esta es la razón por la que las misiones de la UE en Jerusalén y Ramala emiten sistemáticamente declaraciones de condena de las penas de muerte pronunciadas y llevadas a cabo en Cisjordania, recordando la firme oposición de la UE al uso de la pena de muerte, sean cuales sean las circunstancias.

Lamentablemente, mientras la Franja de Gaza siga políticamente separada de Cisjordania, la UE dispone de medios limitados para influir en la situación sobre el terreno, en particular en lo que se refiere a las acuciantes preocupaciones en materia de derechos humanos.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005373/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Neighbourhood policy: Palestine

There is an immediate, urgent need to foster reconciliation and coexistence between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

The media can and should act as a catalyst for raising awareness of the situation. However, they are having great difficulty performing the tasks that should be safeguarded by freedom of expression and the right to inform.

What does the Commission intend to do about the fact that journalists are being executed and reporters in the Gaza Strip are being sentenced to death simply for doing their job of keeping people informed of developments in the region?

Question for written answer E-005374/14
to the Commission
Salvador Sedó i Alabart (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Neighbourhood policy: Palestine

There is an immediate, urgent need to foster reconciliation and coexistence between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples.

The media can and should act as a catalyst for raising awareness of the situation. However, they are having great difficulty performing the tasks that should be safeguarded by freedom of expression and the right to inform.

What does the Commission intend to do about the fact that journalists are being executed and reporters in the Gaza Strip are being sentenced to death simply for doing their job of keeping people informed of developments in the region?

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

The HR/VP shares the concern of the Honourable Member concerning the situation in Gaza. It is for this reason that the EU Missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah systematically issue statements condemning the death sentences issued and carried out in the West Bank recalling the EU's firm opposition under all circumstances to the use of capital punishment.

Regrettably, as long as the Gaza Strip remains politically separated from the Gaza Strip, the EU has limited means of influencing the situation on the ground including with regard to pressing human rights concerns.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005375/14
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: State aid rules and UK tax breaks to the shale gas industry

The UK Government has recently announced that it will be awarding tax breaks to the shale gas industry ([1]).

Furthermore, a consultation from the UK treasury outlines the possibility of a 30% tax rate on shale gas ([2]). This is in contrast to other forms of extraction such as North Sea gas, which are subject to a high tax rate of 62%.

Can the Commission confirm whether it considers the proposed tax breaks to the shale gas industry as being in breach of EU state aid rules?

If so, how does the Commission intend on reacting to this breach of EC law?

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

The UK launched a consultation on 10 December 2013 on proposals for a tax regime for shale gas and a summary of the responses to the consultation has been published.

The Commission understands that this new tax regime is still in the project stage and has not yet been implemented. If introduced, such a regime may constitute state aid and in this case, the UK Government would be under an obligation to notify the measure to the Commission for state aid clearance.

([1]) UK Government's Autumn Statement 2013: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263942/35062_Autumn_Statement_2013.pdf

([2]) UK Government's consultation on a fiscal regime for shale gas : https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/harnessing-the-potential-of-the-uks-natural-resources-a-fiscal-regime-for-shale-gas/harnessing-the-potential-of-the-uks-natural-resources-a-fiscal-regime-for-shale-gas

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-005376/14
till kommissionen
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(23 april 2014)

Angående: Internet- och telekomleverantörers lagring av uppgifter efter domstolens beslut av den 8 april 2014

Det svenska företaget Bahnhof har i ett pressmeddelande från den 8 april 2014 kl. 12.07 ([1]) uppgett att det raderar alla uppgifter som redan lagrats och upphör med lagring av nya uppgifter. Svenska Post- och telestyrelsen (PTS) har också förklarat i ett pressmeddelande från den 10 april ([2]) att man inte kommer att vidta åtgärder mot någon som inte lagrar uppgifter. Det vore dock mer logiskt att vidta åtgärder mot dem som fortsätter att lagra uppgifter, eftersom domstolen har förklarat att lagringen är olaglig.

1. Hur kommer kommissionen att säkerställa att ingen lagrar uppgifter på ett olagligt sätt i EU?

2. Håller kommissionen med om att lagrade uppgifter nu bör raderas, så att man inte bryter mot domstolens beslut?

3. Kan kommissionen ange en tidsplan för hur den ska se till att inga EU-lagar, internationella avtal eller nationella lagar strider mot domstolens beslut, bland annat PNR-avtalet, SWIFT-avtalet och den svenska FRA-lagen?

Svar från Cecilia Malmström på kommissionens vägnar
(11 juni 2014)

Domstolens dom av den 8 april 2014 rör ogiltigförklarandet av direktivet om lagring av uppgifter. Andra EU-instrument eller medlemsstaternas nationella lagstiftning berörs inte direkt av domen.

Utan ett direktiv om lagring av uppgifter ([3]) behöver en medlemsstat som inför eller upprätthåller ett datalagringssystem uppfylla kraven i direktivet om integritet och elektronisk kommunikation. Enligt artikel 15.1 i detta direktiv har medlemsstaterna rätt att anta lagstiftning om lagring av uppgifter för en begränsad period om det är motiverat med tanke på förebyggande, utredning, avslöjande och åtal av brott. Sådana åtgärder måste vara förenliga med de allmänna principerna i unionslagstiftningen, inklusive de grundläggande rättigheterna. Medlemsstaternas nationella lagar om lagring av uppgifter fortsätter att gälla i den utsträckning som de uppfyller dessa kriterier. Varje medlemsstat måste noggrant analysera om den nationella lagstiftningen behöver ändras.

Som redan nämnts är det endast direktivet om lagring av uppgifter som direkt omfattas av domstolens dom. Domens relevans för andra EU-åtgärder måste analyseras noga från fall till fall. När det gäller de befintliga TFTP- och PNR-avtalen och EU:s förslag till ett PNR-direktiv, som har ett begränsat syfte och en begränsad omfattning, innehåller de tydliga och strikta bestämmelser om tillgång till och behandling av uppgifter och omfattar effektiva och robusta dataskyddsbestämmelser.

([1]) https://www.bahnhof.se/press/press-releases/2014/04/08/efter-eu-domen-bahnhof-upphor-med-all-datalagring-omedelbart
([2]) https://www.pts.se/sv/Nyheter/Telefoni/2014/PTS-kommer-inte-i-nulaget-att-vidta-atgarder-utifran-datalagringsreglerna/
([3]) Europaparlamentets och rådets direktiv 2006/24/EG av den 15 mars 2006 om lagring av uppgifter som genererats eller behandlats i samband med tillhandahållande av allmänt tillgängliga elektroniska kommunikationstjänster eller allmänna kommunikationsnät och om ändring av direktiv 2002/58/EG (EUT L 105, 13.4.2006, s. 54).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005376/14
to the Commission
Carl Schlyter (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Data retention by access, Internet and telecom providers after the Court of Justice decision of 8 April 2014

The Swedish company Bahnhof stated in a press release ([1]) dated midday on 8 April 2014 that it has deleted all retained data and will no longer be storing any more. The Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) also declared in a press release on 10 April ([2]) that it will not sanction anyone who does not retain data. However, since the retention has been deemed illegal, the more logical approach would be to sanction anyone who continues to store data after the court has declared it unlawful.

1. How will the Commission make sure that no one retains data unlawfully within the EU?

2. Does the Commission agree that retained data should now be erased so as not to violate the CJEU decision?

3. Can the Commission give a timetable for making sure that no European laws, international treaties or national laws violate the logic of the Court's decision, including PNR, SWIFT and the Swedish FRA law?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The ruling of the European Court of Justice of 8 April 2014 concerns the invalidation of the Data Retention Directive. Other EU instruments or Member States' national legislation are not directly concerned by the ruling.

Failing an EU Data retention Directive ([3]), a Member State who establishes or maintains a Data retention scheme needs to do so in compliance with the e-Privacy Directive. Article 15(1) of this directive allows the Member States to adopt legislation on retention of data for a limited period justified on the grounds of prevention, investigations detection and prosecution of criminal offences. Such measures must be in accordance with the general principles of Union law, including fundamental rights. Member States' national legislation on data retention remains valid to the extent that it complies with the above criteria. Each Member State has to carefully assess whether there is a need to change national legislation.

As said, the Court ruling only directly concerns the Data retention Directive. The relevance of the judgment to other EU measures needs a careful case-by-case analysis. As regards the existing TFTP and PNR Agreements and the proposal for an EU PNR Directive, which are limited in purpose and scope, these Agreements and the proposed Directive set out clear and strict rules for access to and processing of data and provide for effective and robust data protection safeguards.

([1]) https://www.bahnhof.se/press/press-releases/2014/04/08/efter-eu-domen-bahnhof-upphor-med-all-datalagring-omedelbart
([2]) https://www.pts.se/sv/Nyheter/Telefoni/2014/PTS-kommer-inte-i-nulaget-att-vidta-atgarder-utifran-datalagringsreglerna/
([3]) Directive 2006/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15.3.2006 on the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services or of public communications networks and amending Directive 2002/58/EC OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, p. 54-63.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-005378/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(23 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Nierówne zasady przyznawania częstotliwości z pasma 800 MHz w Polsce

Planowane przez polskiego regulatora – Urząd Komunikacji Elektronicznej – działania związane z rozdysponowaniem częstotliwości z dywidendy cyfrowej z pasma 800 MHz budzą istotne wątpliwości. Powodem są możliwe zakłócenia konkurencji na polskim rynku telekomunikacyjnym. W efekcie rozstrzygnięć aukcji może bowiem dojść do sytuacji, w której dwie sieci – T-Mobile Polska i Orange Polska (działające w ramach aliansu infrastrukturalnego) – uzyskają łącznie 66 % pasma i będą następnie je wspólnie wykorzystywać w sposób uniemożliwiający dostęp do niego innym przedsiębiorstwom. Obydwaj oferenci nie ukrywają, iż warunki współpracy obejmują wspólne wykorzystanie przyznanych im częstotliwości. Z opracowań eksperckich posiadanych przez polski rząd wynika ponadto, że zaplanowane przez regulatora warunki aukcji nie pozwolą na zrealizowanie celów Europejskiej Agendy Cyfrowej.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy Komisja podjęła lub planuje podjąć działania zmierzające do zapewnienia jednolitego podejścia do oceny antykonkurencyjnych skutków kumulowania zasobów częstotliwości przez konkurujących ze sobą na rynku detalicznym operatorów mobilnych współpracujących w zakresie współdzielenia infrastruktury (w szczególności gdy kumulowane zasoby są większe niż zasoby konkurentów), z uwzględnieniem specyfiki poszczególnych państw członkowskich?

2. Czy określane przez krajowe organy regulacyjne warunki aukcji na rezerwację częstotliwości z dywidendy cyfrowej (w paśmie 800 MHz), kluczowej dla świadczenia usług szerokopasmowych w technologii LTE, powinny realizować cele Europejskiej Agendy Cyfrowej i zmniejszać kwotę pomocy publicznej ze środków unijnych w ramach krajowych programów operacyjnych na lata 2014-2020, które są zatwierdzane przez Komisję?

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

Komisja potwierdza potwierdza, że pasmo 800 MHz ma zasadnicze znaczenia dla osiągnięcia celów dotyczących internetu szerokopasmowego określonych w Europejskiej agendzie cyfrowej.

Państwa członkowskie odpowiadają za wydawanie zezwoleń na użytkowanie widma, a obecne ramy regulacyjne określają pewne wymogi obowiązujące państwa członkowskie przy przyznawaniu praw do użytkowania częstotliwości operatorom. Komisja monitoruje i egzekwuje przestrzeganie tych wymogów. Obejmują one konieczność zapewnienia przejrzystości i niedyskryminacji w procedurze przyznawania zezwoleń, lecz także wymóg zapobiegania zachowaniom antykonkurencyjnym.

Oprócz tych wymogów Komisja określiła potrzebę koordynacji procedury i warunków wydawania zezwoleń na użytkowanie widma w kontekście proponowanego rozporządzenia w sprawie jednolitego rynku telekomunikacyjnego (COM(2013) 627), w odniesieniu do którego Parlament przyjął swoją opinię w pierwszym czytaniu w dniu 3 kwietnia (2013/0309/COD).

Jeśli chodzi o porozumienia między podmiotami dotyczące współdzielenia sieci i łączenia widma, muszą one być oceniane indywidualnie w każdym przypadku, z uwzględnieniem wszelkich potencjalnych problemów w zakresie konkurencji, które mogą się pojawić, oraz potencjalnych korzyści. Rzeczywiście tego rodzaju porozumienia mogą potencjalnie ograniczać konkurencję, w przypadku gdy strony mają władzę rynkową, a porozumienia umożliwiają stronom koordynowanie ich zachowań konkurencyjnych lub zamykanie dostępu do rynku dla innych operatorów. Mogą one jednak również potencjalnie podnosić efektywność, umożliwiając tańszy rozwój sieci w niektórych regionach oraz większą przepustowość łączy szerokopasmowych.

Aby zwiększyć przewidywalność egzekwowania zasad konkurencji i zapewnić spójne stosowanie przepisów w całej UE, Komisja opublikowała wytyczne w sprawie zastosowania reguł konkurencji do porozumień o współpracy między konkurentami.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-005378/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Unequal rules for assigning frequencies in the 800 MHz band in Poland

The way in which the Polish regulator — the Office for Electronic Communications — plans to assign digital dividend frequencies in the 800 MHz band raises important questions because it may lead to a distortion of competition in the Polish telecommunications market. The auction decisions could bring about a situation in which two networks — T-Mobile Poland and Orange Poland (operating with shared infrastructure) — will have a total of 66% of the bandwidth and will use it together in a way that prevents access by the other companies. Neither bidder is hiding the fact that the terms of their cooperation include the joint use of the frequencies assigned to them. Furthermore, it is clear from the Polish Government's expert analyses that it will not be possible to achieve the objectives of the Digital Agenda for Europe under the terms of the auctions planned by the regulator.

1. Has the Commission taken any action, or is it planning to take action, to ensure a uniform approach to assessing the anticompetitive impact of spectrum accumulation by mobile operators who are competing in the retail market but cooperating by sharing infrastructure (particularly when their combined spectrum is larger than that of their competitors), taking into account the specific situation of the individual Member States?

2. Should the auction conditions laid down by the national regulatory authorities for the digital dividend frequencies (in the 800 MHz band), which are crucial for the provision of broadband services based on LTE technology, seek to achieve the objectives of the Digital Agenda for Europe and reduce the amount of public aid from EU funds under the Commission-approved national operational programmes for 2014-2020?

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

The Commission confirms the key importance of the 800 MHz band for achieving the broadband targets of the Digital Agenda for Europe.

While Member States are responsible for spectrum authorisation, the current regulatory framework sets certain requirements for Member States when they grant spectrum usage rights to operators, which are monitored and enforced by the Commission. These include the need to ensure transparency and non-discrimination in the award process, but also the requirement to prevent anti-competitive behaviour.

Beyond these requirements, the Commission has identified the need for coordination of procedures and conditions for the authorisation of spectrum, in the context of the proposed Regulation concerning the Telecom Single Market (COM(2013) 627), on which the Parliament adopted its opinion in first reading on 3 April (2013/0309/COD).

With regard to agreements on network sharing and spectrum pooling among operators, they must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, considering any potential competition issues that may arise and the potential benefits thereof. Indeed, whereas such agreements could potentially restrict competition where the parties have market power and the agreements enable the parties to coordinate their competitive behaviour or to foreclose other operators, they also have the potential to generate efficiencies, making network deployments in certain regions more economical and enabling higher broadband speeds.

With the aim of increasing the predictability of competition enforcement and the consistent application of the rules through the EU, the Commission has published guidelines on the application of the competition rules to cooperation agreements between competitors.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005379/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Größte Giftmülldeponie Europas: toxikologische Gutachten zur Ursache der hohen Krebserkrankungsrate

Die im ehemaligen Sperrgebiet der DDR gelegene größte Giftmülldeponie Europas Schönberg/Ihlenberg nahm im Jahre 1979 ohne einen Standortsicherheitsnachweis den Betrieb auf. Mehrere Wasserwerke in der Umgebung wurden inzwischen geschlossen. Gegen eine geplante Erweiterung auf 32 Millionen Tonnen hat der NABU (Naturschutzbund Deutschland) Klage eingereicht.

1. Wie ist der aktuelle Stand der Untersuchungen zur Klärung der Ursachen der hohen Krebserkrankungsrate unter den Beschäftigen (80 % über dem Durchschnitt)?

2. Ist der Kommission ein entsprechendes toxikologisches Gutachten bekannt?

3. Welche Informationen hat die Kommission über weitere Gutachten (abgeschlossen oder in Auftrag gegeben)? Wann und wo werden sie veröffentlicht und von wem wurden sie wann in Auftrag gegeben?

4. Welche Abfälle mit radioaktiver Belastung wurden seit Einrichtung der Deponie Schönberg aus einzelnen EU-Staaten in welchem Umfang dorthin verbracht?

5. Welche radioaktiven Stoffe enthielten die Abfälle nach Deklaration und welche Aktivität wiesen die Stoffe jeweils auf?

6. Ist der Kommission bekannt, ob radioaktiv belastete Abfälle aus der DDR auf die Deponie verbracht wurden? Wenn ja: Welche Abfälle (Mengen, Zusammensetzung und Aktivität, Jahr)?

7. Wo sind diese Informationen für die (interessierte) Öffentlichkeit einsehbar?

8. Ist der Kommission bekannt, in welcher Höhe Rücklagen für eine Rekultivierung/Sanierung der Deponie Schönberg zurückgestellt wurden? Wenn ja: in welcher Höhe?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(7. Juli 2014)

Zu den Fragen 1, 2 und 3: Der Kommission sind keine Untersuchungen zur Gesundheit der Arbeitnehmer der Deponie Schönberg/Ihlenberg oder toxikologische Gutachten zu diesem Thema bekannt. Die einzigen relevanten Informationen, die der Kommission hierzu vorliegen, beziehen sich auf die standardisierten Sterbeziffern zu krebsbedingten Todesfällen in einem Zeitraum von 15 Jahren in der EU-28, einschließlich im Bundesland Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (siehe Anhang).

Zu den Fragen 4, 5, 6 und 7: Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, dass radioaktive Abfälle auf die Deponie Schönberg verbracht wurden. Deutschland hat der Kommission keine entsprechenden Verbringungen radioaktiver Abfälle gemeldet. In dem Bericht, den Deutschland 2011 zu dem Gemeinsamen Übereinkommen über die Sicherheit der Behandlung abgebrannter Brennelemente und über die Sicherheit der Behandlung radioaktiver Abfälle ([1]) vorgelegt hat, wird Schönberg weder als aktiver noch als früherer Standort für die Entsorgung radioaktiver Abfälle erwähnt.

Zu Frage 8: Die Entscheidungen über Maßnahmen zur Sicherung einer ordnungsgemäßen Stilllegung und Nachsorge von Abfalldeponien durch finanzielle Sicherheiten oder gleichwertige Maßnahmen werden von den Mitgliedstaaten getroffen. Die Kommission erhebt keine Angaben zu solchen Maßnahmen für einzelne Deponien und ihr ist die Höhe entsprechender Rücklagen für die Deponie Schönberg daher nicht bekannt.

([1]) http://www.bmub.bund.de/fileadmin/bmu-import/files/pdfs/allgemein/application/pdf/jc_4_bericht_deutschland_bf.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005379/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Europe's largest landfill: toxicological reports on the cause of the high cancer rate

The largest toxic landfill site in Europe, located in what was a previously the GDR restricted area of Schönberg/Ihlenberg, opened in 1979 without any site safety certification. Several water works in the area have now been closed. Plans to expand its capacity to 32 million tonnes are the subject of a law suit by NABU (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, Germany).

1. What is the current state of the investigations to clarify the causes of the high cancer rate among employees (80% above the average)?

2. Is the Commission aware of a toxicology report into this matter?

3. What information does the Commission have about further reports (completed or commissioned)? When and where they have they been published, and by whom and when were they commissioned?

4. What kinds of radioactivity-contaminated waste — and what quantities of such waste — have been shipped to the Schönberg landfill from individual EU countries since it was opened?

5. Which radioactive substances did the waste contain according to declarations and how active are the substances in each case?

6. Does the Commission know whether radioactivity-contaminated waste from the GDR was dumped in the landfill? If so, what waste (quantities, composition and activity, year)?

7. Where can this information be consulted by the public?

8. Does the Commission know what reserves have been set aside for the reclamation/ rehabilitation of the Schönberg landfill? If so, what is the amount of these reserves?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(7 July 2014)

Questions 1, 2 and 3: The Commission is not aware of any investigations undertaken in relation to the health of the employees of the Schönberg/Ihlenberg landfill or of any toxicology reports on this matter. The only relevant information received by the Commission relates to the Standardised Death Rates due to cancer over a period of 15 years in the EU28, including the German region of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (see Annex).

Questions 4, 5, 6 and 7: The Commission is not aware of any radioactive waste shipped to or disposed of in the Schönberg facility. None has been reported to the Commission by Germany. The 2011 German report ([1]) to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management does not mention Schönberg as a site for the disposal of radioactive waste, neither operational nor as a legacy site.

Question 8: The measures to ensure proper closure and aftercare of the landfill by means of financial security or equivalent measures are to be decided by Member States. The Commission does not gather information about such measures for individual landfills and therefore is not aware of the amount of any such reserves for the landfill in question.

([1]) http://www.bmub.bund.de/fileadmin/bmu-import/files/english/pdf/application/pdf/jc_4_bericht_deutschland_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005381/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Sicherheitsrisiko durch Giftstoffe im Innenraum von Flugzeugkabinen

In diversen (Innenraum-)Messungen und Studien wurde eine Vielzahl von Giftstoffen in Flugzeugkabinen nachgewiesen (es wurde festgestellt, dass Nervengifte auch im Regelbetrieb, in niedrigen Dosen, in der Atemluft vorhanden sind (Cranfield Study, Studie Universität Oslo — Lockridge, Monro, Mulder, Abou-Donia).

1. Wie bewertet die Kommission, dass im Falle eines Vorfalls durch kontaminierte Kabinenluft (auch „Fume Events") keine wirklichen Schutzmaßnahmen für die Fluggäste vorhanden sind und dass somit Passagiere, insbesondere Kinder, Ältere und Kranke von einer Vergiftungsfolge bedroht sind? Welche konkreten Maßnahmen hält die Kommission für umsetzbar, damit eine realistische Chance eines adäquaten Atemschutzes (ohne Kabinenluftgemisch) besteht?

2. Plant die Kommission ein durch unabhängige Kliniken durchgeführtes Biomonitoring von Flugpersonal oder/und Vielfliegern zur Erforschung der gesundheitlichen Risiken und Langzeitfolgen der nachweislich vorhandenen Giftstoffe? Wenn nein: Hält es die Kommission für unterstützenswert und förderungswürdig, ein Airline-unabhängiges Biomonitoring durchzuführen (hierzu liegt bereits ein Angebot der Universitätsklinik Göttingen vor), damit endlich unabhängige wissenschaftliche Daten vorliegen?

3. Ist die Kommission der Auffassung, dass Passagiere schon vor einem Flug über die Gefahren der kontaminierten Kabinenluft (gesundheitliche Risiken und Folgen durch die Giftstoffe) aufgeklärt werden sollten?

4. Wie bewertet die Kommission die zunehmend vorgebrachten Bedenken wegen der Auswirkungen kontaminierter Kabinenluft auf die Sicherheit des Flugbetriebs sowie auf die Gesundheit der Besatzungen und der Passagiere? Sieht die Kommission nicht die Gefahr, dass sie die berechtigten Sorgen der Betroffenen, insbesondere der Flugbegleiter und Piloten, ignoriert und sich der Gefahr aussetzt, Gesundheitsrisiken zu beschönigen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2014)

Die Europäische Agentur für Flugsicherheit (EASA) erfasst anhand der aus unterschiedlichen Quellen vorliegenden Informationen Berichte über Vorfälle im Zusammenhang mit der Luftqualität in Flugzeugkabinen. Hierunter fallen beispielsweise Berichtssysteme, offizielle Untersuchungen von Vorfällen und Prüfungen der Flugzeug- und Motorenhersteller. Bislang liegen der Kommission und der EASA keine Hinweise darauf vor, dass die Kabinenluft in Flugzeugen ein Gesundheitsproblem darstellt.

Der Kommission sind allerdings die weltweit geführten Diskussionen über die Luftqualität in Flugzeugkabinen sowie die von der Frau Abgeordneten geäußerten Bedenken durchaus bekannt. Daher hat die Kommission auf Vorschlag der EASA im europäischen Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Innovation (Horizont 2020) einen thematischen Bereich der Luftqualität in Flugzeugkabinen gewidmet. Im Rahmen dieser Forschungsarbeiten sind großmaßstäbliche Messungen während des Flugs mit dem Ziel vorgesehen, mehr Erkenntnisse über die Zusammensetzung und Bestandteile der Luft zu gewinnen, sowie die Entwicklung und Prüfung von Systemen zur Überwachung der Luftqualität und zur Eliminierung etwaiger Schadstoffe.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005381/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Safety risk posed by toxic substances in aircraft cabins

Measurements and studies have shown that aircraft cabins are contaminated with a great many toxic substances (low concentrations of neurotoxins have been found to exist, even under normal operating conditions, in inhaled air (Cranfield study, Oslo University study — Lockridge, Monro, Mulder, Abou-Donia)).

1. How does the Commission view the fact that there are no proper measures in place to protect passengers in the event of incidents caused by contaminated cabin air (including fume events) and that passengers, especially children, older people, and those suffering from a disability or illness, are consequently in danger of being poisoned? What specific steps could be taken, in the Commission's opinion, so as to afford a realistic prospect of proper respiratory protection (without cabin air mixtures)?

2. Will the Commission have crew members and/or frequent flyers assessed through biomonitoring by independent clinics for the purpose of research into the health risks and long-term effects caused by those toxic substances whose presence has been detected? If not, does it consider that biomonitoring by bodies other than airlines (Göttingen University Hospital, for example, which has already offered to carry out testing of this kind) is an activity that should be encouraged and supported in order to provide an independent source of scientific data?

3. Does the Commission believe that passengers should be informed before take-off about the dangers of contaminated cabin air (health risks and effects of toxic substances)?

4. How does the Commission view the growing misgivings about the effects of contaminated cabin air on air safety and crew and passenger health? Does it not consider that it might be in danger of ignoring the justified anxieties of the persons concerned, in particular flight attendants and pilots, and glossing over health risks?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) monitors the reporting of incidents of cabin air quality contamination based on information available from various sources including reporting systems, official incident investigations and reviews made with aeroplane and engine manufacturers. No element has led so far the Commission and EASA to believe that there is an occupational health issue from cabin air exposure.

The Commission is however fully aware of the worldwide debate around the aircraft cabin air quality and the concerns expressed by the Honourable Member of the European Parliament. In this context, the Commission, following an EASA proposal, has included a thematic area on cabin air quality in the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020). This work will include a large scale in-flight measurement campaign to gain better knowledge of the air composition and its components, and the development and testing of systems for air monitoring and removal of potential contaminants.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005382/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Koexistenzregelung für gentechnisch veränderten Anbau

Die EU hat im Jahr 2010 eine Koexistenzregelung verabschiedet. Sie überlässt es den Mitgliedstaaten, das Abstandsgebot zu erlassen, um die Verunreinigung von konventionellem und organischem Anbau zu vermeiden.

1. Sollte der Pioneer für den Anbau freigegeben werden, wie groß ist der Sicherheitsabstand zu den benachbarten Feldern?

2. Gibt es einen Haftungsfonds, in den die Genanbauer einzahlen müssen, oder wie sehen die konkreten Haftungsregelungen aus, wenn es zu Zahlungsunfähigkeit der Genanbauer kommt?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(11. Juni 2014)

1. Gemäß EU-Recht ([1]) können die Mitgliedstaaten geeignete Maßnahmen treffen, um das unbeabsichtigte Vorhandensein von GVO in anderen Produkten, z. B. konventionellen oder ökologischen Kulturpflanzen, zu verhindern. Diese Maßnahmen werden von den Mitgliedstaaten festgelegt. Im Hinblick auf die technische Beratung der Mitgliedstaaten hat das Europäische Büro für Koexistenz Dokumente über vorbildliche Verfahren für die Koexistenz von genetisch verändertem Mais, konventionellen und ökologischen Kulturen ([2]) und der Honigerzeugung ([3]) ausgearbeitet. In diesen Dokumenten werden u. a. Sicherheitsabstände vorgeschlagen, die empfohlen werden können, um das Risiko einer Kreuzbestäubung auf verschiedene Werte zu reduzieren.

2. Die Haftungsvorschriften hinsichtlich des wirtschaftlichen Schadens infolge des zufälligen Vorhandenseins zugelassener GVO in anderen Produkten sind auf EU-Ebene nicht harmonisiert. Einige Mitgliedstaaten haben bei der Annahme von Koexistenzmaßnahmen Haftungsfonds vorgesehen.

([1]) Artikel 26a der Richtlinie 2001/18/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 12. März 2001 über die absichtliche Freisetzung genetisch veränderter Organismen in die Umwelt.
([2]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/Maize.pdf
([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/BPDhoney.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005382/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Co-existence and genetically modified (GM) crops

In 2010 the EU adopted a recommendation on the co-existence of crops which left it up to the Member States to rule on the distance required to prevent contamination of conventional and organic crops.

1. Should authorisation be given to grow the GM maize Pioneer 1507, what will be the safe distance from neighbouring fields?

2. Is there a liability fund to which GM growers must contribute, or what specifically are the rules on liability when a GM grower is not in a position to pay?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

1. The EU legislation provides that Member States may take appropriate measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in other products ([1]), such as conventional or organic crops. These measures are defined by Member States. In order to provide technical advice to Member States, the European Coexistence Bureau ([2]) has developed Best Practice Documents for co-existence of genetically modified maize with conventional and organic farming ([3]) and honey production ([4]). These documents propose, *inter alia*, isolation distances which can be recommended in order to reduce cross-pollination to different levels.

2. Liability rules as regards the economic prejudice linked to the adventitious presence of authorised GMOs in other products are not harmonised at EU level. Some Member States have foreseen liability funds when adopting co-existence measures.

([1]) Article 26a of Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12.3.2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms.
([2]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/index.html
([3]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/Maize.pdf
([4]) http://ecob.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/BPDhoney.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005383/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Daten zu Radioaktivität in Erde, Luft und Wasser

1. Wie werden in der EU Daten zur messbaren Radioaktivität in Erde, Luft und Wasser gesammelt?

2. Gibt es dazu eine einheitliche Erfassung/einheitliche Kriterien in allen EU-Mitgliedstaaten? Wie plant die Kommission dies künftig sicherzustellen?

3. Wo stehen diese Daten den Bürgerinnen und Bürger sowie interessierten Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler zur Verfügung?

Antwort von Herrn Oettinger im Namen der Kommission
(20. Juni 2014)

1. Nach Artikel 35 Euratom-Vertrag (EAG) muss jeder Mitgliedstaat den Radioaktivitätsgehalt der Luft, des Wassers und des Bodens ständig überwachen. Die Ergebnisse der Überwachung werden gemäß den Vorgaben des Artikels 36 EAG regelmäßig in einer von der Kommission geführten Datenbank gesammelt. Auf der Grundlage dieser Daten veröffentlicht die Kommission regelmäßig validierte Informationen über die Umweltradioaktivität im Hoheitsgebiet der EU.

2. Die Mitgliedstaaten haben bei der Entscheidung über den Umfang des Überwachungsprogramms einen gewissen Spielraum, die technischen Überwachungsmethoden sind jedoch relativ einheitlich. Die ständige Überwachung umfasst in der Regel eine kontinuierliche Überwachung der Strahlungsdosiswerte (Nanosievert pro Stunde — nSv/h) und die Bestimmung der Aktivität (Becquerel — Bq) in der Luft, im Oberflächen-, Trink- und Grundwasser, in der Milch und in Lebensmitteln, wofür Proben im Labor analysiert werden. Alter und Entwicklungsgrad der Überwachungsgeräte sind von Mitgliedstaat zu Mitgliedstaat unterschiedlich — die Kommission führt Nachprüfungen durch, um die Einhaltung der Mindestanforderungen sicherzustellen ([1]).

3. Fast jeder Mitgliedstaat macht seine nationalen Überwachungsdaten entweder über eine spezielle Website oder in Form von Jahresberichten der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich. Auf EU-Ebene werden Überwachungsdaten auf folgendem Internet-Portal veröffentlicht: http://rem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RemWeb/RemDbPublic/RemDbPub.aspx.

Wegen der Anforderungen an die Qualitätskontrolle gibt es eine gewisse Verzögerung bei der Bereitstellung der Daten.

Darüber hinaus werden Informationen über die aktuellen Strahlungsdosiswerte über das System EURDEP (European Radiological Data Exchange Platform) zur Verfügung gestellt ([2]). Diese Informationen werden von den Mitgliedstaaten für die Notfallvorsorge automatisch jede Stunde heruntergeladen und sind nicht Gegenstand einer Qualitätskontrolle.

([1]) Berichte über diese Nachprüfungen können abgerufen werden unter: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/radiation_protection/article35/article_35_en.htm
Die Kommission führt regelmäßig Vergleiche zwischen den Laboratorien durch, um die Leistung der Laboratorien zu prüfen, die in den Mitgliedstaaten die Umweltradioaktivität überwachen. Nach jeder Vergleichskampagne organisiert die Kommission eine Sitzung mit den betroffenen Laboratorien, um die erforderlichen Rückmeldungen zu geben und Kenntnisse zu vermitteln, damit die Qualität der Messungen und die Gleichwertigkeit und Harmonisierung der Messergebnisse verbessert werden.

([2]) http://eurdep.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Basic/Pages/Public/Home/Default.aspx

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005383/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Available data about radioactivity in the soil, air and water

1. How are data on measurable radioactivity in the soil, air and water gathered in the EU?

2. Do uniform recording methods/criteria exist in all EU Member States? How does the Commission plan to ensure this in future?

3. Where can citizens and scientists consult these data?

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

1. According to the article 35 of the Euratom Treaty, each Member State is required to continuously monitor radioactivity in the air, water and soil. Monitoring results are regularly collected in a database maintained by the Commission, as required by Article 36 of the Treaty. Based on this data the Commission regularly publishes validated information on the radiation status of the environment on EU territory.

2. Member States have a certain freedom to decide on the extent of the monitoring programme; technical monitoring methods are however fairly consistent. Typically monitoring includes continuous radiation dose rate monitoring (nanosievert per hour — nSv/h) and determination of activity content (becquerel — Bq) in air, surface water, drinking water, ground water, milk and food using laboratory analysis on samples. The age and sophistication of monitoring equipment varies from one Member State to another — verifications are carried out by the Commission in order to make sure the minimum requirements are met ([1]).

3. Almost every Member State makes its national monitoring data available to the public either via a dedicated authority website or annual reports. On EU level monitoring data is made publicly available at:
http://rem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/RemWeb/RemDbPublic/RemDbPub.aspx

Due to quality control requirements there is a delay in making the data available.

In addition, the current radiation dose rate information is available through the EURDEP (EUropean Radiological Data Exchange Platform) system ([2]). This information is downloaded for emergency preparedness purposes from the Member States automatically every hour and does not go through quality control steps.

([1]) Reports on these verifications are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/radiation_protection/article35/article_35_en.htm
The Commission organises on a regular basis inter-laboratory comparisons to test the proficiency of the laboratories of the Member States that monitor radioactivity in the environment. After each comparison campaign, the Commission organises a meeting with the relevant laboratories to provide the necessary feedback and training, in order to improve the quality of the measurements and the equivalence and harmonisation of the measurements results.

([2]) http://eurdep.jrc.ec.europa.eu/Basic/Pages/Public/Home/Default.aspx

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005384/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Schadstoffe in Gebäuden

Obwohl europäische Bürger noch immer gehäuft an den Folgen von — durch eine Vielzahl von Toxinen wie Mykotoxine, PCB, PCP, Formaldehyd, Fungizide, Organophosphate, Flammschutzmittel und weitere Pestizide aller Art — schadstoffbelasteten Innenräumen erkranken, gibt es noch immer keinen ausreichenden Schutz für Menschen, zumal bekannt ist, dass sich Menschen zu über 60 % in Innenräumen aufhalten (Arbeitsplatz, Wohnung, Schule, usw.).

1. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass in Innenräumen zukünftig auf Schadstofffreiheit Wert gelegt werden sollte, und ist sie bereit, sich z. B. für ein Gebäude-Gesundheits-Zeugnis einzusetzen und damit eine präventiv ausgerichtete, nachhaltige und gesunde Bauweise zu fördern?

2. Welche gesetzliche Regelung plant die Kommission, um die Gesundheit von Gebäudenutzern sicher zu stellen?

3. Wann wird die Kommission eine entsprechende Innenraumluftrichtlinie vorlegen, damit es künftig z. B. auch für Teppichbeläge oder Isoliermaterialien Grenzwerte für den Gesundheitsschutz gibt?

4. Wie bewertet die Kommission diesbezüglich die Einführung eines gesetzlich verankerten Schadstoffnachweises für Gebäude und Wohnungen?

5. Welche Finanzierungs- und Förderungsmöglichkeiten gibt es für Konstrukteure und Bauherren, die Schadstofffreiheit in Innenräumen umsetzen wollen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(23. Juni 2014)

Der Kommission ist bekannt, dass schlechte Luftqualität in Innenräumen, die durch verschiedene physikalische, chemische und biologische Schadstoffe verursacht wird, der menschlichen Gesundheit schaden kann. Laut Schätzungen des Projekts „Promoting actions for healthy indoor air“ (IAIAQ) ([1]) im Rahmen des EU-Gesundheitsprogramms gehen ungefähr zwei Millionen Jahre „gesunden Lebens“ in Europa aufgrund schlechter Innenluftqualität verloren.

Was die Förderung des Baus gesundheitsschonender Gebäude angeht, so hat die Kommission mehrere Projekte (BUMA ([2]), CLEAR-UP ([3]), OFFICAIR ([4]), SINPHONIE ([5]), EPHECT ([6]), HELTHVENT ([7]), HITEA ([8])) finanziert, deren Ziel die Bewertung von Strategien zur Verbesserung der Luftqualität in verschiedenen Umgebungen (Wohnung, Schule, Büro) war. Außerdem hat sie die Weltgesundheitsorganisation bei der Entwicklung von Gesundheitsrichtlinien für häufig vorkommende Innenraumschadstoffe unterstützt.

Zwar beabsichtigt die Kommission nicht die Einführung eines Gesundheitszertfizierungssystems, sie plant jedoch, einen Rahmen mit Kernindikatoren zur Bewertung der Umweltleistung von Gebäuden zu entwickeln; dabei ist das Behaglichkeitsniveau eines der Themen, die im weiteren Entwicklungsprozess genauerer Untersuchungen bedürfen. Zudem sind im Rahmen der Umweltzeichen-Verordnung für mehrere Produktgruppen Kriterien, die eine Verbesserung der Innenraumluftqualität zum Ziel haben, z. B. bei Textilien, Farben, Fußbodenbelägen und Möbeln.

Die harmonisierten Normen für Bauprodukte gemäß der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 305/2011 tragen allen auf nationaler oder europäischer Ebene festgelegten Grenzwerten Rechnung. Nach Ansicht der Kommission ist ein Pflicht-Schadstoffnachweis für Gebäude Angelegenheit der Mitgliedstaaten. Es sind keine speziellen finanziellen Maßnahmen zur Förderung von Konstrukteuren und Bauherren vorgesehen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/env_iaiaq.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005307
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/ic2011/index_en.cfm?pg=project_details&project=clear_up
([4]) http://www.officair-project.eu/
([5]) http://www.sinphonie.eu/
([6]) https://sites.vito.be/sites/ephect/Pages/home.aspx
([7]) http://www.healthvent.byg.dtu.dk/
([8]) http://www.hitea.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005384/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Harmful substances in buildings

Although large numbers of European citizens are continuing to be made ill because their interior spaces are contaminated with a whole range of toxins, including mycotoxins, PCBs, PCPs, formaldehyde, fungicides, organophosphates, flame-proofing agents, and pesticides of all kinds, their health is still not being properly protected, notwithstanding the established fact that people spend more than 60% of their time indoors (at work, at home, at school, and so on).

1. Does the Commission consider that, as far as interiors are concerned, the emphasis should in future be on eliminating harmful substances, and is it willing to support, for example, a building health certification system so as to promote prevention-oriented, sustainable, and healthy building methods?

2. What legislation will the Commission produce in order to protect the health of building users?

3. When will the Commission submit a directive on interior spaces so as to ensure that floor coverings or insulating material, say, will in future be subject to the limit values required for health protection?

4. What is the Commission's attitude to mandatory contaminant detection for homes and other buildings?

5. What sources of financing and support are available to designers and builders seeking to create interiors free of harmful substances?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

The Commission is aware that poor indoor air quality due to various physical, chemical and biological pollutants can cause harmful effects to human health: The EU Health Programme project 'Promoting actions for healthy indoor air' (IAIAQ) ([1]) has estimated that approximately two million years of 'healthy life' is lost in Europe due to poor indoor air quality.

Regarding the promotion of healthy buildings, the Commission co-financed several projects (BUMA ([2]), Clear-Up ([3]), Officair ([4]), Sinphonie ([5]), Ephect ([6]), Healthvent ([7]), HITEA ([8])) with the aim to evaluate strategies for improving indoor air quality in various environmental settings (homes, schools, offices) and has also supported the World Health Organisation in developing health-based guidelines for key indoor air pollutants.

While the Commission does not intend to introduce a health certification system, it is planning to develop a framework with core indicators for the assessment of the environmental performance of buildings, including indoor comfort as one of the areas to study further in the development process. Moreover, under the Ecolabel regulation, there are several product groups including criteria addressing indoor air quality, such as textiles, paints, floor coverings and furniture.

The harmonised standards on construction products elaborated under Regulation (EU) 305/2011 incorporate any limit values adopted at national or at European level. The Commission considers that the mandatory contaminant detection for buildings is a matter for the authorities of the Member States. No specific financial measures to support designers and builders are foreseen.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthy_environments/docs/env_iaiaq.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=2005307
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/ic2011/index_en.cfm?pg=project_details&project=clear_up
([4]) http://www.officair-project.eu/
([5]) http://www.sinphonie.eu/
([6]) https://sites.vito.be/sites/ephect/Pages/home.aspx
([7]) http://www.healthvent.byg.dtu.dk/
([8]) http://www.hitea.eu/

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005386/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Möglichkeit, dass die TTIP das Teilverbot von Neonikotinoiden aushebelt

In einem Exklusiv-Interview mit viEUws spricht sich John Atkin, Chief Operating Officer (COO) der Firma Syngenta, für die Harmonisierung der Sicherheitsstandards im Bereich Saatgut und Chemikalien aus.

1. Ist der Kommission dieses Interview bekannt, wonach der COO von Syngenta das Teilverbot von Neonikotinoiden mit der transatlantischen Handels- und Investitionspartnerschaft (TTIP) aushebeln will?

2. Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass dieses von Syngenta gewünschte Ergebnis bei der TTIP herauskommen wird?

3. Auf welcher rechtlichen Grundlage will die Kommission dies sicherstellen?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(17. Juni 2014)

Der Kommission ist das Interview mit dem Chief Operating Officer (COO) der Firma Syngenta nicht bekannt. Die Harmonisierung von in der Europäischen Union geltenden Sicherheitsstandards ist eine allgemeine Maßnahme der Kommission in jedem Bereich, in dem dies für notwendig erachtet wird, und steht in Einklang mit den EU-Verträgen.

Die EU legt in Übereinstimmung mit dem WTO-Übereinkommen über die Anwendung gesundheitspolizeilicher und pflanzenschutzrechtlicher Maßnahmen ein aus ihrer Sicht angemessenes Gesundheitsschutzniveau (für Menschen, Tiere und Pflanzen) fest. Die Kommission stuft den Schutz der Gesundheit und der Umwelt als oberste Priorität ein und hat sich verpflichtet, zu gewährleisten, dass Lebens- und Futtermittelstandards in der gesamten Lebensmittelkette respektiert werden. Der Konsum von Lebensmitteln oder Futtermitteln sollte keine nachteiligen Auswirkungen auf die Gesundheit von Mensch und Tier und auf die Umwelt haben.

Bei der Vorstellung des geplanten Handels- und Investitionsabkommens zwischen der EU und den USA (TTIP) auf einer Pressekonferenz am 13. Februar 2013 hat die Kommission Folgendes erklärt: „Bei den Verhandlungen geht es nicht darum, aus Gewinnstreben die Gesundheit unserer Verbraucher zu gefährden. Über eine Änderung der Grundregeln, die von keiner der beiden Seiten gewünscht wird, werden wir nicht verhandeln."

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005386/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Possibility that the TTIP will annul the partial ban on neonicotinoids

In an exclusive interview with viEUws, John Atkin, Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Syngenta, calls for the harmonisation of safety standards in the area of seeds and chemicals.

1. Is the Commission aware of this interview in which the COO of Syngenta says he wants to annul the partial ban on neonicotinoids through the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)?

2. Can the Commission rule out that this outcome desired by Syngenta will be achieved through the TTIP?

3. On what legal basis will the Commission act to ensure this?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Commission is not aware of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Syngenta interview and its relevant content. Harmonisation of safety standards applicable in the European Union is a general Commission policy in whatever area is considered necessary and in line with the EU treaties.

The EU sets its sanitary protection (human, animal and plant health) at a level that it considers appropriate, in accordance with the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures.

The Commission considers the protection of health and the environment as a top priority and is committed to ensuring that food and feed standards are respected all along the food chain. Consumption of food and feed should prevent adverse effects on human health, animal health and preserve the environment.

When presenting the EU-US trade and investment agreement (TTIP) at a press conference on 13 February 2013, the Commission stated the following: 'These negotiations are not about compromising the health of our consumers for commercial gains. We will not negotiate changes of the basic rules that we do not want on either side.'

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-005388/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23. April 2014)

Betrifft: Gesundheitsfolgen von intensiver Gasförderung

Im Zusammenhang mit zunehmenden Beschwerden über potenzielle gesundheitliche Schädigungen durch konventionelle Gasförderung im Landkreis Rotenburg/Wümme kommen Fragen auf. Es gibt keinen Hinweis auf die unzähligen toxischen Ereignisse rund um eine seit über 50 Jahren bestehende intensive Gasförderung unter Einsatz von flüchtigen Kohlenwasserstoffen, Methanol, Feinstäuben, PAK, Benzol, Stickoxiden, Schwefeldioxid, Schwermetallen, Hormonaktiven Substanzen (EDCs) und vielem anderem mehr. Es muss von einer mangelnden Qualität der Dokumentation, wenn nicht von der Verletzung der Sorgfaltspflicht bei der Dokumentation, ausgegangen werden. Eine augenscheinlich hohe Zahl von Krebsfällen in dieser Region wird berichtet, davon mehrere bekannte Fälle von Blutkrebsen bei ca. 20-Jährigen.

Die EU-Umweltinformationsrichtlinie schreibt in Artikel 7 Absatz 4 den Behörden vor, S „im Fall einer unmittelbaren Bedrohung der menschlichen Gesundheit oder der Umwelt (…), sämtliche (…) Informationen (…) unverzüglich zu verbreiten, die es der eventuell betroffenen Öffentlichkeit ermöglichen können, Maßnahmen zur Abwendung (…) zu ergreifen“. Diese Dokumentationspflicht bezieht sich nach Artikel 2 Buchstabe f auch auf „den Zustand der menschlichen Gesundheit und Sicherheit“.

1. Welche Möglichkeiten sieht die Kommission für Bürger, hier Abhilfe zu erreichen?

2. Wie können die Bürger in Erfahrung bringen, was, wann, wo und ob überhaupt entsprechend der Bedrohungslage durch die Behörden ein adäquates Umweltmonitoring durchgeführt wurde?

3. Welche Möglichkeiten hat die Kommission, darauf hinzuwirken, dass ein überprüfbares umfassendes Umweltmonitoring mit Beteiligung unabhängiger Institute und mit Kontrolle durch Strukturen in der betroffenen Bevölkerung vorgenommen wird?

4. Ab welchem Niveau der Weigerung der Behörden, adäquat auf die begründeten Besorgnisse der Bevölkerung wegen der konkreten Gesundheitsschädigung durch Emissionen der Gasförderindustrie (die bei Benzol auch niedrigschwellig hoch gefährlich sind) zu reagieren, besteht eine Interventionspflicht der zuständigen EU-Behörden?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(2. Juli 2014)

Nach Auffassung der Kommission enthalten die von der Frau Abgeordneten angeführten Informationen keine genauen Hinweise auf bestimmte Anlagen oder Quellen der angeblichen Luftverschmutzung und auch keinen Beleg für einen Verstoß gegen EU-Vorschriften zur Luftverschmutzung, Luftqualität oder Verbreitung von Umweltinformationen, wie sie z. B. in den Richtlinien über Industrieemissionen ([1]), die Luftqualität ([2]) oder den Zugang zu Umweltinformationen ([3]) enthalten sind.

In Bezug auf die Umweltüberwachung möchte die Kommission daran erinnern, dass die Mitgliedstaaten nicht verpflichtet sind sicherzustellen, dass diese Überwachung durch unabhängige Einrichtungen erfolgt.

Deshalb ist die Kommission nicht in der Lage, über das Vorliegen eines Verstoßes gegen EU-Recht zu befinden, und möchte darauf hinweisen, dass die betroffenen Bürger die nationalen Verwaltungs- und Justizbehörden mit der Angelegenheit befassen können.

([1]) Richtlinie 2010/75/EU des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 24. November 2010 über Industrieemissionen (integrierte Vermeidung und Verminderung der Umweltverschmutzung), ABl. L 334 vom 17.12.2010.
([2]) Richtlinie 2008/50/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 21. Mai 2008 über Luftqualität und saubere Luft für Europa, ABl. L 152 vom 11.6.2008.
([3]) Richtlinie 2003/4/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 28. Januar 2003 über den Zugang der Öffentlichkeit zu Umweltinformationen und zur Aufhebung der Richtlinie 90/313/EWG des Rates, ABl. L 41 vom 14.2.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005388/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Damage to health caused by intensive gas production

Increasing concern is being expressed at the possible damage to health caused by conventional gas production in the district of Rotenburg/Wümme. This in turn leads to a number of questions about the lack of information concerning the innumerable cases of harm caused by toxic substances such as volatile hydrocarbons, methanol, fine dust, PAH, benzene, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, heavy metals, endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) and many others over more than 50 years of intensive gas production . This situation can only be attributed to inadequate documentation, not to mention failure to exercise due care and diligence in this respect. The reported incidence of cancer, including various forms of leukaemia affecting young people around the age of 20, is particularly high in the area concerned.

Under Article 7(4) of the EU Environmental Information Directive, Member States are required to take the necessary measures to ensure that, in the event of an imminent threat to human health or the environment, all information which could enable the public likely to be affected to take preventive measures is disseminated immediately and without delay. Under Article 2(f), this requirement also relates to information concerning the state of human health and safety.

1. In the Commission's view, what can be done to assist the members of the public concerned?

2. What can be done to inform the public what measures were taken, when and where they were taken and whether any adequate environmental monitoring commensurate with the nature of the threat was in fact carried out by the authorities?

3. What action can the Commission take to ensure that verifiable and comprehensive environmental monitoring is carried out for the benefit of the members of the public concerned, with the involvement of independent institutions and watchdog organisations?

4. At what juncture are the EU authorities required to intervene following refusal by the authorities to take suitable action in response to justified public concerns regarding serious damage to health caused by emissions from gas production (which are, in the case of benzene for example, highly dangerous even at low levels)?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2014)

The Commission considers that the information from the Honourable Member does not provide specific reference to particular installation(s) and sources of the alleged air pollution, nor does it provide evidence of a breach of EU legislation on air emissions, air quality and environmental information dissemination, including of the Industrial Emissions Directive, ([1]) of the Ambient Air Quality Directive ([2]) and of the Access to Environmental Information Directive. ([3])

Regarding environmental monitoring, the Commission recalls that Member States have no obligation to make sure that environmental monitoring is carried out by independent institutions.

The Commission is therefore not in a position to conclude on a possible infringement of EU environmental law and wishes to stress that the public concerned is entitled to refer the matter to the national administrative and judicial authorities.

([1]) Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24.11.2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control), OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.
([2]) Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21.5.2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe, OJ L 152, 11.6.2008.
([3]) Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28.1.2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC, OJ L 41, 14.2.2003.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-005389/14
do Komisji
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(23 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowe badania na temat wartości pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów (ILUC)

Podczas gdy obecny wniosek w sprawie pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów oparty jest na badaniach IFPRI (Międzynarodowego Instytutu Badań nad Polityką Żywnościową), Komisja rozpoczęła nowe badania, GLOBIOM, mające na celu opracowanie nowego modelu pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów na szczeblu unijnym. Potrzeba opracowania nowych badań, jak i ograniczona dostępność informacji na temat GLOBIOM, nasuwają wątpliwości względem korzyści płynących z wniosku w sprawie pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów, który znacząco wpłynie na sektor biopaliw.

1. Jaki jest powód rozpoczęcia nowych badań GLOBIOM?

2. Przedstawiony przez Komisję wniosek w sprawie pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów znacząco wpłynie na rentowność sektora biopaliw. Dlaczego Komisja przedłożyła wniosek ustawodawczy, skoro wydaje się, iż proponowane wartości pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów (bazujące na badaniach IFPRI) nie są oparte na ugruntowanej wiedzy naukowej i wymagają przeprowadzenia dalszych badań (GLOBIOM)?

3. Nowy model GLOBIOM wykorzystuje wyłącznie dane z lat 2005-2010. Co za tym idzie, nowe badania nie będą uwzględniały ostatnich zmian w dynamice rynku, zmian wydajności produkcji oraz bardziej zrównoważonego charakteru upraw. Dlaczego w badaniach nie wykorzystuje się bardziej aktualnych danych?

4. W zaleceniu Komisji z dnia 9 kwietnia 2013 r. (2013/179/UE) dotyczącym stosowania wspólnych metod pomiaru efektywności środowiskowej w cyklu życia produktów i organizacji, stwierdzono, że „Ponieważ w kontekście śladu środowiskowego nie istnieje uzgodniona metodyka dotycząca pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów, nie jest ona włączona do obliczeń gazów cieplarnianych w ramach śladu środowiskowego produktu (PEF)". Skoro nie istnieje uzgodniona metodyka dotycząca pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów, dlaczego Komisja wydaje 800 000 EUR na kolejne badania ILUC?

5. Pozytywna rola działań mających na celu spowolnienie zmian klimatycznych, takich jak bardziej skuteczne egzekwowanie ustawodawstwa w krajach trzecich, zwiększenie wydajności produkcji żywności, zmieniające się modele zaopatrzenia itp., nie jest brana pod uwagę w modelach takich jak IFPRI i GLOBIOM, może jednak prowadzić do znacznego zmniejszenia wartości pośredniej zmiany sposobu użytkowania gruntów. Dlaczego pozytywna rola działań mających na celu spowolnienie zmian klimatycznych nie jest brana pod uwagę w tych badaniach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(18 czerwca 2014 r.)

1. W związku z rozwojem badań naukowych dotyczących pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów ([1]) może zaistnieć potrzeba dostosowania polityki. We wniosku dotyczącym pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów ([2]) Komisja przewidziała przeprowadzenie w 2017 r. przeglądu, w ramach którego uwzględnione zostaną wyniki dalszych badań naukowych. Oczekuje się, że badania te wzbogacą naszą wiedzę o dodatkowe szczegóły, natomiast mało prawdopodobne jest, by przyniosły one wyniki radykalnie odmienne od obecnych.

2. Z opracowań naukowych wynika, że poziomy emisji spowodowanych pośrednią zmianą użytkowania gruntów mogą znacznie różnić się w zależności od surowców i mogą niwelować w części lub w całości korzyści w postaci ograniczenia emisji gazów cieplarnianych uzyskiwanego dzięki zastąpieniu paliw kopalnych określonymi biopaliwami. Szacunki dotyczące pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów zawarte we wspomnianym wniosku oparte są na najlepszych dostępnych w 2012 r. wynikach badań naukowych. Szacunki te nie mają bezpośredniego wpływu na ocenę rentowności sektora biopaliw, ponieważ Komisja zaproponowała, by nie włączać ich do oceny skutków w kontekście zrównoważonego rozwoju w odniesieniu do biopaliw. Zamiast tego, biorąc pod uwagę ograniczenia modelowania w planowaniu strategii politycznych, kluczowym elementem wniosku Komisji jest ograniczenie wkładu biopaliw, które niosą ze sobą wysokie ryzyko spowodowania pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów, w realizację celu na 2020 r. w zakresie energii ze źródeł odnawialnych w transporcie. Prawodawca UE podejmie ostateczną decyzję o tym, czy i w jaki sposób szacunki dotyczące pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów powinny zostać uwzględnione w prawodawstwie.

([1]) ang. *indirect land-use change*, ILUC.
([2]) COM(2012) 595 final.

3. W badaniu GLOBIOM wykorzystane zostaną aktualne dane, a nawet najnowsze prognozy dotyczące przyszłych zmian do 2030 r. Szczegółowa dokumentacja jest dostępna na stronach internetowych ([3]).

4. Jeżeli chodzi o potrzebę dalszych badań, uprzejmie proszę o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytania nr 1 i 5, a w odniesieniu do kwestii braku powszechnie przyjętej metodyki – z odpowiedzią na pytanie nr 2.

5. W badaniach naukowych w zakresie pośredniej zmiany użytkowania gruntów brany jest pod uwagę wpływ wielu zmiennych agronomicznych i ekonomicznych; zmienne te zostały uwzględnione w modelach IFPRI i GLOBIOM. Pod uwagę bierze się również wysiłki podejmowane zarówno w UE, jak i w państwach trzecich, w celu przeciwdziałania zmianie klimatu poprzez zapobieganie utracie naturalnych zasobów węgla spowodowanej zmianą sposobu użytkowania gruntów. W przyszłości konieczne może okazać się uwzględnienie innych zmiennych, dlatego też istotne jest regularne aktualizowanie danych naukowych.

([3]) http://www.globiom-iluc.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005389/14
to the Commission
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: New study on indirect land use change (ILUC) values

While the current ILUC proposal is based on the IFPRI study, the Commission has launched a new study, Globiom, which aims at developing a new ILUC model at EU level. The need to develop a new study as well as there being limited information available on Globiom, casts doubt over the viability of the ILUC proposal, which will have a huge impact on the biofuels sector.

1. What is the reason behind launching the new study, Globiom?

2. The ILUC proposal put forward by the Commission will have a huge impact on the viability of the biofuels sector. Why did the Commission put forward a legislative proposal, when it seems that the proposed ILUC values (based on IFPRI research) are not based on agreed science and need further research (Globiom)?

3. The new Globiom model is only using data from the period 2005-2010. As a result, the latest changes in terms of market dynamics, yield changes or improved sustainability will not be taken into account in the new study. Why is the study not using more recent data?

4. In its Recommendation of 9 April 2013 (2013/179/EU) on the use of common methods to measure and communicate the life cycle environmental performance of products and organisations, the Commission stated that, 'as there is no agreed methodology on indirect land use change in the context of the Environmental Footprint, indirect land use change shall not be included in the greenhouse gas calculation in the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)'. If there is no agreed methodology on ILUC, why is the Commission spending EUR 800 000 on another ILUC study?

5. The positive role of mitigation, such as better enforcement of legislation of third countries, increasing yields of food crops, changing sourcing patterns, etc., are not included in models such as IFPRI and Globiom, but can result in a considerable weakening of ILUC values. Why is the positive role of mitigation not included in these studies?

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

1. As ILUC ([1]) science is evolving, policy may need to be adapted. The Commission has included a review for 2017 in its ILUC proposal ([2]), for which further research will serve as input. It is expected to refine our understanding, but unlikely to yield drastically different results.

2. Scientific works indicates that emissions from ILUC can vary substantially between feedstocks and can negate some or all of the GHG savings of individual biofuels relative to the fossil fuels they replace. The ILUC estimates in the proposal are based on the best science available in 2012. These estimates have no direct impact on the viability of the biofuels sector as the Commission proposed not to include them in the sustainability assessment for biofuels. Instead, given the limits of modelling in policy design, the key element of the Commission's proposal is to cap the contribution of biofuels with a high risk of causing ILUC towards the renewable energy target for transport in 2020. The EU legislator will eventually decide if and how ILUC estimates should be used in legislation.

3. The Globiom study will use up-to-date data and even the most recent projections for future developments up to 2030. Detailed documentation is available online ([3]).

4. Regarding the need for further research, please refer to replies 1 and 5, for the lack of agreed methodology to reply 2.

5. ILUC science takes into account the impact of many agronomic and economic variables; they are included in the IFPRI and Globiom models. Efforts taken, both within the EU and in third countries, to mitigate climate change through combatting the loss of natural carbon stocks caused by land use change are also taken into account. As these variables may change over time, it is important to keep science up-to-date.

([1]) Indirect land-use change
([2]) COM(2012) 595 final
([3]) http://www.globiom-iluc.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005390/14
to the Commission
Claude Moraes (S&D) and David Martin (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Geographical protected status

Three EU schemes known as PDO (protected designation of origin), PGI (protected geographical indication) and TSG (traditional speciality guaranteed) promote and protect the names of quality agricultural products and foodstuffs. We welcome the steps the Commission has taken to ensure that these products are protected from misuse and imitation. However, products beyond agricultural products and foodstuffs are open to similar misuse but can't be registered under the schemes. One particular example is Savile Row bespoke tailoring, based in London, which in recent years has seen a rise in imitations or misuse, both within the EU and from China and other parts of Asia.

Accordingly:

1. Can the Commission confirm whether there are any plans in place to develop these schemes beyond agricultural products and foodstuffs within the EU?

2. Can the Commission confirm whether or not it will raise these issues in trade dialogues and negotiations with countries outside of the EU?

3. What action will the Commission take to obtain geographical protected status and to broaden the scope of protection for producers and consumers so as to work towards ensuring that high-quality textiles products are guaranteed by such status?

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

1. The Commission is currently studying the possibility of extending Geographical indication (GI) protection to non-agricultural products like high quality textile products. Within this framework, in 2012, the Commission commissioned an external Study on Geographical Indication protection for non-agricultural products in the internal market and in 2013, organised a public hearing.

2. Although non-agricultural products are still not subject to a harmonised system of GI protection at EU level, there is frequently an interest among our trading partners to discuss the different approaches taken to protect such products. The Commission has been and continues to be ready to engage with its trade partners' requests on non-agricultural products based on a case-by-case approach, and where possible to enhance GI protection for EU non-agricultural products.

3. Based on the Study and the feedback received from stakeholders, the Commission now considers to broadly consult the public in the coming months on the pros and cons of potentially extending Geographical indication protection to non-agricultural products.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005391/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Testicular cancer

New research in the UK suggests that as many as 68% of men do not know how to check themselves for testicular cancer. The survey was based on a sample of 3 000 men aged 15-45 and carried out by male cancer charity Orchard. Each year, around 2 300 men in this age range are diagnosed with the illness, yet if caught early enough the survival rate is very high.

What is the Commission doing, in conjunction with relevant charities and agencies within Member States, to raise awareness, to educate and to reduce any stigma relating to this potentially fatal, but so often curable, illness?

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

At the current stage, there is no initiative of the Commission, in conjunction with relevant charities and agencies within Member States, on the issue of raising awareness and reducing stigma relating specifically to testicular cancer.

Supporting action on cancer is a longstanding priority of EU action on health. In this regard, the Commission supports Joint Actions with the Member States and projects to address cancer via the Health Programme; as well as action focused on the prevention of cancer, including the European Cancer Code and action on tobacco control, alcohol related harm, nutrition and physical activity.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005392/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: European Health Insurance Card

A number of constituents have contacted my office doubting the reliability of the European Health Insurance Card, particularly older citizens for whom holiday insurance premiums can rocket.

In view of this, can the Commission:

1. reaffirm what the card entitles an EU citizen to when in another Member State?

2. outline where there have been problems experienced by citizens presenting the card?

3. outline what problems there have been for citizens attempting to access medical services, specifically in Spain, and what stage legal proceedings against Spain have reached and when a ruling can be expected?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) entitles the holder to unplanned healthcare which is necessary from a medical point of view in the host State's public healthcare system during a temporary stay in any EU Member State, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Iceland. Such treatment must be provided on the same terms and at the same cost as those applying to nationals of the State concerned.

From 2010 to 2013, EHIC holders experienced particular problems when certain hospitals in Spain refused to accept the Card where the holders were covered by travel insurance. The Commission issued a Letter of Formal Notice to Spain regarding this practice in May 2013. The Honourable Member is referred to the Commission's answer to Question E-10736/2013, which gives an account of the Spanish authorities' response to that Letter. The Commission has received no further complaints about that particular practice and is therefore considering closing the infringement procedure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005393/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Uzbekistan cotton industry

A constituent of mine has recently brought to my attention the exploitation of child, as well as adult, labour in the Uzbekistan cotton industry. Labourers often work long hours in poor conditions for little or no financial reward. Children as young as nine are forced to pick cotton by hand. Failure to meet targets can lead to beatings or expulsion from schools. Uzbekistan benefits from preferential import duties for its cotton exports to the EU, which is the biggest single destination for Uzbek cotton, giving us substantial leverage to push for reform and for the protection of children and other labourers in the country.

What is the Commission doing at the European level to lobby the Uzbek state, its cotton industry and its main consumers within EU borders with a view to combating this injustice?

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

The use of child labour during the cotton harvest in Uzbekistan has been an issue of ongoing concern for the EU over the last years, which we have raised with our Uzbek interlocutors on every occasion, including at the highest level. The EU has been actively involved in supporting the resumption of cooperation between Uzbekistan and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which is the competent international body on labour standards and the monitoring of the implementation of the relevant ILO labour conventions. Further to our efforts, an ILO High Level Monitoring Mission was deployed to Uzbekistan during last year's cotton harvest. This mission concluded that significant progress had recently been made by Uzbekistan towards eradicating child labour. Furthermore, the renewed cooperation between the ILO and Uzbekistan has allowed them to sign, in April 2014 a Decent Work Country Programme, which marks an unprecedented step forward in ILO-Uzbek relations. The Programme is aimed at addressing, beyond child labour, a number of wider labour issues, including the issue of forced labour for adults. The EU strongly supported this initiative and will continue to follow very closely this issue in the future.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005394/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Marriage of girls under the age of nine

Legislation tabled by Iraq's governing coalition this week reveals plans to legalise the marriage of girls under the age of nine. Whilst the legislation does not set any age limit for marriage proposals, it includes rules on divorce for girls who have reached nine years of age. If passed, the legislation, applicable to the Shia majority in Iraq, would mirror the martial law in neighbouring Iran. What is the EU doing to combat child marriage in the Middle East?

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission
(19 June 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 on 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 has prioritised promotion and protection of children's rights and protection against gender-based violence in its Action Plan under the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy. The EEAS is in process of preparing a diplomatic campaign on the rights of the child and Children victims of early forced marriages will be a key element.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005395/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Christians in China

Press reports have raised concerns that the Christians in China are once again under attack from the ruling Communist Party. Recent headlines relate more specifically to one of China's most Christian provinces, Zhejiang, and particularly the city of Wenzhou within it, where citizens are trying to protect a church that the city's thousands of Christians use for worship.

What has, and is, the Commission doing to lobby China on religious freedom, particularly in this case concerning Christians?

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

On 25 June 2013, the European Union and the People's Republic of China held the 32nd round of the Dialogue on Human Rights in Guiyang (Guizhou), China. The EU side visited a Christian church in the region and referred to the clear provisions in the Chinese Constitution safeguarding freedom of religion, whilst expressing concerns over continuous reports of systematic harassment and threats against members of the religious groups and interference in the functioning of churches. The EU also enquired about plans to modify the registration requirements for religious organisations, and referred to the 'Guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief' adopted by the Council of the European Union, in 2013. Similar concerns were raised by the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, during his extended visit to China in September 2013. The EU will continue to monitor the human rights situation in China, including the issue of freedom of religion or belief.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005396/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Persecution of Christians

In an age where freedom of expression, human rights and democracy are increasingly held up as among the greatest virtues of the EU, yet persecution of Christians across the world seems to continually increase, what is the Vice-President/High Representative doing to lobby Pakistan on behalf of the two Christians who have been sentenced to death under blasphemy charges? ([1])

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

The EU has, in its contacts with the Government of Pakistan, repeatedly expressed grave concern over the discrimination against Christian and all religious minority communities in the country. The situation of religious minorities and freedom of religion and belief is a priority in the EU's dialogue and cooperation with Pakistan. The blasphemy laws are a key concern when it comes to freedom of religion and belief. A related concern is that the laws are often misused to settle personal scores or seize property. In response to presumed cases, very harsh punishments, including the death sentence, continue to be handed out by the lower courts. Nevertheless Pakistan has a de facto moratorium on the death penalty. It should be noted that while the cases that receive international attention generally concern Christians or other minorities, most cases are between Muslims.

The HR/VP has repeatedly expressed concern at the potential for abuse of the blasphemy laws, and has called on the Pakistani authorities to take adequate measures to prevent incidents of religious hostility, to protect the rights of all citizens and to align government practice with its commitments to international human rights instruments.

The EU will, as appropriate, raise the recent cases of sentencing on blasphemy charges in upcoming human rights dialogues.

([1]) http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/pakistan_140407.php?ref=lnstorylnk

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-005399/14
Komisijai
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(2014 m. balandžio 23 d.)

Tema: Bankų finansų reguliavimas ir bankų bankrotas

Norėjau sužinoti, ar ES lygmeniu yra priimtos taisyklės, reglamentuojančios ES veikiančių bankų bankroto klausimus ir procedūras? Taip pat koks reglamentavimas yra taikomas ES bankų finansinei priežiūrai?

M. Barnier atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 13 d.)

Gerbiamojo Parlamento nario minimose srityse pastaruoju metu buvo didelių pokyčių. Bankų sąjunga grindžiama dviem ramsčiais: bendru priežiūros mechanizmu, kuris įsigaliojo 2013 m. lapkričio mėn. ([1]), ir bendru pertvarkymo mechanizmu, dėl kurio Europos Parlamentas ir Taryba pasiekė susitarimą, kuris patvirtintas balandžio 15 d. plenariniame posėdyje.

Pagal bendrą priežiūros mechanizmą nuo 2014 m. lapkričio mėn. Europos Centrinis Bankas rūpinsis dalyvaujančių valstybių narių bankų sistemos priežiūra ir bus tiesiogiai atsakingas už svarbių euro zonos bankų priežiūrą. Bendras pertvarkymo mechanizmas bus centralizuotai taikomas bankams, įsteigtiems valstybėse narėse, dalyvaujančiose pagal bendrą priežiūros mechanizmą nustatytoje bankų gaivinimo ir pertvarkymo sistemoje (Bankų gaivinimo ir pertvarkymo direktyva), dėl kurios taip pat balsuota balandžio 15 d. plenariniame posėdyje.

Be to, siekiant labiau suderinti ir nuosekliau taikyti taisykles finansų įstaigoms, 2011 m. sausio mėn. įsteigta Europos bankininkystės institucija.

Konkrečiai bankams nuo 2014 m. sausio mėn. galioja nauja Kapitalo reikalavimų direktyva ir reglamentas, kuriuose nustatytos visiems ES bankams vienodos taisyklės dėl prudencinių reikalavimų, kuriuos turi įgyvendinti priežiūros institucijos.

Galiausiai bankams taikoma Direktyva 2001/24/EB dėl kredito įstaigų reorganizavimo ir likvidavimo ([2]).

([1]) 2013 m. spalio 15 d. Tarybos reglamentas (ES) Nr. 1024/2013, kuriuo Europos Centriniam Bankui pavedami specialūs uždaviniai, susiję su rizikos ribojimu pagrįstos kredito įstaigų priežiūros politika (2013 OL L 287, p. 63).

([2]) 2001 m. balandžio 4 d. Europos Parlamento ir Tarybos direktyva 2001/24/EB dėl kredito įstaigų reorganizavimo ir likvidavimo (2001 OL L 125, p. 15).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005399/14
to the Commission
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Regulation of banking finance and bank bankruptcy

I would like to know whether there exist rules regulating bankruptcy matters and procedures of EU operating banks at EU level? Also, what regulation is applied to financial supervision of EU banks?

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

In the last years significant developments have taken place in the areas referred to by the Honourable Member. The Banking Union rests on two pillars: the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM), which has entered into force in November 2013 ([1]), and the Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM), where a political agreement has been reached between the European Parliament and the Council, which was confirmed by the Plenary on April 15.

In accordance with the SSM, the European Central Bank will be in charge of overseeing the banking system in participating Member States as of November 2014 and will be directly responsible for the supervision of significant banks in the euro area. The SRM will centrally apply to banks established in Member States participating in the SSM the framework for the recovery and resolution of banks (Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRRD), which was also voted by the Plenary on April 15.

In addition, as of January 2011, the European Banking Authority (EBA) was established, with the objective to ensure the greater harmonisation and coherent application of rules for financial institutions.

Specifically for banks, since January 2014 the new Capital Requirements Directive and Regulation are in force, setting out the uniform rules to all EU banks in terms of prudential requirements that supervisors have to implement.

Finally, Directive 2001/24/EC on the reorganization and winding up of credit institutions applies to banks. ([2])

([1]) Council Regulation (EU) No 1024/2013 of 15.10.2013 conferring specific tasks on the ECB concerning policies relating to the prudential supervision of credit institutions (OJ 2013 L 287 p. 63).

([2]) Directive 2001/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4.4.2001 on the reorganization and winding up of credit institutions (OJ 2001 L 125, p. 15).

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-005400/14
Komisijai
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(2014 m. balandžio 23 d.)

Tema: Prekinio kreditavimo draudimo problemos

Norėjau sužinoti, ar ES mastu yra reglamentuojamas prekinis kreditavimo draudimas? Jei ne, ar Komisija planuoja imtis veiksmų šioje srityje?

Karelo De Guchto atsakymas, Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 18 d.)

Susitarus, kad prekinio kreditavimo draudimas reiškia eksporto kredito draudimą (t. y. valstybės garantija arba draudimas, kurį už atitinkamą mokestį teikia valstybinė įstaiga, kad apsaugotų eksportuotojus nuo konkrečios rizikos, lemiančios, kad importuotojai neįvykdys mokėjimo įsipareigojimų pagal sutartį), ES lygmeniu naudojama ši reglamentavimo sistema:

1) Eksporto kredito draudimui, kurio grąžinimo terminas – 2 arba daugiau metų, taikomas EBPO susitarimas dėl oficialiai remiamų eksporto kreditų. Šiuo ES ir 8 kitų Ekonominio bendradarbiavimo ir plėtros organizacijos (EBPO) šalių vadinamuoju džentelmenišku susitarimu apibrėžiamos bendros tokių sandorių finansavimo taisyklės. EBPO susitarimas ir vėlesni pakeitimai reguliariai perkeliami į ES teisės aktus (Reglamentas (ES) Nr. 1233/2011 ([1]) ir šiuo teisiniu pagrindu grindžiami deleguotieji aktai). Be to, 1998 m. gegužės 7 d. Tarybos direktyva 98/29/EB užtikrinamas tam tikrų ES valstybių narių eksporto kredito programų techninių aspektų suderinimas ([2]).

2) Trumpalaikis eksporto finansavimas (grąžinimo terminas – iki 2 metų), kai eksporto sandoriai vyksta tarp ES valstybių narių ir eksportuojant į daugumą EBPO šalių, paprastai gali būti teikiamas privačios rinkos ir tik išimtiniais atvejais – pagal valstybines eksporto kredito programas. Smulkesnė informacija išdėstyta Komisijos komunikate dėl Sutarties dėl Europos Sąjungos veikimo 107 ir 108 straipsnių taikymo trumpalaikiam eksporto kredito draudimui ([3]).

([1]) OL L 326, 2011 12 8, p. 45.
([2]) OL L 148, 1998 5 19, p. 22.
([3]) OL C 392, 2012 12 19, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005400/14
to the Commission
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Issues on trade credit insurance

I would like to know whether trade credit insurance is regulated at EU level? If not, does the Commission intend to take any action in this field?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

On the understanding that the term 'trade credit insurance' refers to 'export credit insurance' (i.e. a public guarantee or insurance provided against appropriate fee by a government agency to protect exporters against specific risks leading to the non-payment of his contract by the importer), the following regulatory framework exists at EU level:

1. Export Credit Insurance with a repayment term of 2 years or more is subject to the 'OECD Arrangement on Officially Supported Export Credits'. This gentlemen's agreement between the EU and 8 other Members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines common rules for the financing of such transactions. The OECD Arrangement and subsequent modifications are regularly transformed into EC law (Regulation (EU) No 1233/2011 ([1])and delegated acts based on this legal basis apply). In addition, the Council Directive 98/29/EC of 7 May 1998 ensures the harmonisation of certain technical aspects between the export credit programs of the EU Member States ([2]);

2. Short term export finance (with a repayment term of up to 2 years) for export transactions from one EU Member State to another and for exports to most OECD countries can normally be covered by the private market and may only in exceptional situations be covered by public export credit programs. The details are laid down in the Commission Communication on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU to short-term export credit insurance ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 326, 8.12.2011, p.45.
([2]) OJ L 148, 19.5.1998, p.22.
([3]) OJ C 392, 19.12.2012, p.1.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-005401/14
Komisijai
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(2014 m. balandžio 23 d.)

Tema: Energetinė nepriklausomybė ir bendra sąjunga

Viešumoje pasirodė Varšuvos raginimai įkurti energetinę sąjungą Europoje, norint sumažinti priklausomybę nuo rusiškų energetikos išteklių. Lietuva šiuo metu dujas perka tik iš „Gazprom“ ir moka pačią aukščiausią kainą visoje Europoje. Vienas iš labai teigiamų žingsnių būtų tai, kad mes galėtume pradėti dalyvauti bendroje dujų diversifikuotoje rinkoje. Taip pat tikimės dar šiais metais Klaipėdoje užbaigti suskystintų gamtinių dujų terminalą, kuris galėtų prisidėti prie šios idėjos ir pasiūlymo įgyvendinimo. Taip pat svarbu, kad Lietuva 2015 m. pabaigoje taptų elektros energijos neuždara sala. Šiuo metu statome elektros jungtį „LitPol Link“ su Lenkija, taip pat statome elektros jungtį ir su Švedija. Tos dvi jungtys turi būti įvestos 2015 m. ir tik tokiu atveju galėtume kalbėti apie bendrą Europos Sąjungos energetikos sistemos sukūrimą. Aš manau, tai išspręstų dalinai neteisingą konkurenciją tarp valstybių, kai atskiros šalys moka daug didesnes pinigų sumas tiek perkant dujas, tiek gaminant ar importuojant elektrą. Bendra ES energetinė bendrija galėtų išnaudoti savus išteklius – skalūnų dujas ir anglį, be to, visos valstybės narės dujas galėtų pirkti biržose, tokiu būdu diktuodamos savo sąlygas, o ne sutikdamos su monopolijų pasiūlymais. Manau, kad tai liečia ir didesnio bendrumo pirkimuose idėją. Norėtumėm, kad Europa kaip visuma startuotų konkursuose, tam yra įvairūs mechanizmai ir metodai, pavyzdžiui, birža. Tam, kad Europa galėtų diktuoti sąlygas, o ne tik priimti jas, labai svarbu, kad būtų taikoma bendra politika, ieškant įvairių būdų ir mechanizmų. Tikiuosi, kad birželį Briuselyje Europos Vadovų Tarybos susitikimo metu pateikiamame Komisijos pasiūlyme, kuris gvildens Europos energetinę nepriklausomybę, šitie siūlymai taip pat atsispindės.

Ar Komisija nemano, kad bendra sąjunga užtikrintų ne tik konkurencingesnę ekonomiką, bet ir sumažintų politinę bei ekonominę priklausomybę nuo Rusijos ir jos dujų koncerno „Gazprom“?

Ar Komisija nemano, kad Europoje reikia energetinės sąjungos, nes iš to kyla Europos ekonomikos konkurencingumas, tai taip pat padidintų energetinę ir politinę nepriklausomybę, ir tai ypač liečia valstybes, stipriai priklausančias nuo Rusijos dujų tiekimo?

G. Oettingerio atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 16 d.)

Norint užtikrinti energijos tiekimo saugumą, nepaprastai svarbu integruoti energetikos vidaus rinką. Tam, be kita ko, reikia sukurti infrastruktūrą, ypač ten, kur valstybėms narėms vis dar trūksta jungčių su likusia ES dalimi. Iš neseniai paskelbto bendro intereso projektų sąrašo galima susidaryti gerą bendrą vaizdą apie svarbiausius projektus. Gerai veikiančioje rinkoje, kurioje yra pakankamai jungčių, kainų skirtumai įvairiose valstybėse narėse turėtų gerokai sumažėti. Gegužės mėn. pabaigoje Komisija paskelbė energetinio saugumo strategijos dokumentą, kuriame pasiūlė priemonių, kuriomis galima padidinti ES energetinį saugumą – energiją vartoti efektyviau, naudoti vietos šaltinius, įvairinti išorės tiekimo šaltinius, taip pat geriau integruoti ES vidaus energetikos rinką ir tobulinti solidarumo mechanizmus tiekimo sutrikimų atveju.

Komisija žino apie Lenkijos pasiūlymą dėl energetikos sąjungos. Šis pasiūlymas grindžiamas šešiais ramsčiais, iš kurių penki yra labai artimi Komisijos pozicijai. Vieną pasiūlymo elementą Komisija šiuo metu nagrinėja – siūlymą sukurti bendro dujų pirkimo agentūrą. Komisijos nuomone, visapusiškai funkcionuojanti dujų vidaus rinka labai padės sumažinti kainų skirtumus Europoje. Todėl mūsų strategija, kuria siekiama didinti energijos tiekimo saugumą Europoje, turi būti grindžiama tvirta energijos vidaus rinka. Reikėtų vengti visko, kas galėtų trukdyti veikti vidaus rinkai.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005401/14
to the Commission
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Energy independence and common union

In public, Warsaw calls for establishment of the energy union in Europe, which would reduce dependency on the Russian energy resources. Lithuania is currently buying gas only from Gazprom and paying the highest price in all of Europe. One of the positive steps forward would be our participation in the common diversified gas market. This year we also hope to complete the Klaipėda liquefied natural gas terminal, which could contribute to the implementation of the idea and the proposal. It is also important that at the end of 2015 Lithuania will have become an unenclosed island of electrical energy. Presently we are building the electrical connection LitPol Link with Poland; we are also building the electrical connection with Sweden. These two connections must be introduced in 2015, and only in this case could we speak about the development of the common European Union energy system. I believe this could help to partially solve the issue on competition among countries, where individual states pay larger sums of money both when buying gas and when producing and importing electrical energy. The common EU energy community could exploit its own resources, i.e. shale gas and coal; moreover, all Member States could buy gas in commodity exchange, thus dictating their own terms, rather than accepting the proposals of monopolies. I believe this also applies to the idea of greater communality in purchase. We would like for Europe as a whole to start participating in public procurement — there are various mechanisms and methods to this end, for example, exchange. In order for Europe to be able to dictate terms, not just accept them, it is very important that, in search of various mechanisms and methods, a general policy would be applied. I hope that these proposals will also be reflected in the proposal of the Commission, which will discuss European energy independence and which will be presented during the European Council meeting in Brussels, this June.

Does the Commission not consider that the common union would not only ensure a more competitive economy, but also reduce the political and economic dependence on Russia and its gas concern Gazprom?

Does the Commission not believe that Europe needs the energy union, because it leads to the competitiveness of the European economy, it would also increase energy and political independence, and it applies in particular to countries heavily dependent on the Russian gas supply?

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

The integration of the internal energy market is of particular importance for the security of energy supply. This includes the construction of infrastructure, in particular where Member States still lack interconnections to the rest of the EU. The recently published list of projects of common interest provides a good overview of key projects. In a functioning market with sufficient interconnections, price differences between Member States can be expected to decline considerably. The Commission has issued at the end of May an energy security strategy paper which sets out a series of measures that can improve the EU's energy security, including a more efficient use of energy, the exploitation of indigenous sources and the diversification of external sources of supply in addition to a better integration of the internal EU energy market and enhanced solidarity mechanisms in case of supply disruptions.

The Commission is aware of the Polish proposal of an Energy Union. The proposal is based on six pillars, five of which are rather closely aligned with the Commission's positions. One element of the proposal, the suggestion to create an agency for joint gas purchases, is currently being examined by the Commission. In the view of the Commission, a fully functioning internal market for gas will go a long way towards reducing price differences in Europe. Our strategy to enhance energy security in Europe must therefore build on a strong internal energy market. Anything that could undermine the functioning of the internal market should be avoided.

(Tekstas lietuvių kalba)

Klausimas, į kurį atsakoma raštu, Nr. E-005402/14
Komisijai
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(2014 m. balandžio 23 d.)

Tema: Projektas „Rail Baltica“

Pasirodė pranešimų, kad Lietuvos siekiai pakeisti geležinkelio projektą „Rail Baltica“, įtraukiant į jį Vilnių, prieštarauja Europos Sąjungos (ES) teisei. Projekto koordinatoriaus p. Pavelo Teličkos teigimu, nesuprantama, kodėl Lietuva, anksčiau rėmusi geležinkelio maršrutą per Kauną, pakeitė savo poziciją. Jis perspėjo, kad norint laiku pateikti paraišką ES finansavimui gauti bendra įmonė turi būti įsteigta per kelias artimiausias savaites. P. P. Teličkos teigimu, Vilniaus prijungimą prie projekto Europos Komisija galėtų svarstyti tik ateityje atlikus galimybių studiją, kuri patvirtintų tokią būtinybę. Taip pat p. P. Telička pabrėžė, kad pirminis maršrutas per Taliną, Rygą ir Kauną yra patvirtintas ES reglamentu, o jo nesilaikant Europos Komisija gali pradėti pažeidimo procedūrą.

Norėčiau sužinoti, ar Vilniaus įtraukimas į projektą pažeistų ES teisę? Jei taip, tai norėtųsi, kad būtų konkrečiai įvardinta, ką Lietuva pažeistų? Kokios numatytos sankcijos už pažeidimą?

Siimo Kallaso atsakymas Komisijos vardu
(2014 m. birželio 18 d.)

Pagal iš anksto nustatytą tyrimų ir darbų projektą numatoma Šiaurės jūros – Baltijos jūros koridoriuje nutiesti naują visiškai sąveikią UIC ([1]) geležinkelio liniją Talinas – Ryga – Kaunas – Varšuva. Tai vadinamojo „Rail Baltic“ projekto geležinkelio linija.

Sąraše yra ir iš anksto nustatytas projektas modernizuoti dabartinę Šiaurės jūros – Baltijos jūros koridoriaus geležinkelio liniją Kaunas – Vilnius, tačiau ši atkarpa nėra projekto „Rail Baltic“ dalis.

Jungties su Vilniumi finansavimas atitiktų Europos struktūrinių ir investicinių fondų reikalavimus.

([1]) *Union Internationale des Chemins de fer* – Tarptautinė geležinkelių sąjunga.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005402/14
to the Commission
Juozas Imbrasas (EFD)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Project 'Rail Baltica'

It was reported that Lithuania's target to change the railway project 'Rail Baltica' by including Vilnius in it, is contrary to European Union (EU) law. According to the project coordinator Pavel Telička, it is incomprehensible why Lithuania, which previously supported the railway route through Kaunas, has changed its position. He warned that, in order to apply for EU funding in a timely manner, a joint venture is to be established in the next few weeks. According to Mr Telička, the European Commission could consider the possibility of connecting Vilnius to the project only in the future after a feasibility study justifying such a need. Also, Mr Telička emphasised that the primary route through Tallinn, Riga and Kaunas is approved by EU regulation, and, in case of incompliance with it, the European Commission can launch an infringement procedure.

I would like to know whether Vilnius' inclusion in the project would infringe upon EC law? If so, I would like for there to be specifically listed what Lithuania would infringe upon. What are the penalties for this infringement?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(18 June 2014)

On the North Sea — Baltic Core Network Corridor, the pre-identified project for studies and works for a new UIC ([1]) fully interoperable gauge line is foreseen along the alignment Tallinn — Riga — Kaunas — Warsaw. This is the alignment of the so called 'Rail Baltic' project.

A pre-identified project for upgrading the current Kaunas — Vilnius railway line on the North Sea — Baltic Core Network Corridor is also listed, but this section is not an integral part of the 'Rail Baltic' project.

Funding for the Vilnius connection would be eligible under the European Structural and Investment Funds.

([1]) Union Internationale des Chemins de fer- International Union of Railways.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005403/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Expansão do Porto de Sines

O porto de águas profundas de Sines tem um interesse estratégico para Portugal. Só nos primeiros três meses do ano este porto movimentou 8,2 milhões de toneladas de mercadorias. Segundo as informações que temos, o potencial de crescimento do porto comercial é ainda grande e poderá expandir-se por mais cerca de 300 metros de cais, o que aumentaria o volume de mercadorias movimentadas e, portanto, de postos de trabalho.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apoios comunitários estarão disponíveis para a realização daquela obra? Em que condições?

2. Existem outros exemplos de obras semelhantes em portos da UE que tenham sido apoiadas por fundos comunitários?

Resposta dada pelo Vice-Presidente Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2014)

1. O Anexo II do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1315/2013 ([1]) inclui o porto de Sines na rede principal da rede transeuropeia de transportes (RTE-T). Por conseguinte, os projetos de infraestrutura no porto de Sines que que preencham os requisitos estabelecidos pelas orientações RTE-T podem beneficiar de um financiamento prioritário no âmbito do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa (CEF). Os pedidos de assistência financeira ao abrigo do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa devem satisfazer as modalidades e condições especificadas nos programas de trabalho anuais e/ou plurianuais, bem como nos sucessivos convites à apresentação de propostas previstos no Regulamento (UE) n.° 1316/2013 ([2]).

2. Exemplos de projetos financiados pela RTE-T em portos da UE durante o período 2007-2013 podem ser consultados no sítio Web da Agência de Execução para a Inovação e as Redes (INEA) ([3]). A UE também apoiou infraestruturas portuárias no âmbito dos programas no domínio da política regional (fundos estruturais e de coesão). As informações sobre os projetos portuários podem ser consultadas no sítio Web InfoRegio da Comissão ([4]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2013.348.01.0001.01.PTG
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2013.348.01.0129.01.PTG
([3]) http://inea.ec.europa.eu/pt/home/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_pt.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005403/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Expansion of the port of Sines

The deep-water port of Sines is of strategic importance to Portugal. In the first three months of the year alone, the port handled 8.2 million tonnes of merchandise. According to our information, the commercial port still has substantial potential for growth, with room for a further 300 metres of quayside. This would increase the volume of merchandise handled and, therefore, the number of jobs available.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What Community aid would be available for carrying out this work? Under what terms and conditions?

2. Are there other examples of similar work being undertaken at EU ports with the support of Community funds?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 ([1]) includes the port of Sines in the core network of the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T). Therefore, infrastructure projects in the port of Sines that meet the requirements of the TEN-T Guidelines are entitled to receive priority funding under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). Applications for financial assistance under the CEF will have to meet the particular terms and conditions detailed in the multiannual and/or annual work programmes and in the successive calls for proposals foreseen by the CEF Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 ([2]).

2. Examples of TEN-T funded projects in EU ports for the period 2007-2013 can be found on the website of the Innovation & Networks Executive Agency (INEA) ([3]). The EU has also supported port infrastructures under the regional policy programmes (Cohesion and Structural Funds). Information about port projects can be retrieved from the Commission's Inforegio website ([4]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2013.348.01.0001.01.ENG
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2013.348.01.0129.01.ENG
([3]) http://inea.ec.europa.eu/en/home/
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/stories/index_en.cfm

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005404/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Financiamento da Ferrovia Sines-Espanha

Em resposta à pergunta E-002557/2010, a Comissão Europeia respondeu que a linha ferroviária projetada para o troço PP16 Sines — Fronteira espanhola incluiria a construção de três novas secções, possivelmente financiadas pelo Fundo de Coesão. Informou também que, até à data, não existia qualquer decisão de financiamento do projeto por parte da Comissão.

O governo português anunciou recentemente novos planos para a construção de uma nova linha, de 90 quilómetros, entre Évora e Caia, sendo que os restantes troços seriam modernizados. Como há muito se sabe, o melhoramento da ferrovia com ligação ao Porto de Sines é fulcral para a atratividade deste porto enquanto porta de entrada do Atlântico.

Assim, pergunto:

1. Que fundos comunitários (montantes) decidiu a Comissão Europeia atribuir, e a que eixos?

2. Quais os projetos considerados?

3. Está salvaguardado financiamento para este projeto no Quadro Financeiro Plurianual 2014-2020?

Resposta dada por Siim Kallas em nome da Comissão
(12 de junho de 2014)

1. e 2. No que respeita ao período de programação 2007-2013 (final do período de elegibilidade das despesas: 31 de dezembro de 2015), o instrumento de financiamento da RTE-T eleva-se a cerca de 27 milhões de EUR e está garantido no que se refere ao troço português da linha transfronteiriça Évora-Mérida, na sequência da proposta de projeto apresentada por Espanha e Portugal. O apoio a conceder respeita à conceção, aquisição de terrenos e obras no troço que falta.

O Fundo de Coesão deve contribuir para o projeto global com cerca de 159 milhões de EUR para a ligação Sines-Caia, dos quais 79 milhões de EUR para a derivação de Alcácer, 67 milhões de EUR para a melhoria do troço Bombel-Vidigal-Évora e 12,6 milhões de EUR para a estação de Raquete, em Sines. Os dois primeiros foram considerados grandes projetos e ainda não foram aprovados pela Comissão.

3. No que se refere às perspetivas financeiras para 2014-2020, a Comissão não recebeu ainda quaisquer propostas de projetos específicos ao abrigo do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa, dado que o primeiro convite à apresentação de propostas só terá lugar em setembro de 2014. Contudo, a ligação entre Sines/Lisboa e a fronteira espanhola faz parte do corredor atlântico da rede principal e constitui a principal prioridade da Comissão no que se refere aos projetos de transporte a levar a cabo em Portugal.

No quadro do Mecanismo Interligar a Europa, foram reservados cerca de 510 milhões de EUR da dotação para a coesão para projetos portugueses, que devem ser apresentados e aprovados até 2016. Pode ainda ser concedido mais apoio no âmbito de um convite à apresentação de propostas concorrencial aberto a todos os Estados-Membros.

No quadro dos Fundos Estruturais e de Investimento Europeus, a Comissão está a negociar com as autoridades portuguesas o teor do acordo de parceria. Foi proposto a Portugal um financiamento de cerca de 1 060 milhões de EUR destinado às infraestruturas de transporte, tendo a prioridade sido atribuída ao financiamento da rede ferroviária.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005404/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Financing for the Sines-Spain rail link

In its answer to Question E-002557/2010, the European Commission said that the railway line planned for the PP16 Sines-Spain border track would include the construction of three new sections, possibly with the support of the Cohesion Fund. It also said that a funding decision for these lots had not yet been taken by the Commission.

The Portuguese Government recently announced new plans for the construction of a new 90-kilometre line between Évora and Caia, with the remaining tracks to be modernised. As has long been known, improvement of the rail link to the port of Sines is vital if the port is to be seen as an attractive option for access to the Atlantic.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What Community funding (amounts) did the European Commission decide to allocate, and on what basis?

2. Which lots were considered?

3. Has funding been set aside for this project under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 June 2014)

1 and 2. With regards to 2007-2013 programming period (end date of the eligibility of expenditure: 31 December 2015), the TEN-T funding amounts to about EUR 27 million and has been secured to the Portuguese section of the Evora-Mérida cross-border line, following the submission of the project proposal by Spain and Portugal. This support concerns design, land acquisition and works for this missing link.

The Cohesion Fund is expected to contribute to this overall project with around EUR 159 million for the Sines-Caia link of which EUR 79 million for the Alcacer Bypass, EUR 67 million for the upgrading of the Bombel-Vidigal-Evora section and EUR 12.6 million for the Raquete station in Sines. The two first are Major Projects and have not yet been approved by the Commission.

3. As far as the 2014-2020 financial perspectives are concerned, the Commission has not yet received specific project proposals on the Connecting Europe Facility, since the first call will only be open as of September 2014. However, the connection Sines/Lisboa — Spanish border belongs to the Atlantic core Network Corridor and represents the key priority for the Commission as regards transport projects for Portugal.

In the framework of the Connecting Europe Facility, around EUR 510 million from the cohesion envelope are earmarked for Portuguese projects to be submitted and approved before 2016. Other support can be granted on a competitive call open to all Member States.

In the framework of the European Structural and Investment funds, the Commission is still negotiating the Partnership Agreement with the Portuguese authorities. Around EUR 1 060 million have been proposed by Portugal to finance transport infrastructure, of which the financing of railways will be a priority.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005405/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Precariedade no Período Paragem Técnica Petrogal

A Petrogal — Refinaria de Sines, Portugal — é uma empresa detida por capitais portugueses e estrangeiros. Em março realizou o seu período regular de paragem técnica, no qual são realizadas várias operações de manutenção. Neste período de 5 meses, a empresa contrata várias empresas para realizarem este trabalho. Temos informações de que alguns desses trabalhadores foram contratados ao dia — não tendo nenhuma garantia sobre o número de dias em que iriam ser contratados nem sobre a remuneração que iriam auferir —, o que constituiria uma ilegalidade e um ataque aos direitos dos trabalhadores, um retorno ao período das chamadas «praças de jorna».

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Recebeu esta empresa fundos comunitários?

2. Tem conhecimento acerca deste tipo de ilegalidades cometidas por esta empresa?

3. Conhece situações semelhantes em outros países da UE?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2014)

1. Segundo informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a Petrogal, SA recebeu 6 502 638,64 euros de apoio financeiro do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) nos períodos de programação de 1994-1999 e 2000-2006.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento da prática referida pela Senhora Deputada. Relações de trabalho tais como as descritas pela Senhora Deputada, em que os trabalhadores são contratados sem qualquer número de horas garantido, não são, enquanto tais, incompatíveis com a legislação da UE. Cabe às autoridades portuguesas competentes verificar a legalidade de tais práticas nos termos da legislação nacional pertinente. A Comissão relembra que, de acordo com a Diretiva 91/533/CEE ([1]), cada trabalhador deve ser notificado por escrito relativamente aos aspetos fundamentais da sua relação de trabalho, incluindo a duração previsível da mesma, o montante de base inicial, ou outros elementos constitutivos, bem como a periodicidade do pagamento da remuneração a que o trabalhador tem direito.

3. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de situações semelhantes à referida pela Senhora Deputada.

([1]) Diretiva 91/533/CEE, relativa à obrigação de a entidade patronal informar o trabalhador sobre as condições aplicáveis ao contrato ou à relação de trabalho JO L 288 de 18.10.1991, p. 32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005405/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Precarious employment during Petrogal's technical outage period

Petrogal — Sines Refinery, Portugal — is a company backed by Portuguese and foreign capital. In March, it had its regular technical outage period, during which various maintenance operations are conducted. During this five-week period, the company contracts several firms to perform this work. We are informed that some of these workers were hired on a daily basis, with no guarantee as to the number of days they would be employed nor the pay they would receive, which is both illegal and an attack on workers' rights — a return to the time when day workers were hired each morning on the market square.

I ask the Commission:

1. Has this company received Community funding?

2. Is the Commission aware of such illegal practices being employed by this company?

3. Does it know of any similar situations in other EU countries?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, Petrogal, SA, has received financial support amounting to EUR 6 502 638.64 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming periods 1994-1999 and 2000-2006.

2. The Commission is not aware of the practice mentioned by the Honourable Member. Employment relationships such as described by the Honourable Member, where workers are employed without any guaranteed hours, are as such not precluded by EC law. It is for the competent Portuguese authorities to verify whether such practices are lawful according to the pertinent national legislation. The Commission recalls that, according to Directive 91/533/EEC ([1]), each employee should be notified in a written form of the essential aspects of its employment relationship, including the expected duration of the employment relationship and the initial basic amount, the other component elements and the frequency of payment of the remuneration to which the employee is entitled.

3. The Commission is not aware of similar situations to the one mentioned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) Directive 91/533/EEC on an employer's obligation to inform employees of the conditions applicable to the contract or employment relationship, OJ L 288, 18.10.1991, p. 32.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005406/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Apoio a aquisição de embarcação para fins científicos

O Departamento de Oceanografia e Pescas (DOP) da Universidade dos Açores necessita de um novo navio científico para desenvolver adequadamente o seu trabalho de investigação, de grande relevância científica, mas também para a economia açoriana. O Navio «Arquipélago», utilizado até hoje, tem 25 anos e já não corresponde às necessidades do Departamento.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que apoios comunitários estão disponíveis para apoiar a aquisição deste navio? Quais os montantes?

2. Foi atribuído algum financiamento anteriormente para este objetivo?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(27 de junho de 2014)

A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a concessão de financiamento para a aquisição de um navio, tal como descrito pela Senhora Deputada. O princípio da gestão partilhada aplica-se à execução da política de coesão. Neste contexto, a seleção dos projetos é da responsabilidade das autoridades nacionais competentes que gerem os programas, devendo a aprovação dos projetos estar conforme com as regulamentações nacionais e com os critérios de seleção estabelecidos.

Para o período de 2014-2020, a Comissão está a debater com os Estados-Membros as suas prioridades de financiamento.

Para mais informações, a Comissão sugere que a Senhora Deputada contacte diretamente as autoridades de gestão responsáveis pelos programas:

Autoridade de gestão do PO Proconvergência para os Açores;
Direção Regional do Planeamento e Fundos Estruturais — DRPFE
Caminho do Meio, 58 — São Carlos
9701-853 Angra do Heroísmo
Tel.: +351 295 206 380
Fax: +351 295 206 381/ 332 774
proconvergencia@azores.gov.pt
http://www.proconvergencia.azores.gov.pt

Autoridade de gestão do PO Promar
Direção-Geral de Recursos Naturais, Segurança e Serviços Marítimos — DGRM
Avenida Brasília
1449-030 Lisboa
Tel.: +351 21 3035700
Fax.: +351 21 3035965
promar@dgrm.mam.gov.pt
http://www.promar.gov.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005406/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Aid for purchasing a vessel for scientific purposes

The University of the Azores' Department of Oceanography and Fisheries needs a new scientific vessel to effectively pursue its research work, which is of great scientific importance and is also very important to the economy of the Azores. The ship currently being used, the *Arquipélago*, is 25 years old and no longer meets the department's needs.

I ask the Commission:

1. What Community aid is available to help with the purchase of a new vessel? In what amounts?

2. Has any funding been previously granted for this purpose?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 June 2014)

The Commission has no information about funding granted for the purchase of a vessel as described by the Honourable Member. The shared management principle applies to the implementation of cohesion policy. In this context, the selection of projects is the responsibility of the competent national authorities managing the programmes and the approval of projects has to be in compliance with national regulations and the established selection criteria.

For the 2014-2020 period, the Commission is in discussion with the Member States on its funding priorities.

For further information, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authorities responsible for the programmes:

Managing Authority of the OP Proconvergência for the Azores
Direcção Regional do Planeamento e Fundos Estruturais — DRPFE
Caminho do Meio, 58 — São Carlos
9701-853 Angra do Heroísmo
Tel.: +351 295 206 380
Fax: +351 295 206 381/ 332 774
proconvergencia@azores.gov.pt
http://www.proconvergencia.azores.gov.pt

Managing Authority of the OP Promar
Direção Geral de Recursos Naturais, Segurança e Serviços Marítimos -DGRM
Avenida Brasília
1449-030 Lisboa
Tel.: +351 21 3035700
Fax.: +351 21 3035965
promar@dgrm.mam.gov.pt
http://www.promar.gov.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005407/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Apoio aos agricultores do Vale do Mondego

Os incêndios do último verão no distrito da Guarda queimaram não só floresta, mas importantes áreas agrícolas, em que arderam pomares, pastagens, hortas e até animais e celeiros. No vale do Alto Mondego estima-se que tenham ardido cerca de 560 hectares de área agrícola, na sua maioria olival.

Este nível de destruição teve como efeito imediato a brutal redução na produção de azeitona. A Cooperativa Camponeses do Vale do Alto Mondego, no ano passado, laborou 620 toneladas de azeitona. Este ano, e apesar do alargamento da sua área de intervenção, esse valor chegou apenas às 130 toneladas.

Esta redução drástica da produção tem efeitos nefastos na atividade da cooperativa, cujos prejuízos podem atingir o meio milhão de euros, mas também na atividade dos produtores.

Estes incêndios levaram à perda de investimentos por parte dos agricultores e a situação pode levar pelo menos uma década a ser reposta.

As maiores vítimas, como sempre, são pequenos e médios agricultores, e esta catástrofe implica já consequências sociais desastrosas para as famílias de quem trabalha no setor.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Existe a possibilidade de mobilizar fundos comunitários para fazer face aos danos causados, nomeadamente o Fundo de Solidariedade? Quais os procedimentos a serem tomados?

2. O governo português requereu a mobilização deste ou de outro fundo para apoiar os agricultores do Vale do Mondego, vítimas dos incêndios de 2013?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(2 de junho de 2014)

1. No que diz respeito ao Fundo de Solidariedade da UE, cabe ao Estado-Membro afetado apresentar um pedido no prazo de 10 semanas após terem sido registados os primeiros prejuízos. Portugal não apresentou um pedido para este caso específico e, sem ele, a Comissão não pode tomar uma decisão de mobilização do Fundo. Além disso, a assistência financeira do Fundo apenas pode ser utilizada para operações essenciais de emergência, tal como referido no regulamento. Os prejuízos causados a privados (como na agricultura) não podem ser compensados com a assistência financeira do Fundo.

2. No que diz respeito ao Fundo Europeu Agrícola de Desenvolvimento Rural, o apoio da UE está disponível para o restabelecimento do potencial agrícola e florestal e para ações de prevenção. O programa de desenvolvimento rural de Portugal continental atribuiu 77,6 milhões de euros a essas medidas. As autoridades portuguesas podem utilizar essas medidas por sua própria iniciativa.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005407/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Aid for farmers in the Mondego Valley

Last summer's fires in Guarda affected not just forestry but sizeable areas of farmland, where orchards, pasture, vegetable crops and even animals and grain stores were destroyed. In the Upper Mondego Valley, it is estimated that some 560 hectares of agricultural land, mostly olive groves, succumbed to the fire.

This level of destruction had the immediate effect of a drastic drop in olive production. Last year, the Cooperativa Camponeses do Vale do Alto Mondego (Upper Mondego Valley farmers' cooperative) processed 620 tonnes of olives. This year, despite covering a larger area, it processed a bare 130 tonnes.

This drastic drop in production is having a negative impact not only on the cooperative, whose damages might be as much as half a million euros, but also on individual producers.

The fires have led to investment losses for farmers, and it could take at least a decade for them to recover.

As ever, the most hard hit are small and medium-sized farmers, and this disaster is already having catastrophic social consequences for the families of people working in the industry.

I ask the Commission:

1. Would it be possible to make Community funds available to deal with damages resulting from the fires, particularly from the Solidarity Fund? What is the procedure to be followed?

2. Has the Portuguese Government asked for funds from this or any other source to be made available to help farmers in the Mondego Valley who were affected by the fires of 2013?

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

1. As regards the EU Solidarity Fund, it is up to the affected Member State to submit an application within the deadline of 10 weeks after the first damage was recorded. Portugal has not submitted an application for this particular case, and without it the Commission cannot take a decision whether to mobilise the Fund or not. Moreover, financial assistance from the Fund may only be used for essential emergency operations as set out in the regulation. Any private damage (i.e. in agriculture) cannot be compensated from the Fund.

2. As far as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is concerned, EU support is available for restoring agricultural and forestry potential and prevention actions. The rural development programme of mainland Portugal has allocated EUR 77.6 million to these measures. The Portuguese authorities can make use of these measures at their own initiative.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005408/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Apoios à renovação da vinha com a mesma casta

Em visita à Cooperativa Vitivinícola do Pico, fomos informados de que os produtores de vinha necessitam de apoios para renovar e substituir vinha ainda em produção da mesma casta, o que decorre das especificidades da vinha que se desenvolve nos Açores. Foi-nos ainda comunicado que apenas existiram apoios para plantação em terrenos abandonados ou para reconversão das castas, o que não vai ao encontro das suas necessidades.

Pergunto à Comissão:

Que apoios comunitários estão disponíveis para apoiar a renovação da vinha, ainda em produção, da mesma casta? Quais os montantes disponíveis no QFP 2014-2020?

Resposta dada por Dacian Cioloș em nome da Comissão
(11 de junho de 2014)

Os apoios à reestruturação e reconversão das vinhas são concedidos no âmbito do Programa de apoio nacional para o sector vitivinícola, destinado a aumentar a competitividade dos produtores do setor. O Parlamento Europeu e o Conselho estabeleceram um limite orçamental anual de 65,2 milhões de EUR para o programa português em questão, a partir de 2014.

Os apoios às medidas de reestruturação e reconversão das vinhas podem incidir no seguinte: 1) Reconversão varietal, nomeadamente mediante sobreenxertia, 2) Relocalização de vinhas, 3) Replantação de vinhas caso tal for necessário na sequência do arranque obrigatório por motivos de saúde ou de fitossanidade, com base numa instrução emitida pela autoridade competente do Estado-Membro, e 4) Melhoramentos das técnicas de gestão da vinha.

Todavia, tal como previsto no artigo 46.°, n.° 3, segundo parágrafo, do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1308/2013 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho ([1]), não é apoiada a renovação normal das vinhas, o que se traduz na replantação da mesma parcela de terra com a mesma casta, no mesmo sistema de viticultura, quando as vinhas cheguem ao fim do seu ciclo de vida natural.

([1]) Regulamento (UE) n.° 1308/2013 do Parlamento Europeu e do Conselho, de 17 de dezembro de 2013, que estabelece uma organização comum dos mercados dos produtos agrícolas e que revoga os Regulamentos (CEE) n.° 922/72, (CEE) n.° 234/79, (CE) n.° 1037/2001 e (CE) n.° 1234/2007 do Conselho (JO L 347 de 20.12.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005408/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Aid for replacing vines with the same variety

On a visit to the Cooperativa Vitivinícola do Pico (Pico winegrower's cooperative), we were told that wine producers need aid for renewing and replacing existing vines with the same variety, because of the special qualities of the particular variety grown in the Azores. We were also told that aid is available only for planting on abandoned land or for switching varieties, which does not meet their needs.

Can the Commission tell me what Community aid is available for replacing existing vines with the same variety? What sums are available under the MFF 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

Support for restructuring and conversion of vineyards can be granted in the framework of the National Support Programme for the wine sector, in order to increase the competitiveness of wine producers. From 2014, the European Parliament and the Council set an annual budget limit of EUR 65.2 million for the Wine Support Programme of Portugal.

Support under the measure restructuring and conversion of vineyards may cover (1) varietal conversion, including by means of grafting-on, (2) relocation of vineyard, (3) replanting of vineyard where that is necessary following mandatory grubbing up for health and phytosanitary reasons on the instruction of the Member State competent authority and (4) improvements to vineyard management techniques.

However, the normal renewal of vineyards, which means the replanting of the same parcel of land with the same wine grape variety according to the same system of vine cultivation, when vines have come to the end of their natural life, shall not be supported, as set out in Article 46(3) second subparagraph of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([1])

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17.12.2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) No 922/72, (EEC) No 234/79, (EC) No 1037/2001 and (EC) No 1234/2007 (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013).

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005409/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Apoios à construção de novo quartel de bombeiros nos Açores

O Quartel da Associação Humanitária dos Bombeiros do Faial já não corresponde às necessidades daquela corporação, que desenvolve um importante e imprescindível serviço à comunidade, sobretudo, numa ilha. Existe um projeto para a construção de um novo quartel para os Bombeiros do Faial.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que fundos estarão disponíveis no QFP 2014-2020 para a construção deste tipo de infraestruturas?

2. Foi já feito algum pedido anteriormente em relação a este projeto?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(4 de julho de 2014)

1. Como é do conhecimento da Senhora Deputada, as discussões relativas ao período de 2014-2020 entre Portugal e a Comissão estão ainda em curso e, por isso, ainda não é possível tecer comentários detalhados sobre as possibilidades de financiamento futuro.

2. No contexto do princípio da gestão partilhada, a Comissão sugere que a Senhora Deputada contacte diretamente a autoridade de gestão responsável pela execução do programa:

Autoridade de gestão do PO Proconvergência para os Açores
Direção Regional do Planeamento e Fundos Estruturais — DRPFE
Caminho do Meio, 58 — São Carlos
P-9701-853 Angra do Heroísmo
Telefone: +351 295 206 380
Fax: +351 295 206 381/ 332 774
e-mail: proconvergencia@azores.gov.pt
Web: http://www.proconvergencia.azores.gov.pt

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005409/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Aid for the construction of a new fire station in the Azores

The fire station of Faial's Humanitarian Fire-fighters' Association no longer meets the needs of the organisation, which provides a vital community service, especially on an island. There is a plan to build a new fire station for Faial's fire-fighters.

I ask the Commission:

1. What funding would be available under the MFF 2014-2020 for the construction of this type of infrastructure?

2. Have any requests already been made in relation to this project?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 July 2014)

1. As the Honourable Member is aware, discussions for the 2014-2020 period between the Commission and Portugal are still on-going and therefore it is not yet possible to comment on detailed future funding possibilities.

2. In the context of the shared management principle, the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority responsible for the execution of the programme :

Managing authority of the OP Poconvergência for the Azores
Direcção Regional do Planeamento e Fundos Estruturais — DRPFE
Caminho do Meio, 58 — São Carlos
P-9701-853 Angra do Heroísmo
Tel.: +351 295 206 380
Fax: +351 295 206 381/ 332 774
E-mail: proconvergencia@azores.gov.pt
Internet: http://www.proconvergencia.azores.gov.pt

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005410/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Avaliação do apoio FEG à fábrica Delphi da Guarda

Um certo de número de desempregados, vítimas de despedimento coletivo da fábrica Delphi, na Guarda, recebeu apoios do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização, que tem como função reinserir os trabalhadores no mercado de trabalho.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Existe uma avaliação da Comissão sobre a mobilização do Fundo para os ex-trabalhadores da Delphi?

2. Que informações estão disponíveis (montantes, número de trabalhadores abrangidos, número de trabalhadores que estão presentemente empregados e com que tipo de vínculo laboral, etc.)?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(6 de junho de 2014)

A Comissão recebeu o relatório final sobre a candidatura (EFG/2011/005PT/Norte Centro) em dezembro de 2013 e está atualmente a proceder à sua apreciação. A síntese da Comissão sobre este caso constará do próximo relatório bienal das atividades do Fundo Europeu de Ajustamento à Globalização ([1]).

As autoridades portuguesas comunicaram à Comissão que 322 trabalhadores participaram nas medidas ao abrigo do FEG, dos quais 103 (32 %) regressaram ao emprego no final do período de execução (junho de 2013). Seis meses mais tarde, em dezembro de 2013, eram 155 (48 %) os trabalhadores reintegrados no mundo do trabalho, 45 dos quais exerciam uma atividade por conta própria e 65 tinham contratos permanentes. Estes resultados devem ser considerados em função de uma situação de aumento de desemprego na zona em questão: durante o período em que as medidas foram implementadas (do segundo trimestre de 2011 ao segundo trimestre de 2013), a taxa de desemprego aumentou de 12,6 % para 17,2 % na região Norte e de 9,5 % para 11,5 % na região Centro.

([1]) Artigo 19.° do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1309/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005410/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Assessment of EGF aid for the Delphi factory in Guarda

A number of unemployed people, who were made redundant by the Delphi factory in Guarda, received aid from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), whose purpose is to reintegrate workers in the labour market.

I ask the Commission:

1. Is there a Commission assessment of use of the fund for former Delphi workers?

2. What information is available (sums and number of workers involved, number of workers now in employment and under what type of employment contract, etc.)?

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

The Commission received the final report on the case (EGF/2011/005 PT/Norte Centro) in December 2013 and is currently assessing it. The Commission's summary of the case will appear in the next biennial report on the activities of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund ([1]).

The Portuguese authorities have informed the Commission that 322 workers participated in the EGF measures, of whom 103 (32%) had returned to employment by the end of the implementation period (June 2013). Six months later, in December 2013, the number of workers reintegrated into employment was 155 (48%) of whom 45 were active as self- employed persons and 65 as permanent workers. These results should be seen against a situation of rising unemployment in the area: during the time the measures were implemented (from Q2 2011 to Q2 2013) the unemployment rate rose from 12.6% to 17.2% in the region of Norte and from 9.5% to 11.5% in the region of Centro.

([1]) Article 19 of Regulation (EU) 1309/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005411/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Danos ambientais causados pela empresa Sofibritas

Têm sido denunciados publicamente vários danos ambientais causados pela pedreira da Empresa Sofibritas — empresa de asfaltos e britas — localizada na Redinha, concelho de Pombal. Esta fábrica está localizada sobre aquíferos públicos, provocando a existência de pó de pedra na água, existindo também a acumulação de detritos nas linhas de água próximas, que servem para abastecimento público. Os moradores da zona queixam-se de poluição no ar, sendo que vários já abandonaram o local devido a esse problema.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que informações detém sobre esta situação? Que normas ambientais estão a ser violadas?

2. Quais as medidas que podem ser tomadas para resolver a situação?

Resposta dada por Janez Potočnik em nome da Comissão
(2 de julho de 2014)

A Comissão não tem conhecimento de qualquer denúncia relacionada com a atividade da pedreira referida pelo Senhor Deputado.

A autorização e o funcionamento das pedreiras podem ser apreciados ao abrigo de diferentes diretivas, designadamente a Diretiva 2006/21/CE relativa à gestão dos resíduos de indústrias extrativas ([1]), a Diretiva 2006/118/CE relativa à proteção das águas subterrâneas contra a poluição e a deterioração ([2]), e/ou a Diretiva 2011/92/UE relativa à avaliação dos efeitos de determinados projetos públicos e privados no ambiente ([3]).

Ao abrigo da legislação portuguesa (Decreto-Lei n.° 151-B/2013, que revogou o Decreto-Lei n.° 69/2000), é obrigatório uma avaliação do impacto ambiental para as pedreiras de 15 ha ou mais e para aquelas que, estando situadas num raio de 1 Km, são inferiores individualmente a 15 ha, mas todas juntas têm uma dimensão de 15 ha ou mais. Os limiares estabelecidos na lei portuguesa são mais rigorosos do que os da Diretiva 2011/92/UE (25 ha). Independentemente dos limiares, as pedreiras podem igualmente ser objeto de uma AIA quando, após um exame inicial, são consideradas suscetíveis de ter graves impactos sobre o ambiente.

Na ausência de elementos de prova de que a pedreira em causa está a violar a legislação da UE, a Comissão não tem fundamentos para intervir.

([1]) JO L 102 de 11.4.2006.
([2]) JO L 372 de 27.12.2006.
([3]) JO L 26 de 28.1.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005411/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Environmental damage caused by the company Sofibritas

Public complaints have been made about various kinds of environmental damage being caused by the quarry owned by the company Sofibritas — producer of asphalt and crushed stone — in Redinha, in Pombal. The quarry is situated above public aquifers, leading to the presence of stone dust in the water, and there is also a build-up of debris in nearby water pipes used for the public supply. Local residents are complaining about air pollution, and several have already left the area because of this problem.

I ask the Commission:

1. What information does the Commission have on this situation? Which environmental regulations are being broken?

2. What steps can be taken to resolve the situation?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(2 July 2014)

The Commission is not aware of any complaint related to the activity of the quarry referred to by the Honourable Member.

The authorisation and functioning of quarries can be assessed under different Directives, namely Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of waste from extractive industries ([1]), Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration ([2]), and/or Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment ([3]).

Under the Portuguese law (Decree-law 151-B/2013, which replaced Decree-law 69/2000), an environmental impact assessment is compulsory for quarries of 15 ha or more and for those that, when located within a radius of 1 km, are individually less than 15 ha but all together have a size of 15 ha or more. The thresholds laid down by Portuguese Law are more stringent than those of Directive 2011/92/EU (which is 25 ha). Independently of the thresholds, quarries may also be subject to an EIA when after an initial screening they are considered likely to have serious impacts on the environment.

In the absence of evidence that the quarry concerned is breaching EU legislation, the Commission has no grounds to intervene.

([1]) OJ L 102, 11.4.2006.
([2]) OJ L 372, 27.12.2006.
([3]) OJ L 26, 28.1.2012.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005412/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Discriminação das PME de Rent a Car no Aeroporto de Faro

A ANA — Aeroportos de Portugal — foi recentemente privatizada e é agora gerida pela empresa francesa Vinci. A Associação de Empresas de *Rent a Car* do Algarve, que representa dezenas de PME do setor, tem vindo a denunciar várias práticas de discriminação de que têm sido alvo por parte desta empresa no exercício da sua atividade, no Aeroporto de Faro. Estas empresas possuíam um balcão de atendimento no interior da Aerogare do Aeroporto de Faro que a ANA decidiu transferir para o exterior do aeroporto, estando estas empresas agora a operar num espaço sem um mínimo de condições. Por outro lado, a ANA exige às empresas que assinem uma declaração na qual se comprometem a não utilizar o espaço interior do aeroporto, como contrapartida para a renovação das avenças anuais de lugares de estacionamento no parque exterior, colocando estas PME em clara desvantagem em relação às grandes empresas do setor que operam dentro da aerogare. Recentemente, a ANA publicou um regulamento onde cria uma taxa de 17 euros por cada carro de aluguer entregue pelos *rent-a-car* no perímetro das infraestruturas aeroportuárias na sua área de jurisdição. Estas medidas põem claramente em risco a sobrevivência das PME do setor, beneficiando as grandes empresas do setor.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Tem conhecimento desta situação? O que sabe?

2. Considera que é uma situação que não cumpre com os princípios da concorrência? Que medidas podem ser tomadas?

3. Conhece situações semelhantes em outros aeroportos de países da UE?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2014)

A Comissão não dispõe de quaisquer informações relativas à questão que referiu e não tem conhecimento de qualquer situação semelhante em outros aeroportos da UE. Note-se, porém, que os efeitos primários do comportamento descrito parecem estar centrados no território português. Nestas circunstâncias, a Autoridade da Concorrência portuguesa afigura-se bem posicionada para investigar e, se for caso disso, aplicar tanto a legislação portuguesa em matéria de concorrência como a legislação da UE no mesmo domínio.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005412/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Discrimination against Rent-a-Car SMEs at Faro Airport

The Portuguese airport authority, ANA, was recently privatised and is now managed by the French firm, VINCI. The Algarve Association of Rent-a-Car Companies, which represents dozens of SMEs in the industry, has been complaining about various discriminatory practices against them by VINCI at Faro Airport. These companies used to have a customer service point inside the terminal at Faro Airport, which ANA decided to move outside the airport, so that these companies now have to work in an area with minimum facilities. Also, ANA is requiring these companies to sign a declaration in which they undertake not to use the space inside the airport, in exchange for the renewal of annual agreements concerning parking spaces in the car park outside, putting these SMEs at a clear disadvantage compared with big companies in the industry, which operate inside the terminal. ANA recently published a regulation introducing a charge of EUR 17 for every rental car delivered by Rent-a-Car companies within the boundaries of the airport infrastructures under its jurisdiction. These measures clearly threaten the survival of SMEs in the industry, whilst benefiting the big companies.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, what information does it have?

2. Does the Commission think this situation is in breach of the principles of competition? If so, what steps can be taken?

3. Is the Commission aware of similar situations in other airports in EU countries?

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

The Commission has no information in its possession regarding the matters referred to, and is unaware of any similar situations at other EU airports. It notes, however, that the primary effects of the behaviour described seem to be focused on the Portuguese territory. In these circumstances, the Portuguese competition authority would appear well-placed to investigate, and if appropriate, to apply both the Portuguese competition rules and EU competition law.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005413/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Modernização da Linha do Vouga

Visitei recentemente o apeadeiro da Aguieira, onde pude constatar o preocupante estado de abandono e degradação da Linha Ferroviária do Vouga, colocando em causa a qualidade do serviço ferroviário e a segurança dos passageiros e trabalhadores. Como é sabido, e confirmado pela população no local, a manutenção e modernização desta linha é fundamental para garantir e melhorar a qualidade da mobilidade das pessoas que vivem na região.

Assim, pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que fundos estão disponíveis para possíveis obras de modernização desta linha ferroviária?

2. Já foi pedido ou autorizado anteriormente algum montante para as referidas obras?

Resposta dada por Johannes Hahn em nome da Comissão
(20 de junho de 2014)

1. Não está disponível qualquer financiamento para a linha ferroviária e para a estação de caminho de ferro mencionadas pela Senhora Deputada para o período de 2007-2013, nem para o período de 2014-2020, uma vez que o financiamento da UE para os caminhos de ferro é sobretudo centrado na finalização das redes RTE-T.

2. A Comissão não recebeu qualquer pedido de financiamento para esta rubrica.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005413/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Modernisation of the Vouga railway line

I recently visited the Aguieira halt and saw the worrying state of neglect and disrepair of the Vouga railway line, which poses a threat both to rail-service quality and to passengers' and workers' safety. As we already know — and this has been confirmed by the local population — the maintenance and modernisation of this line is vital if we are to guarantee and improve mobility for people living in the region.

I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What funding is available for the potential modernisation of this railway line?

2. Have any sums previously been requested or authorised for this work?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(20 June 2014)

1. No funding is available for the railway line and railway station mentioned by the Honourable Member, neither in the 2007-2013 period nor in the 2014-2020 period, as EU funding for railways is principally focused on completing the TEN-T networks.

2. The Commission has not received any funding request for this line.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005414/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Contratos de Emprego e Inserção e substituição de postos de trabalho permanentes

No seguimento dos Programas Ocupacionais, o Estado português criou em Portugal os CEI (Contratos de Emprego e Inserção) destinados aos desempregados e os CEI+ destinados aos beneficiários do Rendimento Social de Inserção. Como é evidente, estes contratos não podem corresponder a postos de trabalho permanentes, porque quando estes existem devem ser preenchidos por pessoas que estão no desemprego. Através destes contratos, os trabalhadores recebem um pequeno apoio da entidade empregadora, no caso dos CEI, ou o correspondente ao total do Indexante de Apoios Sociais, no caso dos CEI + (419 euros). Têm vindo a público várias denúncias, por parte dos sindicatos e representantes dos trabalhadores, de que estes contratos estariam a substituir postos de trabalho permanentes, nomeadamente na administração pública local e central.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Qual o montante de fundos comunitários atribuídos a este programa no último quadro comunitário?

2. Tem conhecimento acerca deste tipo de situações ilegais e de violação dos direitos dos trabalhadores?

3. Como avalia a situação?

Resposta dada por László Andor em nome da Comissão
(17 de junho de 2014)

1. De acordo com as informações recebidas das autoridades portuguesas, a medida Contratos Emprego-Inserção recebeu um apoio financeiro no valor total de 95 349 852,39 euros do Fundo Social Europeu (FSE) no período de programação de 2007-2013.

2. A Comissão não tem conhecimento de situações semelhantes à mencionada pela Senhora Deputada.

3. Não existem regras específicas a nível da UE que regulam contratos tais como os referidos pela Senhora Deputada. A Diretiva 1999/70/CE regula certos aspetos do trabalho a termo, mas aplica-se apenas a situações classificadas como «emprego» ao abrigo da legislação nacional. Além disso, a Diretiva não se aplica a medidas de assistência social ([1]).

([1]) Processo C-157/11 Giuseppe Sibilio vs Comune di Afragola.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005414/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Employment and Integration Contracts and the substitution of permanent posts

Following the Employment Programmes, the Portuguese Government introduced the CEI (Employment and Integration Contract) for unemployed people, and the CEI+ for people in receipt of Social Integration Income. Obviously, these contracts cannot apply to permanent posts, and places have to be filled by people who are unemployed. Under these contracts, workers on a CEI receive a small allowance from the employer, while those on a CEI+ receive an amount equivalent to the Social Security Benefit Rate (EUR 419). Various complaints have been publicly voiced by the trade unions and workers' representatives, claiming that these contracts are being used as a substitute for permanent posts, particularly in local and central public administration.

I ask the Commission:

1. How much Community funding is allocated to this programme under the latest Community framework?

2. Is the Commission aware of situations of this kind, which are both illegal and in breach of workers' rights?

3. What is the Commission's assessment of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. According to information received from the Portuguese authorities, the Employment and Integration Contract measure has received financial support amounting to EUR 95 349 852.39 from the European Social Fund (ESF) in the programming period 2007-2013.

2. The Commission is not aware of similar situations to the one mentioned by the Honourable Member.

3. There are no specific rules at EU level regulating contracts such as those referred to by the Honourable Member. Directive 1999/70/EC regulates certain aspects of fixed-term work, but only applies to situations classified as 'employment' under national law. Furthermore, the directive does not apply to social assistance measures ([1]).

([1]) Case C-157/11, Giuseppe Sibilio contre Comune di Afragola.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005415/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Proibição de pesca do tubarão de profundidade

Está proibida a pesca do tubarão de profundidade (pata-lixa), espécie que em tempos foi capturada nos mares ao largo do arquipélago dos Açores.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Quais os estudos que existem sobre os stocks desta espécie na zona do arquipélago dos Açores que sustentem esta proibição?

2. Existe alguma exceção na UE à captura desta espécie?

Resposta dada por Maria Damanaki em nome da Comissão
(13 de junho de 2014)

A proibição da pesca da gata, tubarão de profundidade, funda-se no parecer científico independente do Conselho Internacional de Exploração do Mar (CIEM), de acordo com o qual, salvo melhores informações e elementos de prova sobre a sua sustentabilidade ([1]), a pesca dirigida a esta espécie não deve ser autorizada. O CIEM baseia-se num estudo açoreano do período 1995-2012, assim como em trabalhos anteriores, que demonstraram uma exploração intensa ou o esgotamento da unidade populacional, que, em seu parecer, poderá estar reduzida a cerca de 50 % da sua biomassa virgem.

A Comissão de Pescas do Atlântico Nordeste (NEAFC) impõe, igualmente, a proibição da pesca dirigida à gata ([2]).

A gata está incluída na lista de «tubarões de profundidade» para os quais o nível de totais admissíveis de capturas (TAC) é igual a zero, por força do Regulamento (UE) n.° 1262/2012 do Conselho ([3]), o que, para os navios da UE, significa proibição de captura desta espécie.

([1]) ICES (2013), *«Kitefin shark (Dalatias licha) in the Northeast Atlantic»*, *ICES Advice 2013*, 9.4.13, Copenhaga, Conselho Internacional de Exploração do Mar: http://tinyurl.com/pvsjsfz
ICES (2012), *«Kitefin shark (Dalatias licha) in the Northeast Atlantic»*, *ICES Advice 2012*, 9.4.12. Copenhaga, Conselho Internacional de Exploração do Mar: http://tinyurl.com/d2barf9

([2]) Neafac (2012), *«REC 07 2013: Deep-sea Sharks»*. Current Measures. Londres, Comissão de Pescas do Atlântico Nordeste: http://www.neafc.org/managing_fisheries/measures/current

([3]) UE (2012). Regulamento (UE) n.° 1262/2012 do Conselho, de 20 de dezembro de 2012, que fixa, para 2013 e 2014, as possibilidades de pesca para os navios da UE relativas a determinadas unidades populacionais de peixes de profundidade, *JO* L 356 de 22.12.2012, pp. 22-33, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R1262

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005415/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Ban on deep-sea shark fishing

There is a ban on fishing for the deep-sea kitefin shark — a species that used to be caught in the waters off the Azores.

I ask the Commission:

1. Are there any studies on stocks of this species around the Azores that support the ban?

2. Are there any exceptions in the EU for catching this species?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The ban on fishing for the deep-sea kitefin shark is supported by the independent scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) that 'no targeted fisheries should be permitted' for kitefin shark unless there is better information and evidence that this will be sustainable ([1]). ICES draws on an Azorean survey from 1995-2012 and on previous work that showed intensive exploitation or depletion and finds that the stock may be depleted to about 50% of its virgin biomass.

Likewise, the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) requires the prohibition of directed fishing for kitefin shark ([2]).

According to Council Regulation (EU) 1262/2012 ([3]), kitefin sharks are included in the list of 'deep-sea sharks' for which the level of total allowable catches (TACs) is zero. This means a prohibition for catching this species for EU vessels.

([1]) ICES (2013). 'Kitefin shark (Dalatias licha) in the Northeast Atlantic.' ICES Advice 2013 9.4.13. Copenhagen: International Council for the Exploration of the Sea. http://tinyurl.com/pvsjsfz ICES (2012). 'Kitefin shark (Dalatias licha) in the Northeast Atlantic.' ICES Advice 2012 9.4.21. Copenhagen: International Council for the Exploration of the Sea. http://tinyurl.com/d2barf9

([2]) NEAFAC (2012). 'Rec 07 2013: Deep-sea Sharks.' Current Measures. London: North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission. http://www.neafc.org/managing_fisheries/measures/current

([3]) EU (2012). 'Council Regulation (EU) 1262/2012 of 20.12.2012 fixing for 2013 and 2014 the fishing opportunities for EU vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks.' OJ, L 356: 22-33. http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32012R1262

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-005416/14
à Comissão
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 de abril de 2014)

Assunto: Suspeita de cartelização do Transporte Marítimo de Mercadorias dos Açores

Foi-nos relatado por várias entidades económicas que existe a possibilidade de as empresas de transporte de mercadorias dos Açores (Boxlines, Transinsular, Mutualista Açoriana) concertarem preços e horários entre si, o que constituiria uma processo de cartelização que muito prejudicaria as exportações açorianas.

Pergunto à Comissão:

1. Que informações tem sobre este assunto?

2. Como avalia situações deste tipo?

Resposta dada por Joaquín Almunia em nome da Comissão
(4 de julho de 2014)

A Comissão não dispõe de informações sobre a matéria e, por conseguinte, não pode avaliar a situação em apreço.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005416/14
to the Commission
Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Suspected operation of a cartel in the freight shipping industry in the Azores

We have been told by several economic bodies that it is possible that freight shipping companies in the Azores (Boxlines, Transinsular, Mutualista Açoriana) are setting prices and shipping schedules among themselves. This would amount to operating a cartel, which would be very damaging to exports from the Azores.

I ask the Commission:

1. What information does it have on this matter?

2. How does it assess this kind of situation?

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

The Commission has no information on this matter and, therefore, cannot assess the situation.

(Slovenska različica)

Vprašanje za pisni odgovor E-005417/14
za Komisijo
Milan Zver (PPE)
(23. april 2014)

Zadeva: Zaskrbljujoče zapiranje in monopolizacija visokošolskega prostora v Sloveniji

V Sloveniji smo na področju visokega šolstva priča zaskrbljujočemu razvoju dogodkov, ki gre v smer odmikanja od evropskih standardov in principov. Vlada je predlagala nov zakon o visokem šolstvu, ki omejuje konkurenco, podržavlja in zapira univerzitetni prostor.

Zato Komisijo sprašujemo:

1. Ali Komisija podpira konkurenčen visokošolski prostor? Prosim, če Komisija navede načine, za katere meni, da zagotavljajo konkurenčnost v luči evropskih načel svobode ustanavljanja, svobode opravljanja storitev in prepovedi diskriminacije.

2. Ali Komisija meni, da so zasebne visokošolske ustanove dobrodošel dejavnik konkurence pri zagotavljanju kakovostnega visokošolskega prostora?

3. Ali Komisija meni, da je potrebno zagotavljati enake možnosti ustanavljanja in delovanja zasebnih visokošolskih zavodov v primerjavi z javnimi?

Odgovor Androulle Vassiliou v imenu Komisije
(25. junij 2014)

V skladu z zakonodajo EU so za vsebino in organizacijo izobraževalnih sistemov izključno pristojne države članice, vendar morajo pri izvajanju te pristojnosti upoštevati določbe Pogodbe in Direktivo 2006/123/ES ([1]), če so zadevne izobraževalne storitve plačane storitve ([2]). Komisija podpira države članice pri njihovih prizadevanjih za zagotavljanje visokokakovostnega izobraževanja na vseh ravneh.

Kot je bilo poudarjeno že v njenem programu iz leta 2011 za posodobitev visokošolskega izobraževanja ([3]), Komisija meni, da je pomembno, da nacionalni sistemi visokošolskega izobraževanja zagotavljajo raznovrstne visokokakovostne programe, na primer ustrezno razmerje med akademsko in poklicno usmerjenimi izobraževanji. Za dosego tega cilja je pomembno, da vlade poskrbijo za zadostne finančne in upravne spodbude ter okvirne pogoje, da se zagotovi ta raznovrstnost ter spodbudi najvišja raven kakovosti.

Visokošolske institucije uspešno delujejo kot zasebne pravne osebe v mnogih državah članicah, čeprav se natančen pravni status teh institucij in njihova vloga v nacionalnih sistemih zelo razlikuje. Komisija meni, da lahko javne in zasebne visokošolske institucije veliko prispevajo k celotni ponudbi visokošolskega izobraževanja, če njihovi programi izpolnjujejo ustrezne standarde kakovosti in akreditacije. Ti standardi se določajo in upravljajo na nacionalni ravni, ob upoštevanju splošnih načel, ki so določena v evropskih standardih in smernicah za zagotavljanje kakovosti v evropskem visokošolskem prostoru. O tem, ali programi, ki jih izvajajo institucije, bodisi javne bodisi zasebne, izpolnjujejo predpisane standarde, odločajo nacionalni organi.

([1]) Direktiva 2006/123/ES Evropskega parlamenta in Sveta z dne 12. decembra 2006 o storitvah na notranjem trgu.
([2]) Glej sodbo Sodišča z dne 7. decembra 1993 v zadevi C-109/92, Wirth proti Landeshauptstadt Hannover, točke 15–17.
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/ef0030_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005417/14
to the Commission
Milan Zver (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Concerns over closing and monopolisation of higher education sector in Slovenia

There have been worrying developments in higher education in Slovenia, which run counter to European standards and principles. The Government has proposed a new law on higher education, which restricts competition while nationalising and closing up the higher education sector.

1. Does the Commission support competition in higher education? Can the Commission state how, in light of the European principles of freedom of establishment, freedom to provide services and prohibition of discrimination, it believes competition can be ensured.

2. Does the Commission believe that private higher education establishments are a welcome element of competition for ensuring quality in higher education?

3. Does the Commission believe that the opportunities for establishing and operating private higher education establishments should be the same as those for public establishments?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(25 June 2014)

Under EC law, the content and the organisation of education systems are the exclusive competence of Member States, however in the exercise of this competence they have to respect Treaty provisions and Directive 2006/123/EC ([1]) to the extent that the educational services in question represent a remunerated service ([2]).The Commission supports Member States in their efforts to provide high quality education at all levels.

As highlighted in its 2011 Agenda for the modernisation of higher education ([3]), the Commission considers that it is important for national higher education systems to provide a diversity of high quality programmes, for example, an appropriate mix between academically and professionally oriented courses. To achieve this, it is important for governments to provide the right financial and administrative incentives and framework conditions to ensure this diversity and to promote the highest levels of quality.

Higher education institutions operate effectively as private legal entities in many Member States, although the exact legal status of such institutions and their relative role in national systems varies considerably. The Commission considers that both public and private higher education institutions can make a valuable contribution to the overall higher education offer, provided the courses they provide meet relevant quality and accreditation standards. These standards are set and regulated at national level, taking into account general principles established in the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. It is for national authorities to determine whether the programmes provided by institutions, whether public or private, meet the standards prescribed.

([1]) Directive 2006/123/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on services in the internal market.
([2]) See the judgment of the Court of 7 December 1993 in Case C-109/92 Wirth v Landeshauptstadt Hannover, paragraphs 15-17.
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/ef0030_en.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005419/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Μία μόνο προσφορά σε 6 μεγάλους διαγωνισμούς του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ — Παραβίαση της ευρωπαϊκής νομοθεσίας για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις

Σε 6 μεγάλους διαγωνισμούς που προκήρυξε το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ (ΔΕΣΦΑ, ΟΠΑΠ, Κρατικά Λαχεία, Διεθνές Κέντρο Ραδιοτηλεόρασης, ΔΕΠΑ, Ελληνικό), παρότι αρχικά οι ενδιαφερόμενοι ήταν τρεις ή και περισσότεροι, τελικά έμεινε μόνο μία τελική προσφορά.

Χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα είναι η τακτική του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ στον διαγωνισμό για την ιδιωτικοποίηση της έκτασης του πρώην αεροδρομίου του Ελληνικού και του Αγίου Κοσμά, καθώς και του ΟΛΘ. Το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ στους συγκεκριμένους διαγωνισμούς δεν εφαρμόζει τους ευρωπαϊκούς κανόνες για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις υπό το πρόσχημα ότι οι διαγωνισμοί αυτοί δεν αφορούν συμβάσεις παραχώρησης αλλά απλώς πώληση των μετοχών δημόσιων εταιρειών. Η παράκαμψη των ευρωπαϊκών κανόνων επιτρέπει στο ΤΑΙΠΕΔ να αναπροσαρμόζει κατά το δοκούν τους όρους των διαγωνισμών μετά την προκήρυξή τους. Το γεγονός αυτό έρχεται σε πλήρη αντίθεση με τις εξαγγελίες της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης για προσέλκυση νέων επενδυτών με σεβασμό στους κανόνες διαφάνειας, και παραβιάζει τους ευρωπαϊκούς κανόνες διαφάνειας.

Με βάση τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Είναι ενήμερη για το γεγονός ότι σε 6 μεγάλους διαγωνισμούς του ΤΑΙΠΕΔ υπήρχε μόνο μία τελική προσφορά;

Ο τρόπος διεξαγωγής των διαγωνισμών παραβιάζει το ευρωπαϊκό δίκαιο για τις δημόσιες συμβάσεις;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή έχει λάβει γνώση ότι σε έξι μεγάλες προσκλήσεις υποβολής προσφορών του Ταμείου Αξιοποίησης Ιδιωτικής Περιουσίας του Δημοσίου (ΤΑΙΠΕΔ) υπήρξε μόνον μία τελική προσφορά. Βάσει των διαθέσιμων πληροφοριών, η Επιτροπή δεν έχει υπόψη της τυχόν προβληματισμούς σχετικά με την εφαρμογή της νομοθεσίας της Ένωσης περί δημοσίων συμβάσεων (εφόσον εφαρμόζεται) στα έργα που αναφέρει ο κ. βουλευτής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005419/14
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Only one bid in six major HRADF tendering procedures — Infringement of European public procurement legislation

Although there were initially three or more potential investors in six major calls for tenders announced by HRADF (DESFA, OPAP, State Lotteries, International Broadcasting Centre, DEPA and Hellinikon), eventually only one bid was left on the table.

HRADF's approach in the call for tenders for the privatisation of the site of the former Hellinkon airport and Aghios Kosmas and the Port of Thessaloniki is typical. In these calls for tenders, HRADF has not applied EU rules on public procurement on the pretext that they do not involve concessions, but simply the sale of shares in public companies. Bypassing EU rules allows HRADF to adjust at will the conditions for the tender procedures after they have been announced. This is in stark contrast to the announcements by the Greek Government about attracting new investors by respecting the EU rules on transparency and is a violation of these rules.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Is it aware of the fact that in six major HRADF calls for tenders there has been only one final bid?

Is the way in which these calls for tenders have been held a violation of European public procurement law?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Commission is aware that in six major HRADF calls for tenders there has been only one final bid. Based on the available information, the Commission is not aware of any concerns on the application of EU public procurement (if applicable) to the projects referred by the Honourable Member.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005420/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση της οδηγίας για τα ύδατα από την εκχώρηση των υδροηλεκτρικών μονάδων («μικρή ΔΕΗ») και την ιδιωτικοποίηση της διαχείρισης των υδάτων

Κατατέθηκε από το ΥΠΕΚΑ το νομοσχέδιο για το σπάσιμο της ΔΕΗ και τη δημιουργία μίας νέας εταιρείας, της μικρής ΔΕΗ. Στη νέα εταιρεία που θα συσταθεί ως 100% θυγατρική της ΔΕΗ και θα πουληθεί σε ιδιώτες θα περιλαμβάνονται οι εξής υδροηλεκτρικές μονάδες: Πλατανόβρυσης, Θησαυρού, Άγρας, Εδεσσαίου, Πουρναρίου Ι και ΙΙ.

Οι Υδροηλεκτρικοί Σταθμοί παραγωγής ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας (ΥΗΣ) συμβάλλουν στην ικανοποίηση ενεργειακών αναγκών. Αποτελούν ταυτόχρονα κέντρα διαχείρισης υδάτινων πόρων, αξιοποιώντας την αποθηκευτική ικανότητα των ταμιευτήρων τους, και παρέχουν: αντιπλημμυρική προστασία, κάλυψη αναγκών νερού για ύδρευση, κάλυψη αναγκών για αρδεύσεις, κάλυψη αναγκών για βιομηχανική χρήση, εξασφάλιση περιβαλλοντικών παροχών και ανάπτυξη οικολογικού τουρισμού. Στους ΥΗΣ, εκτός από τις εγκαταστάσεις παραγωγής ενέργειας, συμπεριλαμβάνονται τα συνοδά φράγματα και τα έργα υποδομών για την παρακολούθηση και διαχείριση των υδάτινων πόρων.

Η εκχώρηση των ΥΗΣ, εκτός από την εκμετάλλευση των εγκαταστάσεων για παραγωγή ηλεκτρικής ενέργειας, θα επιτρέψει στον νέο ιδιώτη ιδιοκτήτη της «μικρής ΔΕΗ» να διαχειριστεί και να εκμεταλλευτεί όλους τους υδάτινους πόρους των περιοχών αυτών, τον υπέργειο και υπόγειο υδροφόρο ορίζοντα, καθώς και τους ποταμούς και τις λίμνες που τροφοδοτούν τις μονάδες. Η ιδιωτικοποίηση των ΥΗΣ μέσω της πώλησης της «μικρής ΔΕΗ» επηρεάζει άμεσα τις τοπικές κοινωνίες σε μια σειρά από σοβαρότατα θέματα, που αφορούν το κόστος άρδευσης για την αγροτική παραγωγή, το ζήτημα της ύδρευσης περιοχών, τη διαχείριση των υδάτων σε περιόδους πλημμυρών, τη διαχείριση των παραλίμνιων και παραποτάμιων περιοχών καθώς και των βιοτόπων τους και τις αντισταθμιστικές υποχρεώσεις της ΔΕΗ προς τις συγκεκριμένες περιοχές.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Η μη σύσταση Φορέων Διαχείρισης Υδάτων στις συγκεκριμένες περιοχές και η ιδιωτικοποίηση της διαχείρισης και εκμετάλλευσης των υδάτων των περιοχών αυτών μέσω της εκχώρησης των Υδροηλεκτρικών Σταθμών παραβιάζει την οδηγία πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα 2000/60/ΕΚ;

Απάντηση του κ. Potočnik εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Ιουνίου 2014)

Όσον αφορά τους φορείς διαχείρισης υδάτινων πόρων, το άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 2 της οδηγίας πλαίσιο για τα ύδατα ([1]) (ΟΠΥ) απαιτεί από τα κράτη μέλη να προσδιορίσουν τις κατάλληλες αρμόδιες αρχές για την εφαρμογή της οδηγίας και να ενημερώσουν την Επιτροπή έως τον Ιούνιο του 2004 (άρθρο 3 παράγραφος 8). Η Ελλάδα ενημέρωσε την Επιτροπή ότι σε εθνικό επίπεδο, η κύρια αρμόδια αρχή είναι το Υπουργείο Περιβάλλοντος, Ενέργειας και Κλιματικής Αλλαγής και σε αποκεντρωμένο επίπεδο, οι αρχές υδροδότησης των αποκεντρωμένων διοικήσεων.

Όσον αφορά την ιδιωτικοποίηση, η Επιτροπή υπενθυμίζει την αρχή της ουδετερότητας που κατοχυρώνεται στο άρθρο 345 της Συνθήκης για τη λειτουργία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, σύμφωνα με το οποίο το καθεστώς ιδιοκτησίας καθορίζεται από τα κράτη μέλη.

Βάσει των πληροφοριών που παρασχέθηκαν, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να εντοπίσει καμία παραβίαση της ΟΠΥ.

([1]) Οδηγία 2000/60/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 23ης Οκτωβρίου 2000, για τη θέσπιση πλαισίου κοινοτικής δράσης στον τομέα της πολιτικής των υδάτων (ΕΕ L 327 της 22.12.2000).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005420/14
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Violation of the Water Framework Directive by the transfer of hydroelectric units (the 'Small PPC') and the privatisation of water management

The Greek Ministry of Environment and Climate Change has tabled a bill for breaking up the PPC and creating a new company, dubbed the 'Small PPC'. The new company, which will be established as a 100% subsidiary of the PPC and be sold to individual buyers, will include the following hydroelectric plants: Platanovrisi, Thesavros, Agra, Edessaios and Pournari I and II.

Hydroelectric Power plants (HPPs) help meet energy needs. They are also water management centres, utilising the storage capacity of their reservoirs, and provide flood protection, meet water supply and irrigation needs, meet the needs of industry, secure environmental benefits and promote eco-tourism. Apart from energy production plants, HPPs comprise the accompanying dams and infrastructure for monitoring and managing water resources.

The transfer of HPPs will allow the new private owner of the 'Small PPC' not only to exploit the electricity production plants, but also to manage and exploit all the water resources in these areas, the surface and underground aquifers, and the rivers and lakes that supply the plants. The privatisation of the HPPs through the sale of the 'Small PPC' will directly affect local communities in a number of very important respects, notably the cost of irrigation for agricultural production, the water supply, water management in times of flooding, the management of littoral and riparian areas and the attendant habitats and the PPC's compensatory obligations in respect of specific area.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

Are the failure to set up Water Management Bodies in specific regions and the privatisation of the management and exploitation of water in these regions through the transfer of HPPs a violation of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

As regards water management bodies, Article 3(2) of the Water Framework Directive ([1]) (WFD) requires Member States to identify the appropriate competent authorities for the implementation of the directive and to communicate this to the Commission by June 2004 (Article 3(8)). Greece has informed the Commission that at the national level, the main competent authority is the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change and at decentralised level the Water Authorities of the decentralised administrations.

Concerning privatisation, the Commission recalls the principle of neutrality enshrined in Article 345 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union according to which the system of property ownership is determined by the Member States.

On the basis of the information provided, the Commission cannot identify any breach of the WFD.

([1]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23.10.2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005421/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Προστασία προσωρινά υψηλών καταθέσεων και πέραν των 100 000 ευρώ

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στη σύσταση για τη δεύτερη ανάγνωση, ενόψει της έγκρισης οδηγίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου περί των συστημάτων εγγύησης των καταθέσεων (αναδιατύπωση) (05199/1/2014 — C7-0094/2014 — 2010/0270(COD)), αναφέρεται στην ανάγκη προστασίας προσωρινά υψηλών καταθέσεων και εκφράζει την άποψη ότι

«τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει μελλοντικά να προστατεύουν προσωρινά υψηλές καταθέσεις και πέρα από το επίπεδο κάλυψης των 100 000 ευρώ, οι οποίες π.χ. προκύπτουν από πώληση ιδιωτικής ακίνητης περιουσίας, ασφαλιστικές πληρωμές, διαζύγια κ.λπ.»

Στην Κύπρο, το κούρεμα των καταθέσεων, με τον τρόπο που εφαρμόστηκε, συμπεριέλαβε εκατοντάδες περιπτώσεις παρόμοιες με αυτές που αναφέρονται πιο πάνω, καθώς και άλλες, όπως π.χ. καταθέσεις ευαγών ιδρυμάτων, φιλανθρωπικών οργανισμών, ταμείων προνοίας και συντάξεων κοκ.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ενόψει των πιο πάνω απόψεων του Κοινοβουλίου, θεωρεί ότι εγείρεται θέμα λανθασμένης ή/και άδικης μεταχείρισης των κυπρίων καταθετών, με τον τρόπο που εφαρμόστηκε το κούρεμα;

2. Προτίθεται να κινήσει διαδικασία αποζημίωσης των καταθετών που υπέστησαν άδικο ή λανθασμένο κούρεμα;

Απάντηση
(30 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το άρθρο 2 παρ. 5 της εκτελεστικής απόφασης της 13ης Σεπτεμβρίου 2013 για την έγκριση προγράμματος μακροοικονομικής σταθερότητας για την Κύπρο προβλέπει ότι η Κύπρος συνεχίζει την εις βάθος μεταρρύθμιση και αναδιάρθρωση του τραπεζικού τομέα και την ενίσχυση των βιώσιμων τραπεζών, αποκαθιστώντας το κεφάλαιό τους, αντιμετωπίζοντας την κατάσταση της ρευστότητάς τους και ενισχύοντας την εποπτεία τους ([1]).

Σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 94/19/ΕΚ του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου και του Συμβουλίου, της 30ής Μαΐου 1994 περί των συστημάτων εγγυήσεως των καταθέσεων ([2]), κάθε κράτος μέλος φροντίζει να συσταθούν και να αναγνωριστούν επίσημα στο έδαφός του ένα ή περισσότερα συστήματα εγγύησης των καταθέσεων (ΣΕΚ). Η οδηγία απευθύνεται στα κράτη μέλη που υποχρεούνται να εξασφαλίζουν ότι τα ΣΕΚ αποπληρώνουν επιλέξιμους καταθέτες μόλις καθίστανται μη διαθέσιμες οι καταθέσεις.

Η οδηγία προβλέπει ειδικότερα ότι η προστασία των καταθέσεων δεν θα πρέπει: (1) να υπερβαίνει το εύρος των προστατευόμενων καταθέσεων, αφού ορισμένες καταθέσεις δεν είναι επιλέξιμες για προστασία δυνάμει της οδηγίας 94/19/ΕΚ ενώ άλλες καταθέσεις ενδέχεται να έχουν εξαιρεθεί από την προστασία αυτή από τα κράτη μέλη σύμφωνα με το παράρτημα Ι της οδηγίας· (2) να υπερβαίνει το επίπεδο κάλυψης που θέτει η οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ για ανώτατο ποσό 100 000 ευρώ από την 31η Δεκεμβρίου 2010.

Στις 12 Ιουλίου 2010, η Επιτροπή διαβίβασε στο Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο πρόταση τροποποιητικής οδηγίας με σκοπό ειδικότερα τη βελτίωση της χρηματοδότησης των ΣΕΚ με βάση τις συνεισφορές του τραπεζικού κλάδου, την ευρύτερη και περαιτέρω εναρμόνιση της επιλεξιμότητας των καταθέσεων, ταχύτερες εκταμιεύσεις και καλύτερη ενημέρωση των καταθετών.

Στις 15 Απριλίου 2014, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ενέκρινε σε δεύτερη ανάγνωση, τη θέση του Συμβουλίου για την τροποποίηση της οδηγίας, η οποία θα δημοσιευθεί σύντομα στην Επίσημη Εφημερίδα και θα τεθεί έτσι σε ισχύ.

Το άρθρο 20 της τροποποιημένης οδηγίας θέτει την ημερομηνία μεταφοράς 12 μήνες μετά την έναρξη της ισχύος της.

Τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να εξασφαλίσουν ότι η προστασία των καταθετών παραμένει σύμφωνα με την οδηγία 94/19/ΕΚ έως την ημερομηνία μεταφοράς της νέας οδηγίας.

([1]) ΕΕ L 250 της 20.9.2013, σ. 40.
([2]) Οδηγία που τροποποιήθηκε από την οδηγία 2009/14/ΕΚ όσον αφορά το επίπεδο κάλυψης και την προθεσμία εκταμίευσης (ΕΕ L 19 της 16.3.2009, σ. 2).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005421/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Protection of temporary high deposits over EUR 100 000

In its Recommendation for Second Reading on the Council position with a view to the adoption of a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on Deposit Guarantee Schemes (recast) (05199/1/2014 — C7-0094/2014 — 2010/0270(COD)), the European Parliament refers to the need to protect temporary high deposits and expresses the view that:

'…in future, Member States must protect temporary high deposits over the normally protected amount of EUR 100 000 in the case of sums resulting, for example, from the sale of privately owned property, insurance payments, divorce etc.'

In Cyprus, the 'haircut' on deposits, as it was implemented, included hundreds of cases similar to those mentioned above and others, such as the deposits of charities, pension and provident funds, etc.

In view of the above, will the Council state:

1. In the light of Parliament's views set out above, does it consider that Cypriot depositors may have been wrongly and/or unfairly treated because of the way in which the 'haircut' was implemented?

2. Will it initiate a compensation procedure for depositors who suffered unfairly or wrongly in the 'haircut'?

Reply
(30 June 2014)

Article 2(5) of the Council Implementing Decision of 13 September 2013 on approving the macroeconomic adjustment programme for Cyprus provides that Cyprus shall continue to thoroughly reform and restructure the banking sector and reinforce viable banks by restoring their capital, addressing their liquidity situation and strengthening their supervision ([1]).

Pursuant to Directive 94/19/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 1994 on deposit-guarantee schemes ([2]), each Member State ensures that within its territory one or more deposit-guarantee schemes (DGS) are introduced and officially recognised. The directive is addressed to Member States, which are obliged to ensure that their DGS pay out to eligible depositors once deposits become unavailable.

The directive provides in particular that deposit protection should not (1) go beyond the scope of deposits protected, since some deposits are not eligible for protection under Directive 94/19/EC while other deposits may have been excluded from that protection by a Member State in accordance with Annex I to the directive; (2) exceed the coverage level set by Directive 2009/14/EC at a maximum of EUR 100 000 as from 31 December 2010.

On 12 July 2010, the Commission forwarded to the European Parliament and the Council a proposal for an amending Directive aimed in particular at improving the funding of DGS based on contributions from the banking industry and providing for broader and further harmonisation of the eligibility of deposits, faster pay-outs and better information for depositors.

On 15 April 2014, the European Parliament approved, at second reading, the Council's position on the amending Directive, which is now soon to be published in the Official Journal and thus to enter into force.

Article 20 of the amending Directive sets the transposition date at 12 months after its entry into force.

Member States must ensure that the protection of depositors remains in accordance with Directive 94/19/EC until the date of transposition of the new Directive.

([1]) OJ L 250, 20.9.2013, p. 40.
([2]) Directive as amended by Directive 2009/14/EC as regards the coverage level and the pay-out delay (OJ L 19, 16.3.2009, p. 2).

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005424/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Διαρθρωτικές Μεταρρυθμίσεις Vs Επενδύσεις

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεση του σχετικά με το Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο για τον συντονισμό των οικονομικών πολιτικών: Απασχόληση και κοινωνικές πτυχές στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2014 (2013/2158(INI)), επισημαίνει ότι «παρόλο που οι διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις μπορεί να αποδώσουν καρπούς μεσοπρόθεσμα έως μακροπρόθεσμα, η ανάγκη να τονωθεί η εσωτερική ζήτηση στην ΕΕ απαιτεί η Επιτροπή και το Συμβούλιο να ενισχύσουν τις επενδύσεις προκειμένου να διατηρηθεί η οικονομική μεγέθυνση και οι ποιοτικές θέσεις εργασίας βραχυπρόθεσμα και να ενισχυθούν οι δυνατότητες μεσοπρόθεσμα» (Παράγραφος 6).

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ασπάζεται το σκεπτικό του Κοινοβουλίου όσον αφορά το ρόλο των επενδύσεων στις πολιτικές για την επίτευξη οικονομικής μεγέθυνσης; Αν ναι, πώς προτίθεται να αξιοποιήσει τις εισηγήσεις του Κοινοβουλίου που περιέχονται στην πιο πάνω έκθεση;

2. Γιατί επιμένει να δίνει προτεραιότητα στην εφαρμογή των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων και των πολιτικών λιτότητας, αφού είναι πλέον ξεκάθαρο ότι για να υπάρξει οικονομική μεγέθυνση θα πρέπει να δοθεί προτεραιότητα στην ενίσχυση των επενδύσεων;

3. Σχεδιάζει οποιεσδήποτε αλλαγές στις πολιτικές της Ένωσης για την οικονομική μεγέθυνση, και ποιες;

Απάντηση
(23 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει για την έκθεση πρωτοβουλίας του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου σχετικά με την απασχόληση και τις κοινωνικές πτυχές στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης του 2014.

Το Συμβούλιο συζήτησε την ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης της Επιτροπής στις 18 Φεβρουαρίου 2014 και συμφώνησε με τους πέντε ευρείς τομείς πολιτικής που έχουν προτεραιότητα όπως σκιαγραφούνται από την Επιτροπή, στους οποίους πρέπει να επικεντρωθούν οι εθνικές και ενωσιακές προσπάθειες το 2014. Το Συμβούλιο κατέληξε στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι προσπάθειες πρέπει να εστιάσουν ιδίως στην επιδίωξη διαφοροποιημένης φιλοαναπτυξιακής δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης και στην εξασφάλιση μακροπρόθεσμης διατηρησιμότητας των δημοσίων οικονομικών· στην επάνοδο της δανειακής ροής προς την οικονομία· και στην προώθηση βιώσιμης και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξης, απασχόλησης και ανταγωνιστικότητας, αντιμετωπίζοντας ταυτόχρονα τις κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις της κρίσης.

Το Συμβούλιο τόνισε ότι πρέπει να δοθεί προτεραιότητα στην εφαρμογή διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων, που να μπορούν να ενθαρρύνουν τις τόσο αναγκαίες βιώσιμες επενδύσεις, και στην ενίσχυση της εσωτερικής αγοράς, ιδίως με μεταρρυθμίσεις που να ενδυναμώνουν την ανταγωνιστικότητα και τον ανταγωνισμό στην αγορά των προϊόντων και των υπηρεσιών, μεταξύ άλλων με ενίσχυση του ανταγωνισμού και των επενδύσεων στις υποδομές στον τομέα των βιομηχανιών δικτύου· καθώς και μια διεξοδικότερη εφαρμογή της οδηγίας περί υπηρεσιών καθώς και ένα φιλόδοξο άνοιγμα του τομέα των υπηρεσιών, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της ρύθμισης επαγγελμάτων με άρση των μη αιτιολογημένων φραγμών.

Το Συμβούλιο υπογράμμισε την ανάγκη στήριξης και απλούστευσης του συνολικού επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος με την άρση του αδικαιολόγητου κανονιστικού και διοικητικού φορτίου που επιβαρύνει τις εταιρίες και με τη βελτίωση της ποιότητας της νομοθεσίας σε όλα τα επίπεδα διακυβέρνησης, μεταξύ άλλων με ενδελεχείς αξιολογήσεις επιπτώσεων, αποδοτική εφαρμογή και εκ των υστέρων αξιολόγηση, καθώς και ταχεία εφαρμογή του προγράμματος REFIT (βελτίωση της καταλληλότητας). Τόνισε επίσης το ρόλο της αποτελεσματικής δημόσιας διοίκησης προς στήριξη αναπτυξιακών στρατηγικών, που επισημαίνει την ανάγκη περαιτέρω προσπαθειών εκσυγχρονισμού. Επίσης, η βελτίωση της διοικητικής ικανότητας αναμένεται ότι θα διασφαλίσει μια καλύτερη χρήση και μια ταχύτερη ανάπτυξη των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων της ΕΕ.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005424/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Structural reforms vs. investment

In its report on the European Semester for Economic Policy Coordination: employment and social aspects in the annual growth survey 2014 (2013/2158(INI)), the European Parliament points out that, 'while structural reforms may bear fruit in the medium to long term, the need to stimulate the EU's internal demand requires the Commission and Council to enhance investment in order to sustain growth and quality jobs in the short term and enhance potential in the medium term' (paragraph 6).

In view of this:

1. Does the Council concur with Parliament regarding the importance of investment in policies to achieve growth? If so, what action will it take in response to Parliament's recommendations in the above report?

2. Why does it insist on prioritising the implementation of structural reforms and austerity policies, since it is now crystal clear that priority must be given to stepping up investment to achieve growth?

3. What changes, if any, does it intend to make to EU growth policy?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed the European Parliament's own-initiative report on the employment and social aspects in the annual growth survey 2014.

The Council discussed the Commission's annual growth survey on 18 February 2014 and agreed on the five broad policy priority areas outlined by the Commission on which national and EU level efforts should concentrate in 2014. The Council concluded that efforts should in particular focus on pursuing differentiated growth-friendly fiscal consolidation and ensuring long-term sustainability of public finances; restoring lending to the economy; and promoting sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs and competitiveness, while tackling the social consequences of the crisis.

The Council emphasised that priority should be given to the implementation of structural reforms that can encourage much needed sustainable investment and to strengthening of the internal market, notably through competitiveness- and competition-enhancing reforms in product and services markets, including increasing competition and infrastructure investment in network industries; and a more diligent implementation of the Services Directive and ambitious opening up of services sectors, including regulated professions by removing unjustified barriers.

The Council highlighted the need to support and simplify the overall business environment, removing unwarranted regulatory and administrative burden on companies and improving the quality of legislation at all levels of government, including comprehensive impact assessments, efficient implementation and *ex post* evaluation; and speedy implementation of the REFIT (regulatory fitness) programme. It also stressed the role of effective public administration in support of growth strategies, which points to the need for further efforts to modernise. Improving administrative capacity should also ensure a better use and speedier deployment of EU Structural funds.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-005426/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Σε σχέση με την ερώτησή μου αρ. E-000010/2014

Στην απάντηση της Επιτροπής στην πιο πάνω ερώτησή μου, αναφέρεται ότι «η Επιτροπή συγκρότησε ομάδα εμπειρογνωμόνων για την ανάλυση δυνητικών πλεονεκτημάτων, κινδύνων, απαιτήσεων και εμποδίων όσον αφορά την κοινή έκδοση τίτλων υπό μορφή ταμείου απόσβεσης χρέους ή ευρωγραμματίων (eurobills). Η έκθεση της ομάδας αναμένεται τον Μάρτιο του 2014».

Καλείται η Επιτροπή να με πληροφορήσει τα ακόλουθα:

1. Έχει συμπληρωθεί η έρευνα της ομάδας εμπειρογνωμόνων που συγκρότησε η Επιτροπή αναφορικά με την κοινή έκδοση ευρωομολόγων ή άλλων παρόμοιων τίτλων;

2. Αν ναι, μπορεί η Επιτροπή να με ενημερώσει σχετικά με τα ευρήματα της έρευνας των εμπειρογνωμόνων;

3. Σε περίπτωση που τα ευρήματα είναι θετικά, είναι έτοιμη η Επιτροπή να προχωρήσει στην υλοποίηση της απόφασης, και πώς προτίθεται να το πράξει;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(2 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η ομάδα εμπειρογνωμόνων για ένα ταμείο απόσβεσης χρέους και ευρωομόλογα υπέβαλε την έκθεσή της στην Επιτροπή την 31η Μαρτίου 2014. Την 1η Απριλίου πραγματοποιήθηκε δημόσια ακρόαση στην Επιτροπή Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής (ECON) του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου. Η έκθεση διατίθεται στην ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/governance/2014-03-31-redemption_fund_and_eurobills_en.htm

Η έκθεση δεν διατυπώνει προτάσεις πολιτικής ή συστάσεις, ούτε εγκρίνει ρητά ή σιωπηρά οποιαδήποτε από τις δύο ιδέες που εξετάστηκαν.

Τα βασικά συμπεράσματα και μια πρώτη αντίδραση συνοψίζονται στο δελτίο τύπου της Επιτροπής της 31ης Μαρτίου 2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-132_el.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005426/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Questionfor written answer E-000010/2014

In reply to the above question, the Commission indicated that it had established an expert group analysing possible merits, risks, requirements and obstacles regarding joint issuance in the form of a redemption fund or eurobills. The group's report was expected in March 2014.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission indicate whether the expert group set up by it to examine joint eurobond or similar issuances has completed its work?

2. If so, can the Commission indicate its findings?

3. If the findings are favourable, what measures will the Commission take to implement the decision?

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

The expert group on a debt redemption fund and eurobills submitted its report to the Commission on 31 March 2014. On 1 April a public hearing took place in the EPs ECON Committee. The report is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/governance/2014-03-31-redemption_fund_and_eurobills_en.htm

The report does not formulate policy proposals or recommendations, nor endorse explicitly or implicitly either of the two ideas analysed.

The key conclusions and a first reaction are summarised in the Commission press release of 31 March 2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-132_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005428/14
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Protection des monuments historiques, une urgence pour l'Union européenne

Le patrimoine culturel de l'Union européenne est l'un des plus riches du monde. Les monuments historiques à travers toute l'Europe en sont la preuve, ils sont le symbole de l'histoire européenne, qu'ils transmettent à travers les siècles. Ces monuments participent à l'estime que les Européens portent à leur pays et à leurs racines culturelles, mais ils contribuent aussi au maintien d'un tourisme important qui fait la richesse du rayonnement de l'Union européenne à l'échelle internationale.

Les monuments historiques méritent ainsi toute notre attention pour les protéger et les restaurer. Pourtant, des profanations ont lâchement été commises le 19 mars dernier sur la Basilique du Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre, à Paris. Ces dégradations nous ont rappelé la faiblesse des dispositifs de protection des monuments historiques au sein de l'Union. Les dégradations nombreuses faites sur des monuments centenaires voire millénaires semblent pouvoir être perpétrées aisément et en toute impunité. C'est inacceptable.

L'Union européenne se doit donc d'agir au plus vite. Actuellement, la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel et donc des monuments historiques est encadrée par des politiques nationales et un ensemble de dispositions internationales, notamment inscrites dans les prérogatives de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO). L'entretien, la protection, la conservation et la remise en état du patrimoine sont au sein de l'Union en premier lieu des compétences des États membres. L'action européenne ne se pose donc qu'en complément. Mais force est de constater que cette action est un échec et que l'Union européenne aurait à gagner d'une plus grande implication dans la protection et la restauration des monuments historiques européens. Il en va de la sauvegarde de son patrimoine.

La Commission compte-t-elle entreprendre de nouvelles actions pour assurer une meilleure protection des monuments historiques de l'Union? Peut-elle faire état, en particulier, des dispositifs supplémentaires qu'elle pourrait mettre en place dans ce domaine en coopération avec les États membres et les acteurs internationaux dans le respect des prérogatives de chacun?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(24 juin 2014)

La Commission donne la plus grande importance à la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel européen. Cependant, l'entretien, la protection, la conservation et la restauration du patrimoine culturel relèvent avant tout de la responsabilité de chaque État.

À travers son programme «Europe créative», la Commission soutient des activités de coopération culturelle ([1]). Ce programme tend à mettre en valeur l'espace culturel partagé par les Européens et fondé sur des valeurs culturelles communes, par le développement de projets transfrontières impliquant des organisations de divers pays.

Toutefois, les fonds du programme ne sont pas destinés à un thème en particulier puisque les projets sont sélectionnés uniquement en fonction de leur qualité, à la suite d'appels à propositions et d'une procédure de mise en concurrence.

Dans le cadre de ce programme, la Commission soutient aussi le Prix du patrimoine culturel de l'Union européenne/Prix Europa Nostra, qui met en lumière de remarquables réalisations dans le domaine de la conservation, de la recherche, des services spécialisés et de l'éducation, de la formation et la sensibilisation en matière de patrimoine culturel. Ce prix a récompensé plusieurs associations ou projets français, tels que la Fondation du patrimoine et le Collège des Bernardins à Paris.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005428/14
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Urgency of protection of historic monuments by the European Union

The European Union's cultural heritage is one of the richest in the world. The historic monuments which exist all over Europe bear witness to this, symbolising European history, which they communicate from age to age. These monuments are partly responsible for European people's appreciation of their countries and their cultural roots, but they also help to maintain a major tourism industry, which plays a large part in maintaining the European Union's international prestige.

We should therefore give our full attention to efforts to protect and restore historic monuments. However, on 19 March 2014, the Sacré-Cœur Basilica in Montmartre, Paris, was desecrated in a cowardly manner. The defacement of the church reminded us just how feeble the arrangements for protecting historic monuments in the EU are. It seems that, in numerous cases, it is possible quite easily and with impunity to deface monuments which are hundreds or even thousands of years old. This is unacceptable.

The European Union must act quickly. At present, the conservation of the cultural heritage and therefore of historic monuments is governed by national policies and a range of international provisions, with Unesco playing a lead role. Within the European Union, maintaining, protecting, conserving and restoring the heritage are primarily matters for the Member States. European action is purely complementary, therefore. But the fact is that European action in this field is a failure and that the EU stands to gain by becoming more involved in the protection and restoration of Europe's historic monuments. What is at stake is the preservation of its heritage.

Will the Commission take fresh action to improve protection of historic monuments in the Union? Can it, in particular, indicate the additional measures which it could take in this field in cooperation with the Member States and international stakeholders, without prejudice to each party's own prerogatives?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(24 June 2014)

The Commission regards the safeguarding of European cultural heritage with utmost importance. However, the maintenance, protection, conservation and renovation of cultural heritage are primarily a national responsibility.

The Commission supports cultural cooperation activities through its Creative Europe Programme ([1]). This programme aims to enhance the cultural area shared by the Europeans and based on common cultural values, through the development of cross-border projects involving organisations from different countries.

However, within the programme funds are not earmarked for any particular topic, as projects are only selected on the basis of quality, further to calls for proposals and a competitive selection process.

Within the framework of this programme, the Commission also supports the EU Prize for cultural heritage/Europa Nostra award, which puts a spotlight on extraordinary achievements in the field of conservation, research, dedicated service and education, training and awareness raising in the field of cultural heritage. This prize has honoured several French associations or projects, such as la Fondation du Patrimoine and Le Collège des Bernardins, Paris.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005429/14
à la Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Protection de la qualité des vins dans le cadre de la réforme des droits de plantation

Les projets de la Commission européenne concernant les droits de plantation n'ont pas fini de réserver des surprises aux viticulteurs européens. Dernièrement, c'est sur la qualité du vin que ceux-ci ont souhaité exprimer toutes leurs inquiétudes.

En effet, la Commission a proposé un projet d'acte délégué en matière de replantation qui prévoit qu'un producteur pourra, à la suite d'un arrachage, replanter n'importe où dans son exploitation quelle que soit la catégorie de production (Appellation d'Origine Protégée (AOP), Indication Géographique Protégée (IGP) ou Vin Sans Indication Géographique). Cette mesure irait complètement à rebours de la préservation de la qualité du vin européen.

L'attribution automatique de l'autorisation de plantation à la suite d'un arrachage à tout endroit d'une même exploitation sans critère d'appellation soulève de nombreux problèmes. Au-delà du détournement de notoriété auquel ces pratiques peuvent conduire, l'on s'expose à une revalorisation à la baisse de certaines indications géographiques, mais surtout à un nivellement par le bas de la qualité des vins dans l'Union. Cette décision serait donc non seulement préjudiciable pour les producteurs dont le travail repose pour la majeure partie sur des vins d'AOP ou d'IGP, mais également pour le consommateur à travers le déficit de traçabilité imputable à cette pratique. Les producteurs d'appellations craignent à juste titre que les actes délégués que s'apprête à adopter la Commission ne soient pas assez précis et n'encadrent donc pas suffisamment les replantations suite à un arrachage.

L'acte délégué dans sa forme actuelle prévoit la possibilité pour les États membres de fixer des limitations à certaines pratiques de transfert. Cela reste insuffisant. La Commission a fixé la fin des négociations avec les États membres au début du mois d'avril et compte transmettre au Parlement son projet d'acte délégué en juillet.

Est-elle en mesure de communiquer la manière dont elle entend protéger l'authenticité des vins européens dans le cadre de la réforme des droits de plantation?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloș au nom de la Commission
(23 juin 2014)

Vos observations sur les autorisations de replantation des vignes au sein de la même exploitation doivent être analysées conformément aux dispositions prévues dans le règlement (UE) nº 1308/2013 (règlement OCM) ([1]), qui traduisent l'accord politique du Parlement européen (PE) et du Conseil.

En effet, l'article 66, paragraphe 1, du règlement OCM stipule de façon explicite que les États membres octroient automatiquement les autorisations de replantation.

Toutefois, malgré le fait que l'octroi de ces autorisations soit automatique, l'article 66, paragraphe 3, précise que les États membres sont autorisés à imposer des restrictions lors du traitement des demandes d'autorisations de replantation, dans le cadre prévu audit paragraphe.

La Commission a la ferme intention, dans l'acte délégué, de ne pas dévier de l'acte de base et de proposer des solutions pour éviter tout contournement éventuel du système d'autorisations de plantation des vignes. À ce stade, les discussions du groupe d'experts sur l'acte délégué sont en cours et devraient contribuer à apaiser certaines inquiétudes exprimées par plusieurs Honorables Parlementaires ainsi que par certains États membres et parties prenantes.

Enfin, la Commission a toujours défendu une politique de qualité dans le secteur viticole, ainsi que dans d'autres secteurs du domaine agricole, et elle poursuivra dans cette voie.

([1]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005429/14
to the Commission
Rachida Dati (PPE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Protecting the quality of wines in the context of the reform of planting rights

The Commission's planting rights proposals continue to reserve surprises for European wine growers. Most recently, it is the issue of the quality of wine which has been prompting producers to voice concerns.

The Commission has proposed a draft delegated act on replanting rights which stipulates that, following grubbing-up, a producer may replant vines anywhere in his or her vineyard irrespective of the classification (Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) or Wine Without Geographical Indication) of the parcel concerned. This measure would run completely counter to the objective of safeguarding the quality of European wines.

The automatic granting, following grubbing-up, of planting rights for any parcel in a vineyard, irrespective of classification, is highly problematical. Quite apart from the fact that these practices may lead to the reputation of certain PDOs being misappropriated, there is a risk that geographical indications will be downgraded and, above all, that the overall quality of wines in the Union will be levelled down. The decision would thus not only be detrimental to those producers who focus on PDO or PGI wines, but also to consumers, who would no longer be able to tell precisely where wines have come from. PDO wine producers quite rightly fear that the delegated act which the Commission is preparing to adopt is not sufficiently detailed and does not therefore provide a proper regulatory framework for replanting following grubbing-up.

The delegated act as it stands gives Member States the option of imposing restrictions on certain transfer practices. These restrictions do not go far enough. The Commission has set early April as the deadline for completing the negotiations with the Member States and plans to submit its draft delegated act to Parliament in July.

Can the Commission say how it intends to protect the authenticity of European wines in the context of the reform of planting rights?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

Your considerations on authorisations for the replanting of vines in the same farm holding need to be analysed according to the provisions laid down in Regulation (UE) No1308/2013 (CMO Regulation) ([1]), which translate the political agreement of the European Parliament (EP) and the Council.

In fact, Article 66(1) of the CMO Regulation states explicitly that Member States shall automatically grant authorisations for replantings.

However, despite such granting being automatic, Article 66(3) establishes that Member States may impose restrictions when dealing with applications for replanting authorisations, within the scope provided for in that paragraph.

The Commission has the firm intention in the delegated act not to depart from the basic act and to present solutions to avoid any possible circumvention of the vine planting authorisation system. At this stage the discussions in the expert's group on the delegated act are ongoing and should contribute to clarify some concerns expressed by several Honourable Members and by some Member States and stakeholders.

Finally, the Commission has always defended a quality policy for wine and other sectors in the field of agriculture and will continue to do so.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005431/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Gouvernance des entreprises

Vous n'y aviez peut-être pas pensé, mais «gérer votre propre argent est différent de gérer celui des autres».

Telle est l'une des conclusions radicales à laquelle a abouti une récente table ronde sur la gouvernance des entreprises familiales organisée par la Commission européenne. Cette «différence», justement, est par ailleurs au centre d'un projet de directive de la Commission européenne sur la gouvernance des entreprises.

1. Où en est ce projet de la Commission?

2. Que contient-il?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(12 juin 2014)

La proposition de révision de la directive sur les droits des actionnaires visant à promouvoir l'engagement à long terme des actionnaires a été adoptée par la Commission le 9 avril 2014.

L'un des principaux objectifs de la directive proposée consiste à encourager les investisseurs institutionnels et leurs gestionnaires d'actifs à mieux prendre en compte les intérêts à long terme de leurs bénéficiaires dans leurs stratégies d'investissement en actions et à agir de manière plus responsable en tant que propriétaires d'entreprises européennes cotées en bourse.

La présente proposition est donc destinée à inciter les investisseurs institutionnels et les gestionnaires d'actifs à investir de façon plus responsable, sans imposer de stratégies d'investissement.

La proposition contient des obligations de transparence pour les investisseurs institutionnels, en vertu desquelles ils sont tenus de rendre publiques la façon dont leur stratégie d'investissement en actions est alignée sur le profil et sur la durée de leurs engagements, et la manière dont ils encouragent les gestionnaires d'actifs à agir au mieux de leurs intérêts et à s'engager en tant qu'actionnaires.

Des études montrent que l'engagement des actionnaires sur les questions de gouvernance d'entreprise est profitable pour les bénéficiaires finaux des investisseurs institutionnels (futurs retraités, etc.), ainsi que pour les sociétés cotées et que c'est un facteur qui contribue à l'amélioration des performances des entreprises concernées.

Outre ces obligations de transparence pour les investisseurs institutionnels et les gestionnaires d'actifs, la proposition accorde de nouveaux droits aux actionnaires (pour ce qui est de la rémunération des administrateurs et des transactions avec des parties liées) et prévoit des mesures pour faciliter la communication entre l'entreprise et l'actionnaire. Elle impose également des obligations de transparence aux conseillers en vote qui donnent des recommandations de vote aux actionnaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005431/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Corporate governance

You might not have given it any thought, but 'managing your own money is different to managing someone else's money'.

That was one of the radical conclusions reached at a recent round table discussion on family business governance organised by the Commission. And it is precisely that 'difference' which lies at the heart of a Commission draft directive on corporate governance.

1. What is the current status of the Commission's draft?

2. What does it contain?

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

The proposal for the revision of the Shareholders Rights Directive on encouraging long-term shareholder engagement was adopted by the Commission on 9 April 2014.

One of the key objectives of the proposed Directive is to encourage institutional investors and their asset managers to take the long-term interest of their beneficiaries better into account in their equity investment strategies and be more responsible owners of European companies listed on stock markets.

This proposal is therefore a measure to incentivize more responsible investment by institutional investors and asset managers without imposing any type of investment strategy.

The proposal contains transparency obligations for institutional investors to disclose how their equity investment strategy is aligned with the profile and duration of their liabilities and how they incentivize asset managers to act in their best interests and engage as shareholders.

Studies show that shareholder engagement on corporate governance issues is beneficial for the end-beneficiaries of the institutional investors (future pensioners, etc.) as well as for listed companies and they contribute to a better performance of the companies engaged with.

Further to these transparency obligations for institutional investors and asset managers, the proposal contains new rights for shareholders (on directors' pay and on related party transactions) and measures to facilitate communication between the company and the shareholder. It also contains transparency obligations on proxy advisory firms providing voting recommendations for shareholders.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005432/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Trafic aérien fluide

Siim Kallas, commissaire aux transports, invite les États membres «à faire preuve de plus d'ambition et à accélérer la mise en œuvre du ciel unique européen».

La Commission européenne a officiellement demandé à l'Allemagne, à la Belgique, à la France, aux Pays-Bas et au Luxembourg d'améliorer leur bloc d'espace aérien fonctionnel (FAB).

1. La Commission peut-elle clarifier ce qu'elle entend par «faire preuve de plus d'ambition»?

2. Ces ambitions sont-elles aussi chiffrées?

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(4 juin 2014)

1. La Commission entend par «faire preuve de plus d'ambition» que ces États membres doivent à présent commencer à véritablement mettre en œuvre les objectifs réglementaires, à savoir une utilisation optimale de l'espace aérien et une optimisation des services de navigation aérienne, et ce, tout en veillant à ce que les frontières nationales n'entraînent pas d'incidences négatives sur ces objectifs.

2. La réponse à la question de l'Honorable Parlementaire est positive. Les objectifs qui consistent en une utilisation optimale de l'espace aérien et en des services optimisés de navigation aérienne sont définis à l'article 9 *bis*, paragraphe 2, point b), du règlement (CE) nº 550/2004 ([1]) et à l'article 2, paragraphe 25, du règlement (CE) no 549/2004 ([2]) respectivement.

([1]) Règlement (CE) nº 550/2004 du Parlement Européen et du Conseil du 10 mars 2004 relatif à la fourniture de services de navigation aérienne dans le ciel unique européen («règlement sur la fourniture de services») (Texte présentant de l'intérêt pour l'EEE), JO L 96 du 31.03.2004, p. 10.

([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 549/2004 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 10 mars 2004 fixant le cadre pour la réalisation du ciel unique européen («règlement-cadre»), JO L 96 du 31.3.2004, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005432/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Air traffic

Siim Kallas, the Transport Commissioner is urging Member States to 'step up their ambitions and push forward the implementation of the Single Sky'.

The Commission has formally requested Germany, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg to improve their Functional Airspace Block (FAB).

1. Can the Commission clarify what it means by 'step up their ambitions'?

2. Have targets been set for these ambitions?

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

1. The Commission means that these Member States must now start to genuinely implement the regulatory objectives of optimum use of airspace and optimised air navigation services without letting national borders adversely affect these objectives.

2. The answer to the question from the Honourable Member is positive. The targets of optimum use of airspace and optimised air navigation services have been defined under Article 9a(2)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 ([1]) and Article 2(25) of Regulation (EC) No 549/2004 ([2]) respectively.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 550/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10.3.2004 on the provision of air navigation services in the single European sky (the service provision Regulation) (Text with EEA relevance), OJ L 96, 31.3.2004, p. 10-19.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 549/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10.3.2004 laying down the framework for the creation of the single European sky (the framework Regulation) , Official Journal L 96 , 31.3.2004 p. 1-9.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005433/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Agence de contrôle européenne du secteur routier

Les entorses à la législation se font notamment via le cabotage, autorisé depuis 2009, et qui permet à un transporteur européen de livrer des marchandises dans un autre pays dès lors que ces trajets, strictement limités, se font en prolongement d'une livraison nationale.

Initialement prévu pour limiter les trajets à vide, ce dispositif souffre de nombreuses irrégularités, dues à la différence de salaire et de législations sociales et fiscales selon les États. Ainsi, certaines sociétés créent des filiales, en Pologne ou en Roumanie par exemple, pour pouvoir employer des conducteurs routiers à bas coûts.

1. La Commission est-elle d'accord avec ce constat?

2. La Commission serait-elle d'accord avec la création d'une agence de contrôle européenne pour le secteur routier? En effet, il existe déjà des agences au niveau européen dans les domaines de l'aérien ou du ferroviaire, mais pas pour le transport routier.

Réponse donnée par M. Kallas au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

1. Le 14 avril 2014, la Commission a publié un rapport sur l'état du marché du transport routier dans l'Union européenne [COM(2014) 222]. Ce document montre que, bien que des différences subsistent entre les niveaux et structures de coûts des États membres, celles-ci s'amenuisent. En outre, le cabotage ne représente qu'une part marginale du volume du transport routier (2 % du volume total du transport pour compte d'autrui dans l'Union). Dans les États membres où de vastes campagnes ont été menées pour faire respecter la réglementation, peu d'infractions aux dispositions en matière de cabotage ont été constatées.

Cependant, le rapport conclut que le règlement (CE) n° 1072/2009 ([1]), qui comporte les dispositions relatives au cabotage routier, est appliqué différemment d'un État membre à l'autre. La mise en œuvre des dispositions du règlement (CE) n° 1071/2009 ([2]) visant à empêcher l'exploitation de «sociétés boîtes aux lettres» semble également être difficile. Aussi la Commission envisage-t-elle de clarifier ces deux règlements en 2015, dans le cadre du programme REFIT ([3]).

2. De l'évaluation préliminaire réalisée dans le rapport sur l'état du marché du transport routier dans l'Union, il apparaît que l'application de la législation sur le transport routier pourrait être améliorée par un renforcement de la coopération transfrontalière. D'autres mesures, telles que l'harmonisation technique accrue des outils de contrôle et l'échange de bonnes pratiques, pourraient également être utiles. Pour d'autres modes de transport, ces mesures sont prises par des agences spécialisées. La création d'une agence européenne du transport routier a effectivement été évoquée comme une option possible. Toutefois, le mandat précis d'une telle agence devrait être soigneusement étudié, de même que son coût au regard des ses avantages potentiels.

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 1072/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil, du 21 octobre 2009, établissant des règles communes pour l'accès au marché du transport international de marchandises par route (JO L 300 du 14.11.2009, p. 72).

([2]) Règlement (CE) n° 1071/2009 du Parlement européen et du Conseil, du 21 octobre 2009, établissant des règles communes sur les conditions à respecter pour exercer la profession de transporteur par route, et abrogeant la directive 96/26/CE du Conseil (JO L 300 du 14.11.2009, p. 51).

([3]) Programme pour une réglementation affûtée et performante (REFIT): résultats et prochaines étapes, COM(2013) 685 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005433/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: A European road haulage control agency

Road haulage legislation is being circumvented through cabotage which has been authorised since 2009 and allows a European carrier to deliver goods in another country providing such trips, which are tightly restricted, are an extension of a national delivery operation.

Originally planned as a way of cutting the number of empty journeys, this arrangement is open to various kinds of abuse, due to differences in wages and social and tax laws in individual Member States. Thus some companies create subsidiaries in Poland and Romania, for example, so as to be able to employ truck drivers at low cost.

1. Does the Commission agree with this finding?

2. Would the Commission agree to the creation of a European road haulage control agency? Such European agencies exist for transport by air or rail, but not for road transport.

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

1. The Commission published on 14 April 2014 a Report on the State of the Union Road Transport Market (COM(214) 222). This report shows that while differences still exist in cost levels and cost structures throughout Member States, these are reducing. In addition, cabotage represents only a marginal share of road transport volumes (2% of all EU transport volumes carried out for hire and reward). In the Member States where extensive enforcement campaigns have been carried out, the level of infringements to cabotage provisions were found to be low.

However, the report does find that Member States enforce Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 ([1]), which contains the provisions relative to road cabotage, in different ways. The provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 ([2]) aimed at preventing letterbox companies from operating also appear to be implemented with difficulty. The Commission is therefore considering a clarification of these two Regulations in 2015 as part of the REFIT exercise ([3]).

2. From the preliminary assessment carried out in the report on the State of the Union Road Transport Market, it appears that enforcement of road transport legislation could be improved by further cross-border cooperation. Other tasks, such as further technical harmonisation of control tools and exchange of best practices, could also be beneficial. In other modes, these tasks are carried out by dedicated agencies. A European road transport agency has indeed been mentioned as a possible option. However, the exact mandate of such an agency would need to be carefully considered, as well as its cost in relation to possible benefits.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21.10.2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 72-87.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1071/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21.10.2009 establishing common rules concerning the conditions to be complied with to pursue the occupation of the road transport operator and repealing Council Directive 96/26/EC, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 51.

([3]) Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT): Results and Next Steps, COM(2013) 685 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005434/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Israël et Mordechaï Vanunu

Depuis sa remise en liberté en 2004, Mordechaï Vanunu a été sous surveillance policière en vertu d'ordres militaires régulièrement renouvelés. Il lui est notamment interdit de quitter le pays et de prendre part à des discussions sur Internet et il doit demander une autorisation pour communiquer avec des étrangers, y compris avec des journalistes.

La punition que les autorités continuent à imposer à Mordechaï Vanunu semble être purement vindicative. Leur argument, à savoir que ces sévères restrictions sont nécessaires pour des raisons de sûreté nationale, est absurde.

Les autorités israéliennes assurent qu'il faut restreindre la liberté de Mordechaï Vanunu pour l'empêcher de divulguer d'autres secrets sur le programme nucléaire israélien. Mordechaï Vanunu a toutefois précisé à plusieurs reprises qu'il avait révélé en 1986 tout ce qu'il savait sur l'arsenal nucléaire israélien et ne possédait pas d'informations supplémentaires. Ses avocats et lui-même ont également mis en avant le fait que les informations dont il disposait au moment de son incarcération datent d'il y a quelque 30 ans et sont depuis longtemps tombées dans le domaine public.

Dix ans après avoir entièrement purgé la peine à laquelle il avait été condamné pour ses révélations à la presse sur le programme israélien d'armement nucléaire, Mordechaï Vanunu continue à subir des restrictions sévères et arbitraires à sa liberté de mouvement, d'expression et d'association.

Comment réagissez-vous?

N'estimez-vous pas que cet ancien technicien en génie nucléaire, ayant purgé une peine de 18 années d'emprisonnement, dont les 11 premières à l'isolement, pour avoir divulgué à des journalistes dans les années 1980 des informations sur l'arsenal nucléaire d'Israël, souffre de restrictions arbitraires, inutiles et sans fondement au regard du droit international? Le maintien de ces mesures restrictives met sa santé mentale et physique à rude épreuve et doit immédiatement cesser.

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(24 juin 2014)

L'Union européenne a connaissance du cas de Mordechaï Vanunu évoqué par les Honorables Parlementaires à l'occasion du dixième anniversaire de sa mise en liberté.

Selon les informations disponibles sur le terrain, les pratiques alléguées ne sont pas établies, ce qui rend difficile pour l'Union européenne toute prise de position concernant ce cas particulier.

Néanmoins, 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 la liberté d'association, l'Union européenne 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 dans les domaines des Droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales évoquées par les Honorables Parlementaires.

L'Union européenne 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.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005434/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Israel and Mordechai Vanunu

Ever since his release in 2004, Mordechai Vanunu has been subject to police surveillance under military orders which continue to be renewed on a regular basis. In particular, he is prohibited from leaving Israel or taking part in Internet discussions, and he is required to seek permission before communicating with foreigners, including journalists.

Vanunu's continuing punishment by the Israeli authorities seems purely vindictive, and their argument that these harsh measures are necessary to protect national security is plainly absurd.

Israel insists that Vanunu's freedom needs to be restricted in this way in order to prevent him from leaking further secrets about the Israeli nuclear programme, but Vanunu himself has repeatedly stated that he disclosed everything he knew about the Israeli nuclear arsenal in 1986, and that he has nothing more to say. In addition, as he and his lawyers have pointed out, what he knew when he was first imprisoned related to the nuclear programme as it was 30 years ago and has long since come into the public domain.

Ten years after completing his sentence for revealing details of the Israeli nuclear weapons programme to the press, Mordechai Vanunu still suffers harsh and arbitrary restrictions on his freedom of movement, expression and association.

What is the Commission's response to this?

Does it not think that the restrictions imposed on this former nuclear technician, who spent 18 years in prison (the first eleven of them in solitary confinement) for revealing information on the Israeli nuclear programme to journalists in the 1980s, are arbitrary and pointless, and have no basis in international law? These ongoing restrictions are seriously damaging his mental and physical health and must be lifted immediately.

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

The EU is aware of the case of Mordechai Vanunu referred to by the Honourable Members on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of his release.

According to the information available on the ground, the alleged practices are not established, making it difficult for the EU to take a position on this individual case.

Nevertheless, in the context of the cooperation with Israel in areas of human rights and international humanitarian law, and more specifically on the issue of freedom of association, 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 on matters of human rights and fundamental freedoms referred to by the Honorable Members.

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.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005435/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Procès Kadhafi

Le procès d'anciens hauts responsables libyens, parmi lesquels Saif al-Islam Kadhafi, risque de tourner à la mascarade après que le tribunal a ordonné lundi 14 avril que cet homme et six autres accusés soient jugés par vidéoconférence.

Le 23 mars, veille de l'audience la plus récente dans cette affaire, deux modifications ont été apportées au Code libyen de procédure pénale afin de permettre que les audiences puissent se dérouler par vidéoconférence.

1. Partagez-vous notre avis sur le fait que ces procès par vidéoconférence enfreindront le droit des sept accusés à un procès équitable? L'impact sur le cas de Saif al-Islam Kadhafi inspire des craintes particulières car il est maintenu en détention dans un lieu secret à Zintan, par une milice qui a refusé à de nombreuses reprises de le remettre aux autorités nationales à Tripoli.

2. Un tel jugement ne favorisera pas la recherche de la vérité et surtout des ramifications autour des anciens leaders. N'estimez-vous pas que le but de cette stratégie est de faire taire les Kadhafi pour que le jugement ne nuise pas à d'autres ayant récupéré le pouvoir en Lybie, ou à d'autres encore au niveau international?

3. La place des inculpés n'est-elle pas à La Haye?

4. Comptez-vous menacer la Lybie d'arrêter toute subvention si les inculpés ne sont pas jugés à La Haye? Si non, pourquoi?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(24 juin 2014)

L'UE suit attentivement la procédure judiciaire engagée à l'encontre de Saif al-Islam et de 36 autres responsables de l'ancien régime. Elle estime que le droit de M. Saif al-Islam à une procédure régulière devrait être garanti par la Libye conformément à ses obligations internationales. À cet égard, la délégation de l'UE à Tripoli compte assister au jugement des 37 responsables en qualité d'observateur, conjointement avec la mission d'appui des Nations unies en Libye. Les divers ajournements et complications liées à la sécurité ont rendu les choses difficiles jusqu'à présent.

Par ailleurs, l'UE a appelé la Libye à continuer à coopérer pleinement avec la Cour pénale internationale, y compris en ce qui concerne le mandat d'arrêt émis à l'encontre de M. Saif al-Islam, conformément aux obligations juridiques du pays découlant de l'adoption de la résolution 1970 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies le 26 février 2011.

L'UE ne compte pas réduire son soutien à la Libye si M. Saif al-Islam n'est pas jugé devant le tribunal de La Haye. Elle estime en effet que nos programmes contribuent de manière positive au processus général de transition démocratique et qu'ils sont bénéfiques aux Libyens. Citons, par exemple, l'atelier de formation de trois jours sur le traitement des détenus, organisé dans le cadre du projet de soutien aux victimes de torture et de disparition forcée, financé par l'UE. Cinquante responsables libyens de la police judiciaire (ministère de la justice), du département de lutte contre l'immigration illégale (ministère de l'intérieur) et de la police militaire (ministère de la défense) de Tripoli, Benghazi, Sabha, Zawiya, Zintan et de cinq autres villes, ont participé à cet événement, qui s'est tenu le 6 mai 2014 à Tripoli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005435/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Gadaffi trial

After a Libyan court ruled on Monday, 14 April 2014 that Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and six other former senior government officials would be tried via video-link, the whole procedure threatens to turn into a farce.

On 23 March 2014, the day before the most recent court hearing, two amendments were made to the Libyan Code of Criminal Procedure specifically to make it possible for the trial to be conducted by video-link.

1. Does the Commission agree that conducting these hearings by video-link will deprive the seven defendants of their right to a fair trial? The implications are particularly worrying in the case of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, who is being held at a secret location in Zintan by a militia which is stubbornly refusing to hand him over to the state authorities in Tripoli.

2. A trial of this kind will hardly be conducive to establishing the truth, in particular about the crimes Libya's former leaders may be guilty of. Does the Commission not agree that this is a strategy designed to silence the Gaddafi family and rule out any unpleasant repercussions for those currently in power in Libya, or for individuals in other countries?

3. Should the trial not be taking place in The Hague?

4. Will the Commission threaten to freeze all aid to Libya if the defendants are not tried in The Hague? If not, why not?

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

The EU is following attentively the judicial process of Saif al-Islam and other 36 officials from the former regime. The EU believes that the due process rights of Mr Saif al-Islam should be guaranteed in accordance with Libya's international obligations. In this regard the EU Delegation in Tripoli, jointly with the UN Support Mission in Libya, intends to attend as observer the trial of the 37 officials. The different adjournments and security-related complications have made this difficult to this date.

Moreover, the EU has been calling on Libya to continue to fully cooperate with the International Criminal Court, including with regard to the arrest warrant issued against Mr Saif al-Islam, in accordance with its legal obligations following the adoption of UNSCR 1970 on 26 February 2011.

The EU has no intention to reduce its support to Libya if Mr Saif al-Islam is not tried in The Hague as it believes our programmes have a positive contribution on the overall democratic transition process and benefit the people of Libya. An example of this is the three-day training workshop on the treatment of detainees organised in the framework of the EU-funded project 'Support to Victims of Torture and Enforced Disappearance'. This event took place on 6 May 2014 in Tripoli and was attended by fifty Libyan officials who serve with the Judicial Police (Ministry of Justice), the Department for Combating Illegal Migration (Ministry of Interior), and the Military Police (Ministry of Defense) in Tripoli, Benghazi, Sabha, Zawiya, Zintan, and five other cities.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-005436/14
à la Commission
Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(23 avril 2014)

Objet: Viande chevaline importée des Amériques dans l'Union européenne

Plusieurs organisations internationales de défense des animaux ont mis au jour les conditions de transport, de manipulation, d'engraissement et d'abattage des chevaux en provenance de pays tiers, notamment d'Argentine, du Canada, du Mexique et de l'Uruguay. La consommation de viande chevaline dans l'Union européenne repose à plus de 60 % sur les importations depuis ces pays.

Il ressort de l'enquête que les chevaux — presque tous réformés d'activités hippiques ou anciens chevaux de trait — sont transportés vers l'abattoir dans des conditions incomparables à celles en vigueur au sein de l'Union et incompatibles avec un minimum d'attention pour les animaux: camions vétustes et dangereux, longs transports sans eau, ni nourriture, ni séparations intérieures pour prévenir les chutes, ou encore camions scellés, qui empêchent les chauffeurs de venir en aide aux chevaux si nécessaire. En témoignent les nombreuses blessures constatées à l'abattoir, aggravées par la vulnérabilité des chevaux réformés.

Par ailleurs, la traçabilité des chevaux dans ces pays ne peut être garantie, ce qui pose des problèmes de sécurité sanitaire. Le système en place pour l'identification des chevaux et de leur historique médicamenteux repose sur des déclarations sur l'honneur impossibles à vérifier. Elles ne concernent par ailleurs que les six derniers mois de vie des chevaux, alors que des substances dangereuses comme la phénylbutazone sont interdites dans l'Union tout au long de la vie des chevaux destinés à la consommation.

Quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour protéger, lors de l'importation de viande chevaline de pays tiers, les chevaux ainsi que les consommateurs? Plus particulièrement:

1. Étant donnée la responsabilité portée par l'Union en tant que principal client, quelles mesures la Commission compte-t-elle prendre pour remédier à la maltraitance des chevaux durant leur transport vers les abattoirs ou les centres de rassemblement ou d'engraissement?

2. Des rapports d'inspection de l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV) constatent que les systèmes pour l'identification et le traitement médical des chevaux sont insuffisants pour garantir des standards équivalents à ceux de la législation européenne. Étant donné les lacunes en matière d'information tout au long de la chaîne alimentaire, quelles mesures la Commission va-t-elle prendre pour imposer une traçabilité équivalente à celle en vigueur dans l'Union?

3. La Commission va-t-elle suspendre l'importation de viande chevaline en provenance de pays où le cadre légal est fondamentalement différent de celui de l'Union?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

1. Le règlement (CE) nº 1/2005 ([1]) relatif à la protection des animaux pendant le transport ne s'applique pas aux pays tiers. Toutefois, la Commission a toujours soutenu les travaux effectués par l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE) visant à élaborer des lignes directrices en matière de transport des animaux. Il appartient à chaque membre de l'OIE de réfléchir à la manière dont ces lignes directrices internationales doivent être appliquées. En ce qui concerne la question des chevaux abattus dans ces pays, le règlement (CE) nº 1099/2009 ([2]) sur la protection des animaux au moment de leur mise à mort prévoit que les autorités compétentes des pays tiers fassent appliquer et certifier l'application des normes européennes ou de dispositions équivalentes en matière de bien-être des animaux. Lors de l'audit des systèmes de contrôle des autorités compétentes dans les pays tiers, l'Office alimentaire et vétérinaire (OAV), qui est le service d'inspection de la Commission de la DG SANCO, s'assure notamment du respect de ces normes.

2. La directive 96/23/CE ([3]) du Conseil impose aux autorités compétentes de tous les pays qui exportent vers l'Union européenne de fournir, chaque année, un plan de surveillance des résidus. Des méthodes d'essai sensibles et fiables doivent fournir la garantie que la viande de cheval exportée vers l'Union ne contient pas, à des concentrations dépassant les teneurs maximales, de résidus de médicaments vétérinaires autorisés dans l'Union européenne ou de résidus de substances interdites d'emploi dans l'Union européenne. En outre, les États membres ont la possibilité d'analyser les lots de viande de cheval au moment de l'importation.

([1]) JO L 3 du 5.1.2005, p. 1.
([2]) JO L 303 du 18.11.2009, p. 1.
([3]) JO L 125 du 18.11.2009, p. 10.

3. S'il est constaté qu'un pays tiers ne peut prouver à suffisance que les exigences en matière de certification pour l'exportation de viande de cheval dans l'Union sont réunies, la Commission peut, en fonction des points faibles mis en évidence, adopter des mesures s'appliquant aux importations en provenance dudit pays jusqu'à une régularisation de la situation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005436/14
to the Commission
Michèle Rivasi (Verts/ALE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Horsemeat from the Americas imported into the EU

A number of international animal rights organisations have drawn attention to the conditions under which horses from non-EU countries, including Argentina, Canada, Mexico and Uruguay, are transported, handled, fattened and slaughtered. More than 60% of horsemeat consumed in the EU comes from these countries.

A study has found that the horses — nearly all of which were used in equestrian sports or as draught horses — are transported to abattoirs under conditions which bear no comparison with those regarded as acceptable in the Union, and which are completely at odds with minimum animal welfare standards. The horses undergo long journeys without food and water in lorries which are old and dangerous, and which have no partitions to prevent the animals falling. In some cases, they are transported in sealed lorries, meaning that the driver cannot help the horses if a problem occurs. The injuries which many of these already very frail horses have when they reach the abattoirs demonstrate the seriousness of this problem.

What is more, the traceability of horses from these countries cannot be guaranteed, which poses a food safety risk. The current system for establishing a horse's identity and keeping track of the drugs it has received is based on declarations given on the owner's honour, which are impossible to verify. What is more, these declarations cover only the last six months of a horse's life, even though the EU has imposed a blanket ban on the administration of dangerous substances such as phenylbutazone to horses intended for consumption.

What measures does the Commission intend to take to protect horses and consumers in the context of the import of horsemeat from third countries? In particular,

1. Given that the EU is the main destination for horsemeat, what measures will the Commission take to address the mistreatment of horses during their transportation to abattoirs or to assembly or fattening facilities?

2. Inspection reports from the Food and Veterinary Office show that the systems for establishing a horse's identity and keeping track of the drugs it has received are not on a par with those required under EC law. In view of the shortcomings throughout the food chain in terms of recording relevant information, what steps will the Commission take to ensure an equivalent level of traceability to that required in the Union?

3. Will the Commission suspend the import of horsemeat from countries where completely different rules apply?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

1. Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 ([1]) on the protection of animals during transport, do not apply to third countries. However, the Commission has consistently supported the work performed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to develop guidelines on the transport of animals. It is up to each member of the OIE, to consider how they implement these international guidelines. Regarding the horses slaughtered in these countries, Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 ([2]) on the protection of animals at the time of killing, states that the competent authorities of third countries must enforce and certify the application of EU or equivalent animal welfare standards. The Commission inspection service of DG SANCO (FVO — Food and Veterinary Office) when auditing the competent authority control systems in third countries, cover, *inter alia*, the implementation of these standards.

2. Council Directive 96/23/EC ([3]) requires the competent authorities of all countries exporting to the EU to provide, every year, a residue monitoring plan. Robust and sensitive testing methods provide assurances that horse meat exported to the Union neither contains residues of veterinary medicines permitted for use in the EU at concentrations in excess of maximum limits, nor residues of substances banned for use in the EU. Furthermore the Member States have the possibility to test consignments of horse meat upon import.

3. Where it is found that a third country fails to provide satisfactory guarantees that the certification requirements for the export of horse meat to the Union are met, the Commission may, accordingly to the weaknesses highlighted, adopt measures, including block of imports from that country until the situation is rectified.

([1]) OJ L 3, 5.1.2005, p. 1-44.
([2]) OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1-30.
([3]) OJ L 125, 23.5.1996, p. 10-32.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005441/14
al Consiglio
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(23 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Metodi brutali della polizia belga nei confronti di cittadini europei e di funzionari dell'UE: assenza di garanzie procedurali negli accertamenti

Secondo le denunce, diversi cittadini non belgi, originari di diversi Stati membri, hanno subito controlli da loro definiti assai bruschi da parte di agenti di polizia belgi nel quartiere europeo, segnatamente Boulevard Clovis, Square Ambiorix, Schuman, rue Belliard o in prossimità di asili nido europei.

Il conducente è costretto a uscire dal proprio veicolo, che viene confiscato senza spiegazioni. A detti cittadini europei non sono stati forniti processi verbali né assistenza da parte di un avvocato e sono stati obbligati, senza potersi opporre, a recarsi al commissariato nel Boulevard Clovis o presso altri uffici per subire controlli che, secondo alcuni testimoni, possono durare ore. Non è stata assicurata alcuna assistenza di un interprete nel caso in cui l'agente di polizia parla una lingua (ad esempio il neerlandese) che il cittadino di un altro Stato membro non comprende. Tutte le denunce che i cittadini hanno inviato al «comitato P» (organo di disciplina della polizia belga) o al procuratore del Re sono state archiviate senza seguito.

Palesemente tali interventi si ripercuotono sull'esercizio della libera circolazione dei cittadini e sulla loro garanzie procedurali, segnatamente alla luce degli articoli 41, 47 e 48 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea in collegamento con i principi di legalità e proporzionalità nonché degli articoli 4 (non discriminazione basata sulla cittadinanza), 15 e 30 (garanzie procedurali legate alla libera circolazione e al diritto di soggiorno) della direttiva 2004/38/CE.

La materia potrebbe prefigurare anche una fattispecie in campo penale, in quanto i principi generali delle garanzie procedurali in materia di diritto di informazione nel quadro dei procedimenti penali — previste dalla direttiva 2012/12/UE e dagli articoli 6 e 13 della Convenzione europea dei diritti umani — dovrebbero essere noti e applicati pure dagli agenti di polizia belgi.

Ove tra le vittime di detti controlli, effettuati, secondo gli interpellati, in modo vessatorio, vi fossero funzionari, agenti contrattuali, esperti nazionali distaccati da un'altra amministrazione nazionale, agenti temporanei e altro personale che soggiornano per un periodo più o meno lungo in Belgio, intende il Consiglio rinegoziare l'accordo sulle sedi concluso con il Regno del Belgio al fine di introdurvi maggiori garanzie riguardo all'immunità di dette categorie di persone, esentandole dall'obbligo di immatricolare un veicolo del proprio Stato membro di origine?

Risposta
(30 giugno 2014)

Il Consiglio non ha discusso la questione in oggetto, poiché non rientra nelle sue competenze.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005441/14
to the Council
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(23 April 2014)

Subject: Acts of aggression against EU citizens and EU officials by the Belgian police: absence of procedural safeguards during these procedures

Non-Belgians from several Member States have complained of being subjected to checks by Belgian police officers, which they describe as quite rough, in the European district and particularly Boulevard Clovis, Ambiorix Square, Schuman and rue Belliard and near the crèches serving the EU institutions.

Drivers have been made to get out of their cars, which are then confiscated without any explanation being given. These EU citizens were not issued with statements or guaranteed they could be assisted by a lawyer, but were forced, with no possibility to object, to go to the police station on Boulevard Clovis, or other stations, to undergo checks which — according to some of those concerned — could take hours. No interpreter was provided in cases where the police officer used a language (e.g. Dutch) which these citizens from other Member States did not understand. No action has been taken in response to any of the complaints these citizens have sent to the 'P Committee' (the Belgian Police Force's disciplinary body) or to the King's Prosecutor.

It is quite likely that such conduct has effects on the exercising by citizens of their right of free movement and the procedural safeguards applicable to them, not least under Articles 41, 47 and 48 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, relating to the principles of legality and proportionality of criminal offences, and Articles 4 (no discrimination on grounds of nationality), 15 and 30 (procedural safeguards in respect of free movement and rights of residence) of Directive 2004/38/EC.

Were this matter to have effects under criminal law, the Belgian police should be familiar with and equally apply the general principles applicable to procedural safeguards on the right to information in the criminal proceedings — as set out in Directive 2012/13/EU and in Articles 6 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Given that some of those subjected to these checks — which according to those stopped have been conducted in a persecutory manner — have been EU officials and contract staff and detached national experts from another national administration, temporary members of staff and other staff living and working in Belgium for varying lengths of time, can the Council state whether it would consider renegotiating the 'host agreement' signed with the Kingdom of Belgium to ensure better guarantees are provided on the immunity of such persons, without it obligatory for them to register their vehicles from their Member State of origin?

Reply
(30 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed this question, as it does not fall within its sphere of competence.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005443/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Allarme Ebola

Dallo scorso febbraio, è in corso in Guinea un'epidemia causata dal virus Ebola che ha fino ad ora causato la morte di almeno 108 persone e ha fatto registrare contagi negli stati confinanti, con altre 19 morti tra Liberia e Sierra Leone. I casi finora registrati sono stati 203: il virus provoca una febbre emorragica nella maggior parte dei casi mortale. Si tratta della prima epidemia di Ebola nell'Africa occidentale degli ultimi 20 anni e per questo è osservata con molta attenzione non solo dalle autorità sanitarie locali, ma anche da quelle mondiali che vogliono evitare che il virus possa diffondersi in altre zone.

Con una circolare del 4 aprile, il Ministero della Sanità italiano ha comunicato l'attivazione di misure di vigilanza e sorveglianza nei punti di ingresso internazionali in Italia. La nota è stata inviata all'Enac, alla Farnesina, a tutte le regioni e alla Croce Rossa Italiana. Per la prima volta, dal 1970 ad oggi, la nota dell'allarme è stata trasmessa anche al Ministero della Difesa.

Le procedure attivate dal Ministero della Salute prevedono controlli sugli ingressi legali e illegali nel territorio nazionale e un monitoraggio affidato al Ministero degli Esteri.

La situazione desta particolare preoccupazione e allarme in Italia, dove si susseguono a ritmo costante sbarchi clandestini sull'isola di Lampedusa, da parte di immigrati e profughi di origine africana. Si teme quindi un arrivo del contagio tramite questa immigrazione clandestina selvaggia.

Considerando che l'Italia è la porta sul Mediterraneo dell'Europa e il primo approdo per gli immigrati e i profughi clandestini, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza della situazione?

2. Quali misure intende mettere in atto per aiutare l'Italia nella gestione di questo potenziale pericolo che potrebbe investire tutti gli Stati membri?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(23 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-004602/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005443/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Ebola virus alert

An epidemic caused by Ebola virus has been under way in Guinea since last February, where it has led to at least 108 deaths to date. Outbreaks have also been recorded in neighbouring countries, with a total of 19 deaths across Liberia and Sierra Leone. So far 203 cases have been recorded. The virus causes haemorrhagic fever which usually proves fatal. This is West Africa's first Ebola epidemic in 20 years. Health authorities at world as well as local levels are therefore watching the situation closely, to prevent the virus spreading elsewhere.

By circular dated 4 April, the Italian Health Ministry announced the start of checks and monitoring at international points of entry to Italy. The circular was sent to the Italian civil aviation authority, the Foreign Ministry, all regions and the Italian Red Cross. For the first time since 1970, the alert was also forwarded to the Ministry of Defence.

The procedures mobilised by the Health Ministry involve checks on both legal and illegal entrants into Italy and a monitoring role assigned to the Foreign Ministry.

The situation is causing particular concern and alarm in Italy where clandestine landings, of immigrants and refugees of African origin, are a constant occurrence on the island of Lampedusa. The fear is that the infection will arrive via this uncontrolled clandestine immigration, as Italy is Europe's Mediterranean gateway and the first port of call for clandestine immigrants and refugees.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What measures does it intend to take to help Italy manage this potential danger which could affect all the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(23 June 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-004602/2014 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005446/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Apertura di una base operativa dell'Agenzia Frontex in Italia: richiesta di informazioni

L'Agenzia europea per la gestione della cooperazione operativa alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'UE (Frontex) dovrebbe rispondere all'esigenza di migliorare la gestione integrata delle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

La sede di Frontex è sita a Varsavia, a 3 000 chilometri da Lampedusa, o da Malta, dove approdano quasi quotidianamente i migranti. Inoltre, il 40 % del budget in dotazione dell'Agenzia Frontex, ovvero 34 milioni di euro l'anno, viene utilizzato per coprire i soli costi amministrativi e burocratici della sede.

Si sottolinea che l'Italia spende circa 9 milioni di euro al mese per le operazioni di controllo, di soccorso e di assistenza agli immigrati clandestini, senza ricevere un adeguato sostegno finanziario dall'Unione europea.

Alla luce di quanto premesso, può la Commissione:

1. fornire un rendiconto dettagliato delle spese sostenute dall'Agenzia Frontex, in relazione al budget ad essa assegnato;

2. valutare — considerando che a frontiere comuni corrispondono responsabilità comuni — l'opportunità di istituire una base operativa di Frontex in Italia, con risorse mirate alle operazioni e che sia vicina all'epicentro dell'emergenza dell'immigrazione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

La Commissione spedirà le informazioni sul budget di Frontex direttamente all'Onorevole Deputato. Tali informazioni sono disponibili sul sito web dell'Agenzia http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/governance-documents/, e sono inoltre trasmesse al Parlamento conformemente al regolamento Frontex.

L'articolo 16 del regolamento (CE) n. 2007/2004 che istituisce Frontex ([1]) conferisce al Consiglio d'amministrazione dell'Agenzia la possibilità di creare reparti specializzati negli Stati membri. Un progetto pilota è attualmente in corso al Pireo, in Grecia. Il Consiglio d'amministrazione di Frontex non ha per il momento istituito alcun altro reparto specializzato.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 2007/2004 del Consiglio, del 26 ottobre 2004, che istituisce un'Agenzia europea per la gestione della cooperazione operativa alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea *(GU L 349 del 25.11.2004, pag. 1)*.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005446/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Opening of an operational base of the Frontex Agency in Italy: request for information

The role of the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) is to meet the need to improve the integrated management of the external borders of the European Union.

Frontex has its head office in Warsaw, 3 000 kilometres away from Lampedusa, and the same distance from Malta, where migrants are arriving almost every day. In addition, the administrative and bureaucratic costs of the head office alone account for 40% of the Frontex Agency's budget, equating to EUR 34 million each year.

It is emphasised that Italy spends approximately EUR 9 million a month on checks, support and assistance for illegal immigrants and does not receive sufficient financial support from the European Union.

In the light of the above, can the Commission:

1. Provide a detailed account of the costs incurred by the Frontex Agency as a proportion of the budget assigned to it?

2. Taking into account the fact that common borders mean a shared responsibility, consider the possibility of creating an operative base of Frontex in Italy which could provide resources to be spent on operations and which would be located close to the epicentre of the immigration crisis?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

The Commission is sending information on the Agency's budget direct to the Honourable Member. This information is available on the Agency's website http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/governance-documents/ and is also transmitted to the Parliament in accordance with the Frontex Regulation.

Article 16 of Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 establishing the Frontex Agency ([1]) gives the Management Board of Frontex the possibility to create specialised branches in the Member States. A pilot is currently running in Piraeus, Greece. The Management Board of Frontex has not established any other specialised branch for the time being.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26.10.2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p.1).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005447/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Campagne europee di informazione e sensibilizzazione

Le campagne europee di informazione sono dedicate alla sensibilizzazione dei cittadini europei su una moltitudine di argomenti specifici.

Esse costituiscono un ottimo strumento di divulgazione delle iniziative intraprese dall'Unione europea e promuovono la conoscenza e l'informazione di tematiche di competenza dell'UE. Le campagne europee costituiscono attività dell'Unione europea che influenzano la vita di milioni di cittadini, e devono quindi essere adottate con la massima trasparenza.

I cittadini europei hanno il diritto di sapere come le istituzioni utilizzano i fondi, dal momento che un accesso trasparente alle informazioni è indispensabile per avvicinare le istituzioni europee ai cittadini e per garantire il pieno contributo e la partecipazione degli stessi alla vita delle istituzioni.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione fornire un calendario delle campagne, delle settimane e delle giornate europee in programma per il 2014?

Può fornire un rendiconto dettagliato delle spese che ha sostenuto e che dovrà sostenere per organizzare le campagne europee in corso e per quelle future?

Risposta di Viviane Reding a nome della Commissione
(18 giugno 2014)

È possibile citare le più importanti Giornate Europe, come la giornata porte aperte interistituzionale del 17 maggio, nonché altre importanti iniziative, come la Settimana Verde e la Settimana Europea dell'Energia sostenibile che si celebrano prima dell'estate e la Settimana Europea delle PMI che prende il via a fine settembre.

Al di là di queste giornate e settimane, la Commissione ricorre a diversi altri programmi e strumenti per informare i cittadini e comunicare con loro.

Nell'ambito delle mie attribuzioni, l'Anno europeo dei cittadini 2013 ha registrato un grande successo e la Commissione ha esplorato nuove vie per impegnarsi direttamente nel dialogo coi cittadini. Si sono tenuti più di 50 Dialoghi con i cittadini che hanno interessato tutti gli Stati membri ed hanno offerto ai cittadini l'opportunità di discutere delle politiche europee che li riguardano direttamente, come anche del futuro dell'UE.

Per quanto concerne la parte dell'interrogazione in cui si sollecita un resoconto dettagliato dei costi sostenuti e da sostenersi per l'organizzazione delle campagne europee, la Commissione non può impegnarsi, per rispondere a un'interrogazione scritta, nella ricerca lunga e costosa che sarebbe necessaria per fornire all'Onorevole deputata tali informazioni. Le pertinenti informazioni ([1]) sui destinatari di finanziamenti dell'UE gestiti direttamente dalla Commissione sono disponibili per il tramite del sistema di trasparenza finanziaria ([2]) della Commissione.

([1]) A seguito della revisione del regolamento finanziario e delle sue modalità di applicazione, una ricerca effettuata sul FTS (Financial transparency system) può individuare un numero di impegni e un importo totale di finanziamento inferiore all'importo cui il destinatario ha legalmente diritto, a causa dell'introduzione di un'esclusione obbligatoria per i contratti di fornitura inferiori a 15 000 euro.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005447/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: European information and awareness campaigns

The European information campaigns are aimed at raising awareness among European citizens of a number of specific topics.

These campaigns are an excellent way of disclosing initiatives taken by the European Union and serve to promote knowledge of and provide information about the remit of the EU. The European campaigns are EU activities that impact upon the lives of millions of citizens, and must therefore be implemented as transparently as possible.

European citizens have the right to know how the institutions make use of the funds, as transparent access to information is essential in order to bring the European institutions closer to its citizens and to guarantee that these citizens contribute fully to and participate in the life of the institutions.

In the light of the above, can the Commission provide a schedule of the campaigns, the European Weeks and European Days set to take place in 2014?

Can it provide a detailed account of the costs that have already been incurred and that are still to be incurred in the organisation of the European campaigns that are currently underway and of any future campaigns?

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

It is possible to identify the most important European Days — such as the inter-Institutional open doors day on 17 May as well as key weeks such as Green Week and European Sustainable Energy Week before the Summer and European SME week starting at the end of September.

Apart from such days and weeks, the Commission uses a number of other programmes and tools to inform citizens and communicate with them.

Within my own portfolio, the European Year of Citizens 2013 was a great success and the Commission has pioneered new ways of engaging directly in Citizens' Dialogues. Over 50 Citizens' Dialogues have been held covering all Member States, giving citizens an opportunity to debate European policies that affect them directly as well as the future of the EU.

Concerning the part of the question that asks for a detailed account of the costs incurred and to be incurred in the organisation of the European campaigns, the Commission cannot undertake, for the purpose of answering a written question, the lengthy and costly research that would be required to provide the Honourable Member with the information. In this context, information ([1]) on recipients of EU funding managed directly by the Commission is available via the Commission's Financial Transparency System ([2]).

([1]) As from the revision of the Financial Regulations and its Rules of Application, a search performed on FTS may report a number of commitments and a total amount of funding lower than what a recipient was legally entitled to, due to the introduction of compulsory exclusion for procurement contracts below EUR 15 000.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005448/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni sulle competenze, sui fondi assegnati e sulle spese di gestione delle Agenzie europee

Le Agenzie dell'UE sono entità giuridiche istituite per eseguire compiti specifici in base al diritto dell'UE.

Allo stato attuale, si contano oltre 40 Agenzie europee. Si segnala che alcune Agenzie europee svolgono essenzialmente gli stessi compiti e hanno competenze identiche. In particolare, vi sono duplicati di Agenzie che si occupano di formazione professionale e di tutela delle condizioni di lavoro. Tali Agenzie sono finanziate a titolo del bilancio dell'Unione.

I problemi che si riscontrano dopo un'analisi delle stesse, riguardano una mancanza di controllo e di trasparenza nella gestione, nonché un'inutile e dispendiosa duplicazione delle loro competenze.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. qual è il quadro generale a livello europeo delle Agenzie dell'UE, delle relative competenze, e dei fondi ad esse assegnati?

2. È disposta a valutare l'opportunità di riunire le Agenzie in un'unica sede, dato che molte di esse svolgono competenze identiche?

3. Può fornire una rendicontazione dei fondi assegnati e delle spese sostenute per la gestione di ciascuna delle Agenzie europee?

Risposta di Maroš Šefčovič a nome della Commissione
(26 giugno 2014)

1. Esistono oltre 30 agenzie decentrate dell'UE ([1]). Esse sono state istituite singolarmente, con un atto di diritto derivato adottato dal legislatore. Per lo più ricevono un contributo finanziario dal bilancio dell'UE, mentre alcune di esse sono parzialmente o interamente autofinanziate. Le responsabilità loro affidate, nonché la fonte delle loro entrate, sono descritte nei rispettivi atti istitutivi.

Vi sono 6 agenzie esecutive, che sono state istituite con una decisione della Commissione, ai sensi del regolamento (CE) n. 58/2003 del Consiglio, ai fini dell'esecuzione di compiti specifici connessi all'attuazione di determinati programmi di spesa o componenti dei programmi di spesa per la quale non vanno esercitati poteri discrezionali che comportano decisioni politiche. Esse sono integralmente sovvenzionate dal bilancio UE a titolo della dotazione finanziaria del programma/dei programmi di spesa che eseguono.

2. Per analogia con l'articolo 341 del TFUE, la sede delle agenzie decentrate dell'UE è fissata di comune accordo dai rappresentanti dei governi degli Stati membri riuniti a livello di capi di Stato o di governo o dal Consiglio. Pertanto la Commissione non ha alcuna competenza in questo campo. Conformemente al regolamento n. 58/2003 del Consiglio, le agenzie esecutive sono ubicate nel luogo in cui sono situati la Commissione e i suoi servizi ([2]).

Nel 2013 la Commissione ha proposto di riunire CEPOL ed Europol sulla base di una valutazione d'impatto delle sinergie funzionali e dei risparmi di bilancio. La proposta è stata respinta dal colegislatore, malgrado i solidi argomenti presentati dalla Commissione a sostegno della sua proposta e la richiesta comune di risparmi e di un uso più efficiente delle risorse disponibili. La Commissione continuerà a valutare le possibilità di fusione di alcune delle agenzie esistenti, nonché di sfruttamento di ulteriori sinergie. Se del caso, potrebbe presentare altre proposte in merito, che vanno inquadrate in un più ampio dibattito sulla razionalizzazione e l'efficienza delle agenzie UE decentrate.

3. I contributi dell'UE per le agenzie decentrate ([3]) e le agenzie esecutive ([4]) iscritti nel bilancio dell'Unione per il 2014 sono pari rispettivamente a 799 310 000 EUR e 195 720 000 EUR.

([1]) http://europa.eu/about-eu/agencies/index_it.htm
([2]) In pratica ciò significa che sono situate a Bruxelles, ad eccezione di CHAFEA (Lussemburgo).
([3]) Nel bilancio votato per il 2014, il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno deciso di aumentare di 9 174 000 EUR i contributi dell'UE alle agenzie decentrate rispetto agli importi proposti dalla Commissione nel progetto di bilancio per il 2014 (790 136 000 EUR), al fine di rafforzare i contributi dell'UE a sei agenzie, vale a dire all'Autorità bancaria europea (ABE), all'Autorità europea delle assicurazioni e delle pensioni aziendali e professionali (EIOPA), all'Autorità europea degli strumenti finanziari e dei mercati (ESMA), all'Ufficio europeo di sostegno per l'asilo (EASO), a FRONTEX ed a EUROPOL.
([4]) Nel bilancio votato per il 2014, il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno accettato i contributi UE a ciascuna delle sei agenzie esecutive proposti dalla Commissione nella lettera rettificativa n. 2 al progetto di bilancio 2014 (COM(2013) 719 del 16 ottobre 2013), senza modifiche.

Informazioni particolareggiate relative a finanziamenti e personale delle singole agenzie dell'UE sono fornite ogni anno nel documento di lavoro III che accompagna il progetto di bilancio ([5]).

([5]) «Organismi istituiti dall'Unione europea aventi personalità giuridica».

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005448/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Request for information on the responsibilities, funds allocated and administrative expenditure of the EU agencies

The EU agencies are legal entities established to perform specific tasks under EC law.

At present, there are more than 40 EU agencies. It is worth noting that some EU agencies perform essentially the same tasks and have the same responsibilities. In particular, there are duplicates of agencies that deal with vocational training and the protection of working conditions. These agencies are funded from the EU budget.

Following a review of these agencies it has emerged that there is a lack of management supervision and transparency, not to mention an unnecessary and wasteful duplication of tasks.

Given the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What is the general framework, at EU level, for the EU agencies, their responsibilities and the funds allocated to them?

2. Is it willing to consider bringing the agencies together in a single place, given that many of them have the same responsibilities?

3. Can it provide a statement of accounts with regard to the funds allocated and expenditure incurred in the administration of each of the EU agencies?

Answer given by Mr Šefcovic on behalf of the Commission
(26 June 2014)

1. There are over 30 EU decentralised agencies ([1]). They were set up on a case by case basis, by an act of secondary legislation adopted by the legislative authority. They most often receive a financial contribution from the EU budget, while a few of them are partially or fully self-financed. The responsibilities entrusted to them, as well as the source of their revenues, are described in their founding acts.

There are 6 executive agencies. They were set up by a Commission Decision under Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003, for the execution of specific tasks related to the implementation of certain spending programmes or strands of spending programmes, where no political decision-making implying discretionary powers is involved. They are fully subsidised by the EU budget as a part of the financial envelope of the spending programme(s) they execute.

2. By analogy with Art. 341 TFEU, the seat of EU decentralised agencies is determined by common agreement between the representatives of the Member States meeting at Head of state or government level or by the Council. The Commission does not therefore have a competence in this field. In accordance with Council Regulation 58/2003, executive agencies are located at the place where the Commission and its departments are located ([2]).

In 2013 the Commission proposed to merge CEPOL with Europol on the basis of an impact assessment of functional synergies and budget savings. The proposal has been rejected by the co-legislator, despite the strong arguments presented by the Commission in support of its proposal and the common call for savings and more efficient use of available resources. The Commission will continue its assessment of the possibilities to merge some of the existing agencies, as well as to obtain further synergies. As appropriate, it may present further proposals in this regard, which should be seen as part of a wider debate on the issue of rationalisation and efficiency in EU decentralised agencies.

3. The EU contributions entered in the EU budget for 2014 are EUR 799 310 million to decentralised agencies ([3]) and EUR 195 720 million to executive agencies ([4]).

([1]) http://europa.eu/about-eu/agencies/index_en.htm
([2]) In practice, this means that they are located in Brussels, with the exception of Chafea (Luxembourg).
([3]) In the voted budget for 2014, the European Parliament and the Council decided to increase the EU contributions to decentralised agencies as compared to the amounts proposed by the Commission in the 2014 Draft Budget (EUR 790 136 million) by a total amount of EUR 9 174 million, so as to reinforce the EU contributions to six agencies as compared to the DB, namely for European Banking Authority (EBA), European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA), European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA), European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex and Europol.
([4]) In the voted budget for 2014, the European Parliament and the Council accepted the EU contributions to each of the six executive agencies as proposed by the Commission in the Amending Letter No 2 to the 2014 Draft Budget (COM(2013) 719 of 16.10.2013), without any changes.

Detailed information relating to funding and staffing of individual EU agencies is given annually in the Working Document III accompanying the Draft Budget ([5]).

([5]) 'Bodies set up by the EU and having legal personality'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005449/14
al Consiglio
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni sulla doppia sede del Parlamento europeo di Strasburgo

In merito alla determinazione delle sedi del Parlamento europeo, si segnala che la dispersione geografica del Parlamento, con particolare riferimento alla questione relativa alla doppia sede di Bruxelles e di Strasburgo, costa all'Unione europea circa 200 milioni di euro l'anno, 1000 milioni a legislatura.

Nonostante il Parlamento si sia espresso a grande maggioranza sull'opportunità di unificare le sedi, il problema della sede di Strasburgo viene costantemente rimandato e lo spostamento di circa 5 mila persone fra deputati, assistenti e personale amministrativo continua, determinando uno spreco di denaro e un'emissione annuale di CO_2 che supera le 19 mila tonnellate.

A questo si aggiunge che la sede del Parlamento europeo di Strasburgo viene utilizzata solo per 42 giorni all'anno.

Ciò premesso, può il Consiglio rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. quando e in che modo darà seguito alle indicazioni del Parlamento europeo relative alla chiusura della doppia sede di Strasburgo?

2. Qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta
(16 giugno 2014)

Non spetta al Consiglio prendere posizione sulla sede del Parlamento europeo.

La determinazione della sede delle istituzioni non è di competenza del Consiglio ma degli Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005449/14
to the Council
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Information on Parliament's seat in Strasbourg

With regard to the issue of where Parliament should be based, geographical dispersion — with particular reference to the twin seats in Brussels and Strasbourg — is currently costing the EU some EUR 200 million per year (EUR 1 000 million per parliamentary term).

Despite a large majority of Members being in favour of a single seat, this issue is still being put off, and moving some 5 000 people (Members, assistants and administrative staff) to part-sessions in Strasbourg is continuing to waste money and generate more than 19 000 tonnes of CO_2 per year.

The Strasbourg premises are in fact used for only 42 days each year.

1. What action will the Council be taking on the views voiced by Parliament regarding the issue of giving up the Strasbourg seat, and when?

2. How do things stand at present?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

It is not for the Council to comment on the seat of the European Parliament.

Determining the seats of the institutions is a matter for the Member States, not for the Council.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005450/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Richiesta di informazioni sulla doppia sede del Parlamento europeo di Strasburgo

In merito alla determinazione delle sedi del Parlamento europeo, si segnala che la dispersione geografica del Parlamento, con particolare riferimento alla questione relativa alla doppia sede di Bruxelles e di Strasburgo, costa all'Unione europea circa 200 milioni di euro l'anno, 1000 milioni a legislatura.

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A questo si aggiunge che la sede del Parlamento europeo di Strasburgo viene utilizzata solo per 42 giorni all'anno.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Quando e in che modo si darà seguito alle indicazioni del Parlamento europeo relative alla chiusura della doppia sede di Strasburgo?

2. Qual è il quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di José Manuel Barroso a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-0947/2010 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005450/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Information on Parliament's seat in Strasbourg

With regard to the issue of where Parliament should be based, geographical dispersion — with particular reference to the twin seats in Brussels and Strasbourg — is currently costing the EU some EUR 200 million per year (EUR 1 000 million per parliamentary term).

Despite a large majority of Members being in favour of a single seat, this issue is still being put off, and moving some 5 000 people (Members, assistants and administrative staff) to part-sessions in Strasbourg is continuing to waste money and generate more than 19 000 tonnes of CO_2 per year.

The Strasbourg premises are in fact used for only 42 days each year.

1. What action will the Commission be taking on the views voiced by Parliament regarding the issue of giving up the Strasbourg seat, and when?

2. How do things stand at present?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-0947/2010. ([1])

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005451/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Accesso al mercato e clausole di reciprocità tra aziende europee e aziende extraeuropee

Il mercato dell'Unione è ampiamente aperto alla concorrenza internazionale, il che riflette l'impegno dell'UE per il libero scambio. Si sottolinea che molti paesi terzi sono riluttanti ad aprire i propri mercati alle imprese europee. In particolare, il problema è rilevante nei confronti della Cina che, attraverso la pratica del dumping, introduce prodotti sottocosto sul mercato europeo, producendo una discriminazione internazionale dei prezzi. Le imprese europee si trovano dunque in una situazione di svantaggio o, comunque, di assenza di reciprocità, per quanto riguarda le condizioni di accesso al mercato, nei confronti dei principali operatori extraeuropei. Inoltre, le imprese extraeuropee spesso importano all'interno del mercato europeo prodotti che esulano dagli standard europei in merito alla qualità, al rispetto dell'ambiente, della salute dei consumatorie e delle tutele sociali.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. di fornire un quadro generale a livello europeo riguardo alla mancanza delle condizioni di reciprocità per l'accesso al mercato dei paesi terzi per le imprese europee;

2. se e come intende intervenire per garantire l'accesso delle imprese europee ai mercati extraeuropei;

3. di indicare quali sono i settori di mercato più sensibili alle partiche di concorrenza sleale e di dumping che andrebbero maggiormente protetti, da parte dell'UE, dalla concorrenza delle imprese extraeuropee;

4. se e come intende intervenire per garantire l'accesso al mercato cinese alle imprese europee?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

La promozione della reciprocità nelle relazioni commerciali tra l'UE e i suoi partner è strettamente legata all'agenda degli accordi di libero scambio (ALS) dell'UE. Poiché l'obiettivo degli ALS è rimuovere tutte le barriere, d'ordine tariffario e non tariffario, che si frappongono al libero scambio e poiché l'UE è più aperta in campo commerciale di alcune delle economie emergenti, questa agenda riequilibrerà l'attuale asimmetria per quanto concerne i livelli di apertura e promuoverà condizioni commerciali più eque. Questa politica è condotta su una base di reciprocità.

L'obiettivo ultimo consiste nel portare le economie emergenti allo stesso grado di apertura dell'UE invece di chiudere il mercato dell'UE pregiudicando l'economia europea.

Questo approccio produce risultati: l'ALS UE-Corea rimuove il 99 % delle tariffe con la Corea, laddove prima dell'inizio dei negoziati le tariffe coreane erano doppie rispetto a quelle dell'UE. Gli ALS già negoziati o in corso di negoziazione migliorano anche l'accesso al mercato per le imprese europee nei settori dei servizi e degli appalti pubblici.

Per quanto concerne la Cina, l'UE ha avviato di recente negoziati per un accordo finalizzato a liberalizzare e tutelare gli investimenti esteri, negoziati destinati a migliorare la posizione delle imprese dell'UE in Cina. L'UE sostiene inoltre la partecipazione della Cina ai negoziati riguardanti l'accordo commerciale multilaterale sugli scambi di servizi (TISA). Inoltre, l'UE si impegna con la Cina in negoziati per la riduzione delle tariffe applicate ai «beni ecologici» (green goods) e ai prodotti informatici, nonché in un dialogo volto a rimuovere le barriere in diversi settori.

Ove non sia possibile affrontare con altri mezzi le distorsioni commerciali, l'UE fa ricorso al sistema di composizione delle controversie in seno all'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio o adotta misure contro le importazioni a prezzi di dumping o sovvenzionate. I settori maggiormente colpiti dal dumping sono quelli dei prodotti chimici e affini, della siderurgia, seguiti dall'ingegneria meccanica e da altri settori metallurgici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005451/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Market access and reciprocity clauses between European and non-EU companies

The EU market is wide open to international competition, which reflects our efforts to encourage free trade. It should be pointed out that many third countries are reluctant to open their own markets up to European businesses. This is a particularly problematic issue with China, which employs dumping tactics to sell products below cost on the European market, thus producing international price discrimination. European companies therefore find themselves at a disadvantage or, in any event, there is a lack of reciprocity as regards market access conditions, compared with the main non-European players. What is more, non-European companies often import products within the European market which fall outside of European quality, consumer health and environmental and social protection standards.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Can it provide a general European framework indicating the lack of conditions of reciprocity concerning access to markets in third countries for European businesses?

2. Does it intend to take steps to ensure access to non-European markets for European businesses and, if so, how?

3. Can it indicate which market sectors are most affected by unfair competition and dumping and which thus need greater EU protection from competition from non-European businesses?

4. Does it intend to take steps to ensure access to the Chinese market for European businesses and, if so, how?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(11 June 2014)

The promotion of reciprocity in EU's trade relations with its partners is closely linked to the EU's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) agenda. As the objective of FTAs is to remove all tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade and the EU is more open to trade than some of the emerging economies, this agenda will rebalance the current asymmetry in levels of openness and promote a more level playing field. This policy is reciprocal in nature.

The ultimate objective is to bring emerging economies to the EU's level of openness and not to close the EU market and hamper the European economy.

This approach provides results: the EU-Korea FTA removes 99% of tariffs with Korea, while Korea's tariffs were twice as high as in the EU before the start of negotiations. The FTAs negotiated or being negotiated also improve the market access situation for European companies in the areas of services and public procurement.

Concerning China, the EU has recently launched negotiations on an agreement to liberalise and protect foreign investment, which are aimed at improving the position of EU companies in China. The EU is also supporting China's participation to the negotiations on a Trade in Services Agreement (TISA). Furthermore, the EU is engaged with China on negotiations for tariff reductions of 'green goods' and Information Technology products, as well as in dialogue aimed at removing barriers in a number of sectors.

When trade distortions cannot be addressed by other means, the EU resorts to dispute settlement under the World Trade Organisation or adopts measures against imports which are unfairly priced or subsidised. The sectors most affected by dumping are chemical and allied products, iron and steel, followed by other mechanical engineering and other metals sectors.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005452/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Difesa dei livelli occupazionali del comparto degli addetti alla vigilanza armata e dei servizi fiduciari (portierato, custodia e guardiania)

La grave crisi che sta attraversando l'Italia e l'Europa, sta investendo molti settori come quello della vigilanza armata e dei servizi fiduciari (portierato, custodia e guardiania) che continuano a perdere migliaia di posti di lavoro ogni mese.

Infatti, tali settori hanno visto negli ultimi anni un continuo mutamento delle forme di contrattazione collettiva che hanno prodotto un impoverimento di mansioni delle figure stesse, oltre a una riduzione del costo orario delle prestazioni lavorative, nonostante le delicate mansioni e funzioni che gli addetti sono chiamati a svolgere.

Eppure tale settore risulta essere strategico, oltre che di supporto alle forze di polizia in generale, per l'opera di prevenzione che gli addetti svolgono, anche per la tutela della pubblica sicurezza.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. come possono essere tutelati i livelli occupazionali di tali settori;

2. se vi sono buone pratiche all'interno dell'UE nei settori della vigilanza armata e dei servizi fiduciari,

3. un quadro generale della situazione?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(30 giugno 2014)

1. La perdita di posti di lavoro suscita preoccupazione in qualsiasi settore avvenga, ma in Italia la situazione occupazionale in generale migliorerà se si porranno in atto le riforme che interessano l'intera economia formulate nelle raccomandazioni specifiche per paese nel contesto del Semestre europeo.

2. La Commissione europea non è a conoscenza di eventuali pratiche ottimali per tali settori.

3. Eurostat dispone di alcune informazioni statistiche sui livelli occupazionali degli addetti alla vigilanza armata e dei servizi fiduciari. Si tratta di informazioni provenienti da diversi Stati membri, ma non tutti, basate sull'indagine sulle forze di lavoro condotta dall'UE e relative al numero di persone impiegate quali agenti di sorveglianza e addetti dei servizi di protezione non classificati altrove (codici 5414 e 5419 rispettivamente della classificazione ISCO delle professioni). Nel 2013 questo settore occupava 1,4 milioni di persone nei 20 Stati membri dell'UE per i quali si dispone di dati ([1]). Nell'anno precedente vi erano 1,3 milioni di persone che lavoravano in questo settore negli stessi 20 Stati membri dell'UE. Dati relativi ai 28 Stati membri dell'UE sono disponibili per la categoria più ampia di professioni addetti dei servizi di protezione (categoria ISCO 541), che comprende anche i pompieri, i poliziotti e le guardie carcerarie. Nel 2013 vi erano nell'UE 3,5 milioni di persone occupate in tali servizi, con un aumento rispetto ai 3,4 milioni del 2012 e un andamento stabile rispetto ai 3,5 milioni del 2011.

In Italia, nel 2013 vi erano 313.000 persone occupate nei servizi di protezione (ISCO 541), con un calo rispetto alle 326.000 del 2012 e alle 337.000 del 2011.

([1]) Dati disponibili per: Belgio, Repubblica ceca, Germania, Estonia, Irlanda, Francia, Croazia, Lituania, Lussemburgo, Ungheria, Malta, Paesi Bassi, Austria, Polonia, Romania, Slovenia, Slovacchia, Finlandia, Svezia e Regno Unito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005452/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Safeguarding the employment levels of armed security guards and those working in the trust services (porters, caretakers and guards)

The serious crisis taking place in Italy and Europe is affecting numerous sectors, such as the armed security and trust services sector (porters, caretakers and guards), in which thousands of jobs a month are being lost.

Over the last few years, there have been continuous changes in the various forms of collective bargaining in these sectors, which have resulted in an impoverishment of the role of these workers and a reduction in the hourly cost of the services provided, despite the delicate tasks and functions they are required to perform.

However, this sector is a strategic one, in terms of both supporting the police in general, due to the prevention work they carry out, and of protecting public safety.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. How can employment levels in these sectors be safeguarded?

2. Are there any best practices in the EU in the armed security and trust services sectors?

3. Can it give an overview of the situation?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(30 June 2014)

1. While employment losses in any sector are a cause for concern, the improvement of the employment situation in general in Italy will come about through enacting the reforms across the economy formulated in the country specific recommendations within the European Semester.

2. The European Commission is not aware of best practices for these sectors.

3. Eurostat has some statistical information about employment levels of armed security guards and those working in the trust services. This consists of information from several — but not all — EU Member States based on the EU Labour Force Survey about the number of employed persons working as 'security guards' and 'protective services workers not elsewhere classified' (codes 5414 and 5419 respectively of the ISCO classification of occupations). In the year 2013, there were 1.4 million persons employed in those occupations in the 20 EU Member States for which data are available ([1]). In the previous year, there were 1.3 million persons in those occupations in the same 20 EU Member States. Data for the 28 EU Member States is available for the broader category of occupations 'protective service workers' (ISCO Category c), which encompasses also fire-fighters, police officers and prison guards. In the EU in 2013 there were 3.5 million persons in those occupations, up from 3.4 million in 2012 and stable from 3.5 million in 2011.

In Italy, there were 313 thousand persons occupied in the 'protective service workers' sector (ISCO 541) in 2013, down from 326 thousand in 2012 and 337 thousand in 2011.

([1]) data available for Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, France, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and United Kingdom.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005453/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ulteriori informazioni circa il corretto inquadramento delle guide turistiche

Considerata la risposta all'interrogazione E-000901/2014, è bene precisare che: per ciò che concerne l'applicazione della direttiva 2006/123/CE alla professione di guida turistica, la stessa direttiva ne fissa i limiti al considerando 31 ed all'articolo 3. Infatti, per ciò che attiene alla tutela dei destinatari dei servizi e del patrimonio storico e artistico essa rientra fra i «motivi imperativi di interesse generale» di uno Stato, riconosciuti dalla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia e come tali citati al considerando 40 della stessa direttiva 2006/123/CE, che possono giustificare delle eventuali limitazioni. L'attività di guida turistica costituisce oggetto di una vera e propria professione, il cui esercizio è subordinato all'ottenimento di un'abilitazione sulla base del possesso di precisi requisiti culturali e tecnici; tale abilitazione, rilasciata dalle amministrazioni regionali competenti a seguito di prove d'esame disciplinate dalle leggi regionali, è diretta ad accertare, oltre alla conoscenza delle lingue nelle quali verrà esercitata la professione, il possesso di specifiche competenze e conoscenze per lo svolgimento dell'attività in questione, inerenti il patrimonio storico e culturale che ne costituirà oggetto. Inoltre, è bene ricordare che come riconosciuto a livello internazionale da Convenzioni e Carte in materia di beni culturali e turismo, per quanto identificati con riferimento formale a un «territorio», dato che i beni del patrimonio culturale e ambientale sono connessi ad uno spazio fisico, gli «ambiti» di esercizio della guida turistica non costituiscono affatto meri «limiti territoriali», bensì rappresentano, proprio in ragione dei presupposti e delle condizioni che stanno alla base dell'abilitazione e del suo rilascio, nonché della natura specifica e peculiare dell'oggetto della professione, niente altro che gli spazi della «accertata competenza» della guida turistica e identificano la porzione del patrimonio che il professionista ha dimostrato di conoscere al punto di poterla «illustrare» e diffondere la corretta conoscenza ai fruitori dei servizi.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere se:

— coerentemente a tali principi, anche nel caso della professione di guida turistica prevalga il principio che solo lo Stato interessato può sapere come può essere correttamente esercitata in base alla regolamentata legislazione statale vigente?

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

La direttiva 2005/36/CE stabilisce le norme per il riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali. La direttiva 2006/123/CE (la direttiva «servizi») contiene norme che disciplinano l'esercizio di attività professionali quale quella di guida turistica. Gli articoli 9-13 della direttiva «servizi» si applicano a tutti i regimi di autorizzazione relativi all'esercizio di un'attività di servizi. Tuttavia, come indicato all'articolo 9, paragrafo 3, di detta direttiva, tali articoli non si applicano agli aspetti dei regimi di autorizzazione che sono disciplinati direttamente o indirettamente da altri strumenti comunitari. Di conseguenza, gli effetti di un'autorizzazione ai fini dell'esercizio dell'attività professionale di guida turistica sono disciplinati dalla direttiva «servizi» e, in particolare, dall'articolo 10, punto 4, che prevede autorizzazioni a livello nazionale. Gli Stati membri possono porre limiti territoriali alle autorizzazioni quando detta limitazione è giustificata da un motivo imperativo di interesse generale, è proporzionata e non è discriminatoria.

La conservazione del patrimonio nazionale storico e artistico, menzionato nel considerando 40, dev'essere interpretata in modo restrittivo ed essere limitata a quanto strettamente necessario per tutelare l'interesse pubblico in gioco, come ogni altra deroga a un principio fondamentale del diritto dell'UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005453/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Further information on the proper deployment of tourist guides

Further to the answer given to Question E-000901/2014, it is necessary to point out that, when applied to the profession of tourist guide, Directive 2006/123/EC sets the relevant limits in its 'whereas' clause 31 and Article 3.

In fact the protection of service users and of historical and artistic heritage does constitute an 'overriding reason relating to the public interest' of a country. The case law of the Court of Justice, and 'whereas' clause 40 of the same Directive 2006/123/EC, can both be taken as justifying any restrictions. Both recognise such protection as an overriding reason in the public interest.

The work of a tourist guide is a profession in its own right. It cannot be exercised without obtaining authorisation, after meeting specific cultural and technical requirements. This is issued by the competent regional authorities after examinations, sat in accordance with the regional laws. The purpose is to check that the guide knows the working languages of the job and possesses other specific skills, and knowledge of the relevant historical and cultural heritage.

Furthermore, the international conventions and charters on cultural assets and tourism recognise that the 'contexts' of tourist guide practice are much more than 'territorial boundaries,' although they do formally refer to a territory (because cultural heritage and environmental assets occupy physical space). Indeed, these 'contexts' correspond to the scope of the tourist's guide 'proven competence.' They are based on the assumptions and conditions underlying the authorisation and its issue, and the specific subject-matter of the profession. Thus they identify the portion of heritage which the professional guide has proved that he/she knows well enough to 'illustrate,' and to pass on the appropriate knowledge to service users.

Can the Commission therefore state whether the principle holds good that only the Member State concerned can know how the profession of tourist guide can properly be exercised in accordance with the regulated national legislation in force?

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

Directive 2005/36/EC sets out the rules for the recognition of qualifications. Directive 2006/123/EC (The Services Directive) includes rules governing the exercise of professional activities as a tourist guide. Article 9 to 13 of the Services Directive apply to all authorisation schemes relating to the exercise of a service activity. However as stated in Article 9(3) of that directive, these articles do not apply to those aspects of authorisation schemes wich are governed directly or indirectly by other Community instruments. Accordingly, the effects of an authorisation as regards the exercise of the professional activity of tourist guide are covered by the Services Directive and in particular its Article 10, paragraph 4, which requires country-wide authorisations. Members States may limit the territorial scope of authorisations where a limitation of the authorisation to a certain part of the territory is justified by an overriding reason relating to the public interest, is proportionate and non-discriminatory in nature.

The preservation of national historical and artistic heritage mentioned in Recital 40 should be interpreted narrowly and be limited to what is strictly necessary to safeguard the public interest at stake, like any other exception to a fundamental principle of EC law.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005454/14
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Procedura di infrazione 2010/4227

Nella sua risposta all'interrogazione E-013992/2013 la Commissione ha affermato che «porta avanti i suoi lavori in relazione alla procedura di infrazione 2010/4227; che sta valutando gli elementi di informazione disponibili e prosegue nel dialogo chiarificatore con le autorità italiane al fine di assicurare che gli Stati membri applichino la normativa dell'UE». Non è molto chiaro se l'esame della documentazione aggiuntiva inviata dal denunciante Marco Bazzoni sia terminato oppure no.

La Commissione ha inoltre indicato che «in tale processo rientra la valutazione della documentazione addizionale ponderosa inviata a più riprese dal denunciante, tra cui l'ultima comunicazione del 7 gennaio 2014». Il denunciante è stato costretto a un ulteriore aggiornamento visto che il governo italiano, all'articolo 11 del DL 150/2013 (Proroga termini in materia di beni culturali e turismo), ha inserito la nuova proroga al 31 dicembre 2014 per l'adeguamento antincendio per le strutture ricettive turistico-alberghiere con oltre 25 posti letto. La Commissione parla di «dialogo chiarificatore con le autorità italiane», ma nella lettera inviata al sig. Bazzoni, Ares(2013)1013528 del 6.5.2013, essa contemplava l'opportunità di deferire l'Italia alla Corte di giustizia dell'UE, almeno per il punto riguardante il differimento dell'obbligo di presentare un documento di valutazione del rischio.

1. Può la Commissione spiegare dettagliatamente su quali elementi della procedura di infrazione sta proseguendo il «dialogo chiarificatore con le autorità italiane»?

2. Può la Commissione far sapere quando prevede di terminare l'esame della «documentazione addizionale ponderosa» inviata dal denunciante Marco Bazzoni?

3. Può la Commissione spiegare per quale motivo non ha ancora deferito l'Italia alla Corte di giustizia dell'UE per il punto riguardante il differimento dell'obbligo di presentare un documento di valutazione del rischio per le nuove imprese o per i cambiamenti sostanziali riguardanti imprese esistenti?

4. Può la Commissione esprimere un giudizio sul fatto che la Repubblica italiana sta prorogando da 20 anni l'adeguamento antincendio per le strutture alberghiere con oltre 25 posti letto?

5. Può la Commissione far sapere se il caso EU Pilot 4324/12/EMPL è ancora aperto? In caso affermativo, può fornire aggiornamenti in merito?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

1. Il sito web della Commissione ([1]) fornisce informazioni sul dialogo risolutorio condotto con le autorità nazionali in merito alle procedure d'infrazione. I particolari di casi specifici, comprese le informazioni su eventuali modifiche legislative, non possono essere divulgati allorché il dialogo è ancora in corso.

2.-3. La Commissione rinvia l'Onorevole deputata alla propria risposta all'interrogazione E-5565/2013 ([2]). Essa ha esaminato le informazioni presentate dal denunciante ed è in contatto con le autorità italiane per assicurare che la direttiva 89/391/CEE sia recepita adeguatamente e pienamente nel diritto nazionale italiano. Il denunciante sarà debitamente informato dell'andamento del caso come ad esempio della chiusura della procedura o del suo deferimento alla Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea.

4. Questo punto è stato sollevato nella lettera di costituzione in mora inviata all'Italia in relazione alla procedura d'infrazione 2010/4227 e tale Stato membro ha fornito una spiegazione dettagliata. La Commissione ha esaminato la legislazione italiana nel merito in base alla quale gli alberghi con più di 25 letti costruiti prima del 9 aprile 1994 devono ottemperare a requisiti minimi vincolanti in tema di prevenzione antincendio.

5. L'indagine in questione è stata conclusa e il denunciate è stato informato delle motivazioni.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_it.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005454/14
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Infringement procedure 2010/4227

The European Commission's answer to Question E-013992/2013 was that it 'is continuing its work on infringement procedure 2010/4227, i.e. assessing the available elements of information and maintaining the problem-solving dialogue with the Italian authorities with a view of ensuring that the Member States give effect to EC law.' This leaves it unclear whether the Commission has finished evaluating the additional documentation sent by the complainant Marco Bazzoni.

The Commission added that this process 'includes the assessment of a numerous and voluminous additional documentation, sent regularly by the complainant, including his latest transmission, dated 7 January 2014'. Article 11 of the Italian Decree-Law 150/2013 had obliged the complainant to supply a further update. In that Article (extension of deadlines for cultural assets and tourism), the Italian Government further extended, until 31 December 2014, the fire safety upgrading of tourist accommodation and hotel facilities with more than 25 beds. While the Commission refers to 'problem-solving dialogue with the Italian authorities,' its Ares letter to Mr Bazzoni (2013)1013528, dated 6.5.2013, says it is considering a referral of Italy to the Court of Justice of the EU, at least on the point concerning deferment of the obligation to submit a valid written risk assessment.

Can the Commission explain:

1. the details of its problem-solving dialogue with the Italian authorities on parts of the infringement procedure?

2. when it expects to finish evaluating the additional voluminous documentation sent by complainant Marco Bazzoni?

3. why it has not yet referred Italy to the Court of Justice of the EU on the point concerning deferment of the obligation of new businesses, or existing businesses undergoing major changes, to submit a written risk assessment?

4. what it thinks of Italy's 20-year postponement of fire safety upgrades of hotel facilities with more than 25 beds?

5. whether EU Pilot Case 4324/12/EMPL is still open? If not, can it supply further updates about this?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

1. The Commission's website ([1]) gives information on problem-solving dialogue with national authorities in connection with infringement procedures. The details of specific cases, including any information on possible legislative changes, cannot be disclosed while the dialogue is still going on.

2 and 3. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to E-5565/2013 ([2]). It has examined the information forwarded by the complainant and is in contact with the Italian authorities with a view to ensuring that directive 89/391/EEC is properly and fully transposed into Italian national law. The complainant will be duly informed of any progress in the case, such as the procedure's closing or its referral to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

4. This point was raised in the letter of formal notice sent to Italy in connection with Infringement Procedure 2010/4227 and the Member State has provided a detailed explanation. The Commission has examined the Italian legislation on this point, which states that hotels with more than 25 beds built before 9 April 1994 must comply with binding minimum requirements concerning fire prevention. .

5. The investigation in question has been closed and the complainant informed of the reasons for this.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_en.htm
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005455/14
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Web tax

Il 29 dicembre 2013 il denunciante Marco Bazzoni ha inviato alla Commissione europea una denuncia contro la web tax (comma 33), contenuta nella Legge di Stabilità 2014.

La web tax doveva entrare in vigore il 1º gennaio 2014, ma è stata posticipata al 1º luglio 2014 (decreto milleproroghe).

La denuncia è stata protocollata il 13 dicembre 2014 come CHAP(2014)00001.

La web tax contenuta al comma 33 della Legge di Stabilità 2014 viola sicuramente l'articolo 16, comma 2, della direttiva europea 2006/123/CEE (direttiva «Bolkestein») e forse anche l'articolo 19 di detta direttiva.

Il 30 gennaio 2014, con un'email indirizzata alla Commissione, il denunciante ha chiesto se c'erano novità in merito alla sua denuncia, ma la Commissione non ha dato nessuna risposta.

Lo scrivente desidera ricordare alla Commissione che, secondo il «Codice di buona condotta amministrativa», ai sensi dell'articolo 21 del trattato che istituisce la Comunità europea, quando i cittadini scrivono alla Commissione, questi devono ricevere risposta entro 15 giorni lavorativi, dalla data alla quale la lettera è pervenuta al servizio competente dell'istituzione.

1. Può la Commissione dire se ci sono novità in merito alla denuncia CHAP(2014)00001?

2. In caso di risposta affermativa, La Commissione ritiene che vi sia una violazione della direttiva europea 2006/123/CEE?

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

La Commissione ha ricevuto una denuncia riguardante la «web tax» prevista dalla legge di stabilità 2014, adottata il 27 dicembre 2013. La denuncia è stata trattata secondo le regole del codice di buona condotta amministrativa che si applica al trattamento di tutte le denunce.

L'identità del denunciante non può essere divulgata senza il suo esplicito consenso.

Il 6 marzo 2014 il governo italiano ha adottato il decreto legge n. 16, che ha parzialmente abrogato la legge di stabilità 2014, in particolare la disposizione che obbliga gli acquirenti di servizi pubblicitari *online* ad acquistare detti servizi esclusivamente da società titolari di partita Iva italiana.

Infine, la Commissione può confermare che il Parlamento italiano ha adottato la legge 2 maggio 2014, n. 68, che ha convertito in legge il decreto legge n. 16 del governo. Con l'adozione della legge, il legislatore italiano ha confermato l'abolizione dell'obbligo per gli acquirenti di servizi pubblicitari *online* di acquistare esclusivamente da società titolari di partita IVA italiana.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005455/14
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Web tax

On 29 December 2013, the complainant Marco Bazzoni submitted a complaint to the European Commission regarding the Web tax (paragraph 33) laid down in the 2014 Stability Law.

The Web tax was due to enter into force on 1 January 2014, but was postponed until 1 July 2014 (Thousand Extensions Decree).

The complaint was filed on 13 December 2014 as CHAP(2014)00001.

The Web tax laid down under paragraph 33 of the 2014 Stability Law undoubtedly constitutes an infringement of Article 16(2) of European Directive 2006/123/EEC (the Bolkestein Directive) and possibly also Article 19 of this directive.

On 30 January 2014, by way of an e-mail addressed to the Commission, the complainant asked whether there was any news about his complaint, but the Commission failed to respond.

I would like to remind the Commission that, in accordance with the 'Code of good administrative behaviour', pursuant to Article 21 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, when citizens write to the Commission they should receive a reply within 15 working days from the date on which the letter reaches the Commission's relevant department.

1. Can the Commission state whether there is any news with regard to complaint CHAP(2014)00001?

2. If so, does the Commission believe that there is an infringement of European Directive 2006/123/EEC?

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

The Commission has received a complaint about the 'digital tax' as established by the Italian 2014 Financial Stability Law, adopted on 27 December 2013. It has been treated in accordance with the rules of the code of good administrative behavior which applies to the general handling of complaints.

Without the express agreement of the complainant in question, the identity of the complainant cannot be disclosed.

On 6 March 2014, the Italian Government adopted Decree-Law No 16, which partially repealed the 2014 Financial Stability Law, notably in relation to the requirement that purchasers of online advertising services could only acquire them by companies holding an Italian VAT number.

Finally, the Commission can confirm the Italian Parliament has converted the Government's Decree-Law No 16 into Law, by adopting Law No 68 of 2 May 2014. With the adoption of this Law, the Italian legislator confirmed that the requirement for purchasers of online advertising services to purchase solely from companies holding an Italian VAT number no longer applied.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005456/14
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Accesso ai documenti rifiutato dall'autorità di gestione della regione Calabria nell'ambito del FESR

Mi è stato segnalato il caso di una ragazza calabrese gravemente disabile, non autosufficiente, che necessita dell'aiuto quotidiano dei suoi familiari. Non dispone di un bagno idoneo, abita all'ultimo piano di una palazzina di edilizia popolare sprovvista di ascensore e non ha mai beneficiato di aiuti regionali per i disabili.

Dopo la pubblicazione di un avviso pubblico nell'ambito di fondi regionali destinati a migliorare l'accesso dei disabili alla propria abitazione (POR FESR 2007/2013 della regione Calabria), suo padre presentò una domanda per le cosiddette «case accessibili». Purtroppo la domanda fu rifiutata senza parere motivato. Per ricorrere in giudizio, il padre fece una richiesta di accesso agli atti. L'autorità di gestione autorizzò la visione integrale degli atti, ma non l'estrazione di copia, a motivo dell'opposizione di terzi in rappresentanza di soggetto in graduatoria utile, in violazione con la giurisprudenza italiana in merito, che fa prevalere la preminenza del diritto alla tutela alla difesa in giudizio rispetto al diritto alla riservatezza. Aggiungo che, nel caso specifico, ci si trova innanzi a una pratica non ancora conclusa a distanza di circa un anno, e la prima richiesta d'accesso risale al marzo del 2013.

Si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere alle seguenti domande:

— Può un'autorità di gestione di fondi strutturali che ha, tra l'altro, il compito di informare, negare il pieno accesso ai documenti amministrativi a un potenziale beneficiario e violare il diritto di uno Stato membro?

— Può la Commissione contattare tempestivamente l'autorità di gestione della regione Calabria al fine di verificare perché questa documentazione non può essere rilasciata al cittadino?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(17 giugno 2014)

La Commissione ha contattato l'autorità di gestione del programma 2007-2013 per la Calabria, cofinanziato dal Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale. Sulla base delle informazioni e dei documenti forniti, la richiesta di accesso ai documenti di cui all'interrogazione è stata completamente esaudita e copie dei documenti richiesti sono state consegnate alle persone interessate.

Per informazioni più dettagliate su questo caso la Commissione suggerisce all'Onorevole deputata di mettersi direttamente in contatto con l'autorità di gestione al seguente indirizzo:

Regione Calabria
Dipartimento Programmazione Nazionale e Comunitaria
Via Molè
88100 Catanzaro
fax +39 (0961) 853181

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005456/14
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Access to documents refused by the authority responsible for the management of ERDF in the Region of Calabria

I have been made aware of the plight of a girl from Calabria who is severely disabled and who depends on her family for assistance on a day-to-day basis. She doesn't have a bathroom which is suitable for her needs, she lives on the top floor of a local authority-run apartment block which has no lift and has never received regional benefit for the disabled.

Following the issuing of a public notice concerning regional funds designed to improve disabled access to housing (ERDF ROP 2007/2013 for the Region of Calabria) her father submitted an application for so-called 'accessible housing'. Unfortunately, this application was rejected without justification. For the purposes of legal action, the girl's father submitted a request for access to the documents. The managing authority agreed to allow the documents to be consulted but would not allow a copy of them to be issued on account of opposition from third parties representing other parties on the housing list. This is contrary to Italian case-law in this regard, according to which the right to defend oneself in court takes precedence over the right of confidentiality. I would add that this particular case has still not been resolved after almost a year, the first request for access dating back to March 2013.

I would ask the Commission to answer the following questions:

— Can an authority which manages structural funds, which has, amongst other things, a duty to inform, refuse full access to administrative documents to a potential beneficiary and violate the laws of a Member State?

— Could the Commission contact the managing authority for the Region of Calabria without delay in order to establish why this documentation cannot be released to this citizen?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

The Commission has contacted the managing authority of the 2007-2013 Calabria programme, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. According to the information and the documents provided, the request for access to documents referred to was completely fulfilled by providing copies of the requested documents to the people concerned.

For more detailed information about this case the Commission suggests that the Honourable Member contact the managing authority of the programme directly at the following address:

Regione Calabria
Dipartimento Programmazione Nazionale e Comunitaria
Via Molè
88100 Catanzaro
fax +39 (0961) 853181

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005457/14
alla Commissione
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Inceneritori di San Vittore del Lazio

Preso atto della relazione conclusiva in merito al rispetto, per ciò che riguarda l'inceneritore di San Vittore del Lazio gestito dall'ACEA-Aria, delle prescrizioni contenute nell'atto autorizzativo n. 72/2007, successivamente integrato con ulteriori decreti, che sono state oggetto dei controlli di cui all'art. 29-decis, comma 3, del D. Lgs. 152/06 s.m.i. nel periodo 4.10.2012-28.3.2013;

considerato quanto segue:

— gli esiti del controllo di cui al punto precedente sono stati trasmessi per gli adempimenti di competenza, alla regione Lazio, all'autorità giudiziaria e alla società ARIA;

— dalle consultazioni di detto documento sono emersi, come rilevato dall'ARPA Lazio, numerose difformità rispetto agli atti autorizzativi, nonché superamenti dei limiti di concentrazione delle emissioni in atmosfera, rilevati dagli stessi tecnici Arpa;

— che tale impianto continua a essere in funzione e ad oggi il ciclo industriale delle società gestrici dell'impianto non ha conosciuto soste né periodi di sospensione dell'AIA;

— che gli impianti di incenerimento di rifiuti rientrano nell'ambito di applicazione della direttiva 2010/75/UE relativa alle emissioni industriali.

La Commissione:

è a conoscenza della situazione degli inceneritori di San Vittore del Lazio? Dispone di dati o analisi riguardanti il probabile inquinamento causato nelle aree circostanti l'impianto?

Non ritiene di dover acquisire informazioni presso le autorità sanitarie locali e le autorità italiane?

Può comunicare se gli impianti in parola sono in linea con quanto previsto dalle norme europee?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

La Commissione non era al corrente della situazione e chiederà alle autorità italiane le informazioni necessarie a valutare se l'impianto di cui trattasi sia conforme ai requisiti stabiliti dalla legislazione UE e, in particolare, dalla direttiva 2010/75/UE ([1]).

([1]) GU L 334 del 17.12.2010, pag. 17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005457/14
to the Commission
Sonia Alfano (ALDE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Incinerators in San Vittore del Lazio

Having noted the contents of the final report on the compliance of ACEA-Aria's incinerator in San Vittore del Lazio with the provisions of licence no. 72/2007, as supplemented by subsequent decrees, which were checked between 4 October 2012 and 28 March 2013 in pursuance of Art. 29-decis, paragraph 3, of Legislative Decree 152/06 *et seq*;

and considering that:

— the results of the abovementioned checks have been forwarded, in accordance with procedures, to the Region of Lazio, the judicial authority and ARIA;

— as indicated by the regional environmental protection agency ARPA Lazio, this document reveals numerous non-compliances with the licences and the exceeding of concentration limits for emissions into the atmosphere, as identified by ARPA's engineers;

— this plant is still in operation and, so far, there has been no interruption in the industrial cycle of the companies that manage the plant nor has the plant's supplementary environmental licence (AIA) been suspended;

— waste incineration plants fall within the scope of Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions.

Is the Commission aware of the situation concerning the incinerators in San Vittore del Lazio? Does it have data or analyses relating to the pollution which is likely to have been caused in the areas surrounding the plant?

Does the Commission feel that it should obtain information from the local health authorities and the Italian authorities?

Can the Commission advise whether the plants in question comply with the provisions of European regulations?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(13 June 2014)

The Commission was not aware of the situation and will contact the Italian authorities to request information in order to evaluate whether the plant in question complies with the applicable requirements of EU legislation and more particularly of Directive 2010/75/EU ([1]).

([1]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 17.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-005482/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Skambju bejn il-popli taċ-Ċina u tal-UE

Hu magħruf li 500 organizzazzjoni taż-żgħażagħ mill-UE u miċ-Ċina pparteċipaw fi djalogu u skambju ta' attivitajiet bħala parti mill-iskema ta' skambju ta' livell għoli bejn il-popli taċ-Ċina u tal-UE. Kemm kien hemm individwi li verament ibbenefikaw minn din l-iskema?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(6 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-Onorevoli Membru huwa mitlub li jirreferi għat-tweġiba li l-Kummissjoni tat għall-mistoqsija bil-miktub E-004873/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005482/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: China-EU people-to-people exchange

It is known that 500 youth organisations from the EU and China have participated in dialogue and exchange activities as part of the China-EU high-level people-to-people exchange scheme. How many individuals have actually benefited from the scheme?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par Mme Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2014)

L'Honorable Parlementaire voudra bien se reporter à la réponse que la Commission a donnée à sa question écrite E-004873/2014 ([1]).

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

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005485/14
alla Commissione
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Criteri minimi di sicurezza dell'autotrasporto a livello europeo

Il 7 Aprile 2014 si è tenuta la prima udienza, presso la Corte di giustizia europea, avente per oggetto la legittimità rispetto all'ordinamento comunitario della normativa introdotta dal d.l. 112/2008 della Repubblica italiana sui costi minimi di sicurezza dell'autotrasporto.

Considerato che:

— la Corte di giustizia europea dovrà stabilire se la tutela della libertà di concorrenza, circolazione delle imprese, stabilimento e prestazione dei servizi (artt. 4 TUE, 56, 96 e 101 TFUE) sia compatibile con disposizioni nazionali che introducono costi minimi di esercizio nell'autotrasporto, in relazione a esigenze di salvaguardia dell'interesse pubblico ed alla sicurezza della circolazione stradale;

— la Corte di giustizia europea ha già sancito la piena compatibilità con la normativa UE delle normative nazionali che, per ragioni d'interesse pubblico e generale, introducono tariffe minime e/o massime (cause C-94/04 e C-202/04 su tariffe minime degli avvocati italiani e cause C-96/94 e 38/97 sull'autotrasporto per conto terzi);

— il d.l. 112/2008 che prevede costi minimi dei contratti di autotrasporto, garantendo il rispetto di criteri e standard minimi di sicurezza, oltre ad evidenziare a riguardo una sostanziale criticità nella disomogeneità a livello UE favorisce altresì, di fatto, evidenti casi di concorrenza sleale tra operatori di diverse nazionalità che devono sopportare, per il medesimo lavoro, costi molto diversi.

Tutto ciò premesso e considerato, si interroga la Commissione in merito ai seguenti quesiti:

— ritiene opportuno e necessario proporre l'adozione di una normativa UE omogenea nel settore dell'autotrasporto per armonizzare l'intero settore?

— quali provvedimenti intende adottare al fine di assicurare la piena compatibilità con la normativa UE delle normative nazionali che introducono costi minimi di esercizio nel settore dell'autotrasporto?

— quali provvedimenti intende adottare con urgenza per assicurare il rispetto di misure e standard di sicurezza minimi omogenei a livello europeo per tutti i veicoli pesanti circolanti in correlazione con la normativa UE nel settore dei trasporti internazionali (regolamento (CE) n. 1072/2009)?

— intende far sì che la problematica della sicurezza stradale derivante dalla disomogeneità delle legislazioni nazionali riguardo ai veicoli pesanti circolanti diventi priorità nell'agenda politica UE?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(17 giugno 2014)

1. Il settore dell'autotrasporto è disciplinato a livello UE da un quadro legislativo completo. La legislazione in vigore è intesa a far sì che il mercato interno dei trasporti su strada funzioni in modo soddisfacente, garantendo nel contempo un livello elevato di qualità del servizio, sicurezza stradale e condizioni di lavoro. Tuttavia, in linea con il principio di sussidiarietà, gli Stati membri rimangono responsabili della maggior parte degli aspetti della politica dei trasporti su strada che non hanno un impatto sul mercato unico ([1]). Ad esempio, i veicoli di peso inferiore alle 3,5 tonnellate, in massima parte utilizzati per il trasporto nazionale, sono esentati dalla maggior parte della legislazione UE in materia di trasporto su strada.

2. La conformità della normativa italiana in materia di costi minimi di sicurezza dell'autotrasporto con le disposizioni del trattato UE è attualmente all'esame della Corte di giustizia europea. La Commissione attenderà la sentenza della Corte e, se del caso, prenderà in considerazione l'adozione di provvedimenti.

([1]) A condizione che le disposizioni adottate in questi casi siano conformi alle disposizioni del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea (TFUE).

3. Come spiegato in una recente relazione ([2]), le autorità incaricate dell'applicazione della legge incontrano difficoltà nell'applicare il regolamento (CE) n. 1072/2009 ([3]), cosa che crea incertezze per gli operatori. La Commissione sta pertanto vagliando il riesame del regolamento (CE) n. 1072/2009, nel quadro del programma REFIT per il 2015 ([4]).

4. Negli ultimi anni il numero di incidenti che coinvolgono veicoli commerciali pesanti è costantemente diminuito ([5]). Non vi è dunque nessuna indicazione che l'eterogeneità delle legislazioni nazionali in materia di traffico di veicoli commerciali pesanti siano fonte di rischi significativi per la sicurezza della circolazione stradale. Tuttavia, la Commissione continua, ove necessario, a promuovere l'armonizzazione. Il 3 aprile 2014, ad esempio, il Parlamento europeo e il Consiglio hanno adottato il pacchetto «controlli tecnici» ([6]), che comprende la direttiva 2014/47/UE, che stabilisce regole comuni circa i controlli tecnici su strada dei veicoli commerciali.

([2]) Relazione sullo stato del mercato UE del trasporto stradale dell'Unione (COM(2014) 222).

([3]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1072/2009 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 ottobre 2009, che fissa norme comuni per l'accesso al mercato internazionale del trasporto di merci su strada, GU L 300 del 14.11.2009.

([4]) Adeguatezza ed efficacia della regolamentazione (REFIT): Risultati e prossime tappe, COM(2013) 685 final.

([5]) Traffic Safety Basic Facts 2012, Heavy Goods Vehicles and Buses, Osservatorio europeo della sicurezza stradale.

([6]) Il pacchetto «controlli tecnici» comprende le tre direttive seguenti:.
Direttiva 2014/45/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa ai controlli tecnici periodici dei veicoli a motore e dei loro rimorchi e recante abrogazione della direttiva 2009/40/CE (con effetto a decorrere dal 20 maggio 2018), GU L 127 del 29.4.2014.
Direttiva 2014/46/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio che modifica la direttiva 1999/37/CE del Consiglio, relativa ai documenti di immatricolazione dei veicoli, GU L 127 del 29.4.2014. .
Direttiva 2014/47/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa ai controlli tecnici su strada dei veicoli commerciali circolanti nell'Unione e che abroga la direttiva 2000/30/CE (con effetto a decorrere dal 20 maggio 2018), GU L 127 del 29.4.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005485/14
to the Commission
Franco Bonanini (NI)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Minimum European safety criteria for road haulage

On 7 April 2014 the first hearing took place before the European Court of Justice on whether the provisions of Decree-Law 112/2008 of the Republic of Italy on minimum road haulage safety costs complies with Community law.

The European Court of Justice has to rule on whether the protection of the freedoms of competition, movement of companies, establishment and provision of services (Article 4 TEU and Articles 56, 96 and 101 TFEU) is compatible with national provisions setting minimum operating costs for road haulage, with a view to protecting the public interest and the safety of road traffic.

The Court of Justice has already found national regulations setting minimum and/or maximum tariffs in the public interest to be fully compatible with the EU regulations (cases C-94/04 and C-202/04 on minimum fees for Italian lawyers and cases C-96/94 and 38/97 on road haulage on behalf of third parties).

Decree-Law 112/2008 sets minimum costs for road haulage contracts, guaranteeing compliance with minimum safety criteria and standards. It not only highlights a rather critical lack of uniformity in this field at EU level, but also *de facto* encourages obvious cases of unfair competition between hauliers of different nationalities who incur very different costs for the same work.

1. Does the Commission think it necessary and appropriate to propose the adoption of uniform EU regulations to harmonise the entire road haulage industry?

2. What measures does it intend to adopt to ensure the full compatibility of national regulations setting minimum operating costs in the road haulage industry with the EU rules?

3. What urgent measures does it intend to adopt to ensure compliance with uniform Europe-wide minimum safety measures and standards for all heavy goods vehicle traffic in line with Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market?

4. Does it intend to prioritise the road safety problems deriving from the lack of uniformity of national laws on HGV traffic, as part of the EU political agenda?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(17 June 2014)

1. An extensive framework of EU legislation applies to the road haulage sector. The existing legislation aims to make the internal market for road transport function smoothly, while ensuring a high level of quality of service, road safety and working conditions. However, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, Member States remain responsible for most aspects of road transport policy that do not have an impact on the Single Market ([1]). Vehicles under 3.5 tonnes, which are used mostly for national transport, are for instance exempted from the majority of EU road transport legislation.

2. The compliance of the Italian rules on minimum road haulage operating costs with EU Treaty provisions is currently being examined by the European Court of Justice. The Commission will await the decision of the Court and might consider taking further actions if appropriate.

3. As described in a recent report ([2]), enforcement authorities encounter difficulties when applying Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 ([3]), creating uncertainty for operators. The Commission is therefore considering a revision of Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 as part of the REFIT exercise ([4]) for 2015.

([1]) As long as the rules adopted in such cases comply with the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).
([2]) Report on the State of the Union Road Transport Market COM(2014) 222.
([3]) Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21.10.2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market, OJ L 300, 14.11.2009.
([4]) Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT): Results and Next Steps, COM(2013) 685 final.

4. The number of accidents involving an HGV steadily decreased in recent years ([5]). There is therefore no indication that differences in national laws on HGV traffic are a source of significant road safety hazards. However, the Commission continues to promote further harmonisation where necessary. As an example, on 3 April 2014, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the 'roadworthiness package' ([6]) including Directive 2014/47/EU which establishes common rules regarding technical roadside inspections of commercial vehicles.

([5]) Traffic Safety Basic Facts 2012, Heavy Goods Vehicles and Buses, European Road Safety Observatory.

([6]) The 'roadworthiness package' is composed of the following three directives: Directive 2014/45/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers and repealing Directive 2009/40/EC (with effect from 20.5.2018), OJ L 127 of 29.4.2014. Directives 2014/46/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 1999/37/EC on the registration documents for vehicles, OJ L 127 of 29.4.2014, and Directive 2014/47/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the technical roadside inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles circulating within the Union and repealing Directive 2000/30/EC (with effect from 20.5.2018), OJ L 127of 29.4.2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005486/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Importazioni di grano duro extra-europeo contaminato e/o avariato

Mai come negli ultimi tempi numerose navi cariche di prodotti agricoli, in particolare di grano, sono giunte nei porti pugliesi, soprattutto a Bari, per poi riversarsi in tutta la regione e il paese. La maggior parte del grano duro in questione proviene principalmente dell'America Latina, dal Canada e dall'area dell'ex Unione Sovietica. Diverse associazioni di coltivatori hanno denunciato che questa «importazione selvaggia» ha permesso la diffusione di semi avariati o contaminati, pregiudizievoli alla salute pubblica. In particolare, è stata rilevata la presenza di ocratossina, un agente inquinante altamente nocivo sia se assunto direttamente che se introdotto tramite il consumo di carni di animali nutriti con mangimi ottenuti dalla decorticazione dei chicchi di grano. In alcuni casi la presenza della tossina è stata addirittura rilevata in percentuali tre volte superiori ai limiti consentiti dalla pertinente normativa sanitaria dell'Unione. Al danno alla salute si aggiunge poi il danno economico: questa situazione ha portato, infatti, all'eliminazione degli introiti legati alla coltivazione di questo prezioso cereale, da sempre vanto per la produzione locale della Puglia, definita da sempre il «granaio d'Italia», che ha invece assistito a un costante calo del prezzo del grano duro, con una perdita di ricavi del 30 % circa nello scorso decennio.

In merito a questa situazione, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. quali sono i principali strumenti di controllo e valutazione delle importazioni di prodotti agricoli extra-europei sanciti dal diritto dell'Unione;

2. se ritiene che le importazioni di grano duro in questione siano confacenti alla norma europea, in particolare con riferimento al regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 che fissa le procedure nel campo della sicurezza alimentare;

3. se intende avviare nuove misure per contrastare questa importazione selvaggia che va a danno dell'economia e della salute dei cittadini pugliesi ed europei.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2014)

1. Esiste un esauriente corpus legislativo per garantire che gli alimenti importati nell'Unione europea soddisfino le prescrizioni della legislazione dell'UE in tema alimentare. I due principali strumenti per il conseguimento di questo obiettivo sono il regolamento (CE) n. 178/2002 ([1]) e il regolamento (CE) n. 882/2004 ([2]). Nel 2010 la Commissione ha stabilito, nell'ambito di tale corpus legislativo, anche un elenco dei mangimi e degli alimenti di origine non animale che, sulla base dei rischi noti o emergenti, devono essere oggetto di un livello accresciuto di controlli prima dell'entrata nell'Unione. L'elenco figura nell'allegato I del regolamento (CE) n. 669/2009 ([3]) ed è periodicamente aggiornato.

2. I controlli ufficiali alle frontiere dell'UE sono effettuati dagli Stati membri che sono responsabili anche della comunicazione di informazioni cruciali (come la decisione di non consentire l'introduzione di mangimi e alimenti provenienti da paesi terzi) alla Commissione e agli altri Stati membri. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni riguardanti la violazione di prescrizioni della legislazione dell'UE in tema alimentare relativamente alle importazioni di frumento duro a cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato. Nella fattispecie i dati risultanti dalle notifiche ricevute mediante il sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF) non dimostrano l'esistenza o l'emergere di rischi specifici connessi con tali prodotti.

3. La Commissione ritiene che gli strumenti esistenti le consentiranno di agire tempestivamente qualora i dati disponibili indichino la necessità di rafforzare la sorveglianza e di introdurre misure riguardanti tali importazioni.

([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 normativa 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, pag. 11).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005486/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Imports of contaminated and/or spoiled durum wheat from outside Europe

More shiploads of agricultural produce than ever, especially of wheat, have recently been arriving in the ports of Apulia, especially Bari, for onward distribution throughout the region and nationwide. Most of this is durum wheat in question comes from Latin America, Canada and the area of the former Soviet Union. Various growers' associations have reported that these 'wildcat imports' have led to the distribution of spoiled or contaminated seeds which are harmful to public health, with ochratoxin in particular being detected. This pollutant is very harmful if consumed directly or in the meat of animals raised on fodder containing husks of this grain. Sometimes the toxin has been detected in percentages three times higher than the limits permitted by the relevant EU health regulations. This not only harmful to health, but to the economy, leading to a loss of income from growing this valuable cereal. Apulia, always known as the 'bread basket of Italy,' used to be proud of this local crop. Now it has seen a steady slide in the price of durum wheat, with a loss of income of around 30% over the past decade.

1. Can the Commission explain what the main instruments are for controlling and assessing the imports of agricultural produce from outside Europe which are allowed under EC law?

2. Does it believe that these durum wheat imports comply with European regulations, especially Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 laying down procedures in matters of food safety?

3. Does it intend to introduce new measures against these wildcat imports which are harmful to the economy and health of the people of Apulia and Europe?

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

1. There is a comprehensive body of legislation to ensure that food imported into the European Union complies with the requirements of EU food law. Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 ([2]) are the two main tools in order to achieve this objective. As part of this body of legislation, the Commission also 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.

2. Official controls at the EU border are carried out by the Member States, which are also responsible for disseminating critical information (such as the decision not to permit the introduction of feed or food from third countries) to the Commission and the other Member States. The Commission is not in possession of information indicating the non-compliance with EU food law requirements of the imports of durum wheat referred to by the Honourable Member. In particular, data resulting from the notifications received through the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) do not indicate the existence or emergence of specific risks related to these products.

3. The Commission is confident that the existing tools will allow it to react promptly, should the available data point in the future at the need to step up vigilance and introduce specific measures for these imports.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28.1.2002 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 29.4.2004 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.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005487/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Richiesta dell'Fsb di dati personali degli organizzatori delle proteste di piazza Maidan

Il fondatore di un noto social network russo ha affermato che il servizio di sicurezza federale russo ha richiesto, nel dicembre 2013, le informazioni personali degli organizzatori delle proteste di «Euromaidan». L'azienda si è però rifiutata di fornire tali dati. Il giovane ha rinunciato al proprio incarico lo scorso primo aprile, sostenendo che in seguito alcuni tra i proprietari dell'azienda hanno fatto pressioni perché la stessa divenisse più flessibile nel rispetto dei propri ideali fondativi, incluso il diritto degli utenti alla libertà di espressione.

In merito a quanto detto, può il vice-presidente/Alto Rappresentante chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza di tali fatti?

2. ritiene che questi dati possano suggerire che la Russia stesse già preparando dellecontromisure per evitare che le proteste filo-europee avessero successo?

Risposta dell'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente Catherine Ashton a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è a conoscenza delle pressioni esercitate sui social network e delle sempre maggiori restrizioni alla libertà di espressione online e offline, in particolare, il blocco di diversi siti internet senza ordinanza del tribunale, il fatto che ora la legge sui media si applichi ai blog con più di 3 000 visitatori al giorno e l'archiviazione obbligatoria dei dati degli utenti (comprese le loro comunicazioni) per tutti i motori di ricerca, social network e forum. L'AR/VP ritiene che questa sia una grave violazione della libertà di espressione in un contesto globalmente sfavorevole alla libertà dei media in Russia.

Il 12 maggio 2014 l'UE ha adottato gli Orientamenti sulla libertà di espressione online e offline, il cui scopo è contrastare le restrizioni ingiustificate alla libertà di espressione, promuovere la libertà dei mezzi d'informazione e offrire una guida preziosa ai funzionari e al personale dell'UE in tutto il mondo. Le leggi e le prassi russe risultano nettamente inadeguate rispetto a tali Orientamenti.

Per quanto riguarda la libertà di riunione in Russia, l'AR/VP segue con attenzione anche l'iter delle nuove modifiche legislative attualmente all'esame della Duma di Stato, volte ad aumentare le sanzioni, in particolare in caso di seconda violazione entro sei mesi, nonché a introdurre la responsabilità penale e a disporre la reclusione fino a cinque anni in caso di terza violazione.

Il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna continuerà a monitorare con attenzione questi sviluppi e le loro ripercussioni sui diritti umani, in particolare la libertà di espressione, e solleverà tali questioni con le autorità russe in tutte le sedi pertinenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005487/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Request from FSB for personal details of the organisers of the Euromaidan protests

The founder of a well-known Russian social network has said that, in December 2013, the Russian federal security service asked for the personal details of the organisers of the Euromaidan protests. The company, however, refused to supply such details. The young man left his job on 1 April, maintaining that subsequently a number of the owners of the company had urged the company to be more flexible in its founding ideals, including the right of users to freedom of expression.

In this context, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify whether:

1. she is aware of this situation?

2. she believes that this information could suggest that Russia is already preparing counter-measures to prevent the success of the pro-European protests?

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

The High Representative/ Vice-President is aware of the pressure on Russian social networks and of the shrinking freedom of expression, online and offline, notably the blocking of several websites without Court orders, the fact that bloggers with more than 3 000 visitors daily now fall under the media law and the compulsory storage of users data (including their communication) for all search engines, social networks and forums. She considers that this is a serious violation of freedom of expression in an overall adverse context for media freedom in Russia.

The EU has adopted EU Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline on 12 May 2014. The aim of those guidelines is to address unjustified restrictions on freedom of expression, promote media freedom and provide valuable guidance to EU officials and staff across the globe. Measured against them, Russian laws and practice lag far behind.

As regards freedom of assembly in Russia, the HR/VP is also following closely the development of new legislative amendments that are currently under consideration by the State Duma aimed at increasing further penalties particularly for a second violation within six months, and introducing criminal responsibility and imprisonment of up to five years for a third violation.

The European External Action Service will continue to monitor closely those developments and their impact on Human Rights, notably freedom of expression, and will raise them in all relevant fora with the Russian authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005488/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Progressi dell'ingegneria tissutale

Un gruppo di scienziati svedesi ha usato l'ingegneria tissutale per costruire un esofago naturale che, in combinazione con cellule staminali del midollo osseo, è stato trapiantato con successo in alcuni topi cavie. Finora la creazione di tessuti di sostituzione è risultata sempre piuttosto complicata e dall'esito incerto, ma in questo studio gli scienziati hanno creato organi bioingegnerizzati usando esofagi da topi e rimuovendo poi tutte le cellule, così da far rimanere solo una struttura con proprietà meccaniche e chimiche tipiche dell'organo, che viene poi rivestita di cellule del midollo osseo, le quali, in circa tre settimane, hanno iniziato a mostrare caratteristiche organo-specifiche. Tutti i roditori sono sopravvissuti e, a distanza di due settimane, gli scienziati hanno verificato l'esistenza di cellule epiteliali, muscolari, vasi sanguigni e nervi.

Si chiede alla Commissione di rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente dello studio?

2. Può chiarire se siano stati utilizzati fondi europei per condurlo?

3. Può specificare se dispone di dati specifici sui principali rischi legati all'ingegneria tissutale per la salute umana?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio pubblicato di recente da un gruppo di scienziati svedesi, che ha trapiantato con successo in un topo cavia un esofago costruito con una tecnica di ingegneria tissutale. Questi risultati possono aprire nuove prospettive nel campo della medicina rigenerativa per la riparazione di tessuti e organi nonché, in ultima istanza, per la creazione di organi artificiali. Saranno necessari ulteriori investimenti in ricerca e sviluppo per rendere questa promettente tecnologia prontamente disponibile per l'uso clinico. Una recente trattazione della rete Previsione istituita dalla Commissione ha evidenziato l'enorme potenziale nel campo della medicina rigenerativa, per i prossimi 10 anni, offerto dall'impiego dell'ingegneria tissutale in combinazione con la tecnologia delle cellule staminali.

2. Lo studio non ha ricevuto il sostegno dell'Unione europea. Tuttavia, la Commissione sta finanziando simili approcci fondati sulla medicina rigenerativa in cui i tessuti sono costruiti a partire da scaffold biologici o sintetici. Ad esempio, il progetto ESPOIR intende condurre una sperimentazione clinica utilizzando valvole cardiache create con tale tecnica e il progetto BIOTRACHEA tenta di costruire la trachea da scaffold naturali o sintetici per uso clinico.

3. La Commissione non dispone di dati specifici sui principali rischi per la salute umana associati a questo particolare prodotto. Occorre osservare, tuttavia, che i prodotti di ingegneria tissutale sono disciplinati dal regolamento (CE) n. 1394/2007 sui medicinali per terapie avanzate. Ciò significa che, prima che ne venga autorizzata la commercializzazione, l'Agenzia europea per i medicinali condurrà una valutazione indipendente dei benefici e dei rischi correlati al prodotto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005488/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Advances in tissue engineering

A team of Swedish scientists has used tissue engineering to make a natural oesophagus, which, in combination with bone marrow stem cells, has been successfully transplanted into laboratory mice. Until now, it has always been rather complicated to create replacement tissues and the outcome has always been uncertain. In this study, however, the scientists created bioengineered organs by using mouse oesophagi and then removing all the cells, leaving just a structure with mechanical and chemical properties typical of the organ. The structure was then coated with bone marrow cells, which within about three weeks began to show organ-specific characteristics. All the mice survived and, two weeks later, the scientists found epithelial, muscle, blood vessel and nerve cells present.

1. Is the Commission aware of the study?

2. Can it say whether European funds were used to carry it out?

3. Does it have specific data on the primary risks to human health associated with tissue engineering?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the recently published Swedish study that reports the successful transplantation of a tissue engineered oesophagus in a rat model. These results may open up new perspectives in regenerative medicine for the repair of tissues and organs, or eventually the creation of artificial organs. Further investment in research and development will be needed to make this promising technology readily available for clinical use. A recent discussion of the Foresight Network established by the Commission shows that tissue engineering combined with stem cell technology has an immense potential in regenerative medicine in the next 10 years.

2. The study has not been supported by the EU. However, the Commission is funding similar regenerative medicine approaches where tissues are engineered from decellularised biological or synthetic scaffolds. For example, the project Espoir aims at conducting a clinical trial using heart valves created with such a technique. Similarly, the project Biotrachea attempts to construct trachea either from natural or synthetic scaffolds for clinical use.

3. The Commission has no specific data available on the primary risks to human health associated with this specific product. It is noted, however, that tissue engineered products fall under Regulation (EC) No 1394/2007on advanced therapy medicinal products. This means that there will be an independent assessment by the European Medicines Agency of the benefits and risks attached to the product before a marketing authorisation is granted.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005489/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Cannabis e danni al cervello

Uno studio statunitense ha svelato che fumare marijuana anche solo in maniera occasionale può compromettere le zone cerebrali collegate alle emozioni e alla motivazione. Secondo lo studio ci sarebbe una stretta correlazione tra il numero di volte in cui si fa uso di cannabis e le anomalie che nel tempo possono svilupparsi nel cervello, alterando la densità e il volume di determinate aree del cervello, in particolare quelle che sono coinvolte nelle emozioni e nei meccanismi di ricompensa cerebrale. Lo studio è stato condotto su quaranta giovani tra i 18 e i 25 anni, che sono stati sottoposti a risonanza magnetica per verificare il volume e la densità delle aree cerebrali su cui agisce il thc. Venti dei partecipanti erano consumatori abituali o occasionali di marijuana, mentre gli altri non avevano utilizzato la sostanza più di 5 volte durante tutta la vita. Dal confronto delle analisi, i ricercatori hanno evidenziato molte differenze morfologiche tra i cervelli dei consumatori e dei non consumatori, concentrate in particolare nel nucleus accumbens e l'amigdala, regioni coinvolte nelle emozioni, nei meccanismi di ricompensa cerebrale e di decisione e nei meccanismi di dipendenza da sostanze psicoattive.

Gli effetti negativi a lungo termine legati a un consumo anche moderato di cannabis, in buona sostanza, ci sono, ma occorreranno ulteriori studi per confermare queste conclusioni.

In merito a questo studio, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se è a conoscenza dello studio?

2. se, attraverso i fondi europei, sono stati finanziati studi simili o che mirano a proseguire le ricerche dello studio in questione?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza dello studio recentemente pubblicato dal professor Briter e dai suoi collaboratori ([1]).

2. Nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013), il progetto ADDICTION esamina la complessa interazione tra fattori genetici e ambientali alla base delle differenze individuali nell'uso di tali sostanze e nei rischi di abuso, anche della cannabis. Sul tema generale dell'abuso di determinate sostanze, della tossicodipendenza e della salute mentale, il 7° PQ ha stanziato 15 milioni di EUR a sostegno di vari progetti che stanno producendo risultati pertinenti in relazione ai possibili effetti della cannabis sul cervello.

Nell'ambito della sfida per la società «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere», Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione dell'UE (2014-2020) ([2]), può offrire un ulteriore sostegno alla ricerca in questo campo. Le informazioni sulle attuali possibilità di finanziamento possono essere ottenute attraverso il portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([3]).

([1]) Gilman JM, Kuster JK, Lee S, Lee MJ, Kim BW, Makris N, van der Kouwe A, Blood AJ, Breiter HC. J Neurosci. 2014 Apr 16;34(16):5529-38. doi: 10.1523/J. NEUROSCI. 4745-13.2014.
([2]) GU L 347 del 20.12.2013.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005489/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Cannabis and brain damage

A US study has revealed that smoking marijuana only occasionally can damage the areas of the brain associated with emotions and motivation. The study shows a close relation between the number of times cannabis is used and abnormalities that can develop in the brain over time, altering the density and volume of certain brain areas, particularly those involved in emotions and brain reward mechanisms. The study was carried out on 40 young people aged between 18 and 25, who underwent magnetic resonance imaging to check the volume and density of the areas of the brain on which THC acts. Twenty of the participants were habitual or occasional marijuana users, while the others had not used the substance more than five times in their lives. A comparison of the test results showed a number of morphological differences between the brains of users and non-users. They were concentrated mainly in the nucleus accumbens and amygdala, which are regions involved in the emotions, brain reward and decision mechanisms and mechanisms of addiction to psychoactive substances.

There are, in essence, long-term negative effects associated with even moderate use of cannabis, but further studies will be needed to confirm these conclusions.

1. Is the Commission aware of this study?

2. Can it say whether European funds have been used to finance similar studies or ones that aim at furthering the research of the study in question?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the study recently published by Professor Breiter and collaborators ([1]).

2. Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013), the project Addiction ([2]) investigates the complex interaction between genetic and environmental causes of individual differences in substance use and risks of abuse, including those of cannabis. On the general topic of substance abuse, addiction and mental health, FP7 has provided EUR 15 million in support for several projects that are generating results expected to be relevant with respect to the possible effects of cannabis on the brain.

Through its 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge, Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([3]), can provide further support for research in this area. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([4]).

([1]) Gilman JM, Kuster JK, Lee S, Lee MJ, Kim BW, Makris N, van der Kouwe A, Blood AJ, Breiter HC. J Neurosci. 2014 Apr 16;34(16):5529-38. doi: 10.1523/JNEUROSCI. 4745-13.2014.
([2]) http://erc.europa.eu/erc-funded-projects
([3]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-005490/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Vitamina D e declino cognitivo

Uno studio medico americano ha rivelato una correlazione tra il declino cognitivo e i livelli di vitamina D dell'organismo umano. La vitamina D è infatti un gruppo di pro-ormoni, cui appartengono le D1, D2, D3, D4 e D5, che agisce come un vero e proprio ormone in grado di dar vita a una serie di reazione chimiche. Analizzando i dati di circa tremila adulti di età compresa fra i 70 e i 79 anni, è stata misurata la funzione cognitiva dei partecipanti per circa quattro anni insieme ai livelli di vitamina D, scoprendo che a bassi livelli di vitamina D corrisponde un declino cognitivo, pur non trovando un nesso causa/effetto diretto.

In merito allo studio in questione, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se è a conoscenza dello studio o di studi simili negli Stati membri dell'UE?

2. Quali sono le azioni intraprese in ambito europeo per sensibilizzare l'opinione pubblica in merito alla conduzione di uno stile di vita all'aria aperta, fondamentale per garantire l'apporto di vitamina D?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

È politica invalsa della Commissione non esprimere commenti sui singoli risultati di ricerche non correlate alle sue attività di finanziamento.

Per quanto concerne i livelli raccomandati di assunzione di vitamina D, la Commissione ha chiesto all'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare (EFSA), che fornisce pareri scientifici indipendenti, di esprimersi in merito a un quantitativo di assunzione di riferimento per la popolazione relativamente ai micronutrienti presenti nell'alimentazione, tra cui la vitamina D, nel contesto di un'alimentazione equilibrata che, unitamente a uno stile di vita complessivamente sano, contribuisce ad assicurare una buona salute. L'EFSA prevede di pubblicare il proprio parere nel 2015.

Spetta agli Stati membri monitorare la situazione nutrizionale della popolazione e decidere se desiderano o meno introdurre misure per ovviare a un'assunzione insufficiente di nutrienti essenziali. Per quanto concerne le campagne di sensibilizzazione, l'educazione alla salute rientra nelle competenze degli Stati membri.

La Commissione sostiene gli sforzi condotti a livello nazionale nel merito. La strategia europea del 2007 sugli aspetti sanitari connessi all'alimentazione, al sovrappeso e all'obesità ([1]) promuove un'alimentazione equilibrata e stili di vita attivi per tutti. La strategia incoraggia partenariati attivi che coinvolgono i 28 Stati membri dell'UE (nell'ambito del gruppo ad alto livello sulla nutrizione e l'attività fisica ([2])) e la società civile (piattaforma d'azione europea per l'alimentazione, l'attività fisica e la salute ([3])).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_it.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_it.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-005490/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 April 2014)

Subject: Vitamin D and cognitive decline

An American medical study has shown that there is a correlation between cognitive decline and body levels of vitamin D. Vitamin D is in fact a group of prohormones, comprising vitamins D_1, D_2, D_3, D_4, and D_5, which acts like a true hormone capable of producing chemical reactions. The study was based on analysis of data from roughly 3 000 adults aged between 70 and 79. Their cognitive function was measured for about four years, along with their vitamin D levels; those whose vitamin D levels were low were found to be suffering from cognitive decline, although it was not possible to establish any direct cause-and-effect relationship.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above study or similar studies in EU Member States?

2. What steps are being taken at European level to raise public awareness of the need to spend time outdoors, this being essential for the synthesis of vitamin D?

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

It is Commission policy not to comment on individual research results which are unrelated to its funding activities.

With regard to the recommended levels of vitamin D intake, the Commission has asked the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), which provides independent scientific advice, to advise on population reference intakes of micronutrients in the diet, including vitamin D, in the context of a balanced diet which, when part of an overall healthy lifestyle, contributes to good health. EFSA expects to publish its opinion in 2015.

It is the responsibility of Member States to monitor the nutritional situation of the population, and to decide whether or not they wish to introduce measures to address insufficient intake of essential nutrients. Regarding awareness campaigns, health education is also within the competence of Member States.

The Commission is supporting national efforts in this regard. The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([1]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyle for all. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the 28 EU Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([2])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([3])).

([1]) COM(2007) 279.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm