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 343/01)

Treść Strona

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-003466/14
a la Comisión
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(21 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Financiación de la Formación Profesional Básica a cargo del Fondo Social Europeo

La Secretaria de Estado de Educación del Gobierno de España, Montserrat Gomendio, ha anunciado que tiene un preacuerdo con la Comisión Europea para financiar, con hasta 2 000 millones de euros procedentes del Fondo Social Europeo, la implantación de la Formación Profesional Básica que recoge la nueva Ley de Educación.

Según el artículo 15 del Real Decreto 127/2014 del Gobierno de España por el que se regulan las cuestiones específicas de la Formación Profesional Básica, podrán acceder a estas enseñanzas los alumnos y las alumnas que cumplan simultáneamente los siguientes requisitos: tener cumplidos quince años, o cumplirlos durante el año natural en curso, y no superar los diecisiete años de edad en el momento del acceso ni durante el año natural en curso; haber cursado el primer ciclo de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria o, excepcionalmente, haber cursado el segundo curso de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y haber sido propuesto por el equipo docente a los padres, madres o tutores legales para la incorporación a un ciclo de Formación Profesional Básica.

Teniendo en cuenta tanto el reglamento que regula el Fondo Social Europeo como su marco estratégico común, ¿puede confirmar la Comisión si existe ese preacuerdo para financiar la Formación Profesional Básica? Si así fuera y teniendo en cuenta que el Fondo Social Europeo se dirige a personas en edad laboral, ¿considera la Comisión que el Fondo Social Europeo se puede dedicar a financiar los sistemas nacionales de educación obligatoria?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de abril de 2014)

En el marco de los preparativos del Acuerdo de Asociación con España, los servicios de la Comisión han celebrado reuniones con los ministerios pertinentes, así como con otras autoridades nacionales y regionales con objeto de definir las prioridades de inversión específicas para cada uno de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos (Fondos ESIF) a fin de abordar mejor los objetivos de Europa 2020 y las recomendaciones específicas por país de conformidad con el artículo 4 del Reglamento relativo a las disposiciones comunes ([1]).

Los Estados miembros deben seleccionar y proponer los objetivos temáticos que deben recibir asistencia de los fondos ESIF en el marco del Acuerdo de Asociación y presentarlos a la Comisión, a más tardar, el 22 de abril de 2014. Una vez recibidos, la Comisión evaluará el Acuerdo de Asociación con arreglo a los criterios indicados en el artículo 15 del Reglamento relativo a las disposiciones comunes.

Uno de los objetivos temáticos del Fondo Social Europeo es la inversión en educación, formación y formación profesional, y, por tanto, puede abordar los retos nacionales en este ámbito. Por otro lado, tal como indica el artículo 16 del Reglamento relativo al FSE ([2]), la asignación específica de la IEJ solo se puede utilizar en relación con jóvenes menores de 25 años, sin trabajo y no integrados en los sistemas de educación o formación que estén desempleados o inactivos en las regiones subvencionables. El considerando 11 aclara que la IEJ se centra en las personas, no en las estructuras y que, por tanto, no se puede utilizar para financiar las reformas estructurales de los sistemas nacionales de educación obligatoria.

([1]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1303/2013.
([2]) Reglamento (UE) n° 1304/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003466/14
to the Commission
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Financing basic vocational training through the European Social Fund

The Secretary of State for Education in the Spanish Government, Montserrat Gomendio, has announced that she has reached a preliminary agreement with the Commission to use up to EUR 2 billion from the European Social Fund to finance the introduction of basic vocational training as provided for in the new Law on Education.

Under Article 15 of Royal Decree 127/2014 of the Spanish Government regulating specific matters relating to basic vocational training, this training programme is open to students who meet all of the following conditions: they must have reached the age of 15, or turn 15 during the calendar year concerned, and they must not be over 17 when starting the course or by the end of the calendar year concerned; they must have completed the first cycle of compulsory secondary education or, by way of exception, have completed the second course of compulsory secondary education if teaching staff have proposed to their parents or legal guardians that they be enrolled in a cycle of basic vocational training.

In the light of both the regulation governing the European Social Fund and the common strategic framework, can the Commission confirm whether there is such a preliminary agreement to finance basic vocational training? If so, and bearing in mind that the European Social Fund is intended for people of working age, does the Commission take the view that the European Social Fund can be used to finance national compulsory education systems?

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

In the framework of the preparation of the Spanish Partnership Agreement, the Commission services had a number of meetings with relevant ministries and other national and regional authorities to define the specific investment priorities for each European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) to better address the Europa 2020 objectives and the relevant Country Specific Recommendations in line with the Art. 4 of the Common Provisions Regulation ([1]).

Member States need to select and propose thematic objectives to be supported by the ESIF in the Partnership Agreement to be submitted to the Commission by 22 April 2014. Once received, the Partnership Agreement will be assessed by the Commission following the criteria indicated in Art. 15 of the Common Provisions Regulation.

The European Social Fund has as one of its thematic objectives the investment in education, training and vocational training and therefore can address national challenges in this area. On the other hand, the YEI specific allocation, as indicated in the Art. 16 of the ESF Regulation ([2]), can only be used to target young persons under the age of 25 not in employment, education or training who are inactive or unemployed in eligible regions. Recital 11 clarifies that the YEI is targeting individuals rather than structures and therefore cannot be used to fund structural reforms of national compulsory education systems.

([1]) Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.
([2]) Regulation (EU) 1304/2013.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-003467/14
till kommissionen
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(21 mars 2014)

Angående: Avtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap med Västafrikanska staters ekonomiska gemenskap

Under de senaste veckorna har jag hört att kommissionen är nära att sluta ett avtal med Västafrikanska staters ekonomiska gemenskap (Ecowas) efter långdragna förhandlingar om ett avtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap.

Jag har också förstått att Ecowas successivt kommer att liberalisera en stor del av sin import av EU-varor. Den skräddarsydda och samtidigt ömsesidiga liberaliseringsprocessen skulle vara ett välkommet resultat av förhandlingarna.

EU:s spritdrycksindustri är starkt beroende av sin export över hela världen, och letar ständigt efter nya tillväxtområden.

Kan kommissionen klargöra den status som EU:s spritdrycker skulle komma att få enligt avtalet om ekonomiskt partnerskap, med tanke på att det såvitt jag vet inte finns någon lokal spritdrycksindustri som kräver särskilt skydd mot utländsk konkurrens?

Svar från Karel De Gucht på kommissionens vägnar
(28 april 2014)

EU har mycket riktigt slutfört förhandlingarna om ett avtal om ekonomiskt partnerskap med Västafrikanska staters ekonomiska gemenskap (Ecowas) och Västafrikanska ekonomiska och monetära unionen (WAEMU) som företräder 16 afrikanska stater. Förfarandet för godkännande av avtalet pågår för närvarande.

Avtalen om ekonomiskt partnerskap är unika handels- och utvecklingsavtal som är förankrade i partnerskapsavtalet mellan AVS-länderna och EU, som undertecknades i Cotonou år 2000. I linje med det avtalet ska EU erbjuda AVS-länderna marknadstillträde på grundval av deras utvecklingsnivå och utvecklingspotential samt med hänsyn till de socioekonomiska effekterna av handelspolitiska skyddsåtgärder riktade mot dem.

Det är därför viktigt att förhandlingarna förs med stor flexibilitet och att EU inte driver några specifika offensiva intressen under dem. Möjligheten till lokal produktion är bara ett av de argument som parterna kan anföra för att utesluta en produkt. De kan också ta upp socioekonomiska och kulturella skäl eller skäl som rör inkomst och utveckling som argument för att vissa produkter bör uteslutas. Mot bakgrund av detta kommer vin och sprit på begäran av Ecowas att undantas från liberalisering inom avtalet om ekonomiskt partnerskap.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003467/14
to the Commission
Christofer Fjellner (PPE)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Economic Partnership Agreement with Economic Community of West African States

I have been hearing for some weeks that the Commission is close to reaching an agreement with the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) following the lengthy negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement.

I also understand that Ecowas would progressively liberalise a large majority of its imports of EU products. This tailor-made, yet reciprocal, liberalisation process would be a welcome achievement of the negotiations.

The European spirits industry is heavily reliant on its exports all over the globe, and is constantly looking for new areas of growth.

Could the Commission clarify what the status of European spirits would be under this Economic Partnership Agreement, given that, to the best of my knowledge, there is no local spirits industry that would require special protection against foreign competition?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(28 April 2014)

The EU has indeed closed negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) on behalf of 16 West African States. The endorsement process of the deal reached is ongoing.

Economic Partnership Agreements are unique trade and development agreements and their specificity is fully anchored in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou in 2000. In line with that Agreement, the EU engages on ACP market access offers based on their development potential, taking into consideration the development level of its partners as well as the socioeconomic impact of trade measures on them.

Negotiations are therefore pursued with a large degree of flexibility, with the EU refraining from pursuing any particular offensive interests during negotiations. Capacity for local production is only one of the arguments partners may invoke for excluding a product, but our counterparts can also invoke socioeconomic, cultural, revenue and other development-related arguments as justification for the exclusion of certain products. On this basis, at the insistence of Ecowas, wines and spirits will be excluded from liberalisation under the EPA.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-003469/14
till kommissionen
Kent Johansson (ALDE)
(21 mars 2014)

Angående: Angående grisdirektivet 2008/120/EG

Sedan 2010 har Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) gjort 17 inspektioner i medlemsstaterna som avsett efterlevnaden av EU:s grisdirektiv 2008/120/EG om miljöberikning och förbud mot svanskupering. Av dessa inspektioner påpekade FVO brister i efterlevnaden avseende tilldelning av strö till grisar samt förekomst av svansamputationer i 12 fall (Belgien, Bulgarien, Danmark, Frankrike, Italien år 2010 och Portugal, Rumänien, Slovakien, Tjeckien, Ungern och Österrike år 2012). I tre inspektioner kommenterades inte funna brister och endast vid två inspektionstillfällen (Luxemburg och Sverige) kunde man rapportera full efterlevnad av direktivet.

1. Anser kommissionen, mot bakgrund av FVO:s inspektioner i ett flertal medlemsländer avseende tilldelning av manipulerbart material till grisar och bruket av svanskupering, att det föreligger ett brott eller överträdelser mot direktivet i flera medlemsländer?

2. Anser kommissionen, i ljuset av FVO:s inspektioner, att den handel som bedrivs med kött från gris inom EU sker på lika villkor och i enlighet med fördragen?

3. När kommer kommissionen att införa sanktioner mot de medlemsstater där systematiska brott mot grisdirektivet 2008/120/EG har visats förekomma?

Svar från Tonio Borg på kommissionens vägnar
(22 april 2014)

Kommissionen hänvisar till sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-000918/2014 ([1]) vad gäller bristen på bökbart material för svin ([2]) och E-011216/2013 ([3]) om de åtgärder som kommissionen vidtagit.

Villkoren för produktion av griskött i EU påverkas av flera faktorer, och djurskyddsvillkoren utgör bara en del av dessa faktorer. I fråga om djurskydd får medlemsstaterna införa nationella bestämmelser som går utöver EU:s krav. Dessa nationella bestämmelser kan påverka produktionskostnaderna och lönsamheten.

Kommissionen har inte befogenhet att fastställa påföljder för medlemsstaterna. Kommissionen har närmare förklarat sitt tillvägagångssätt i sitt svar på den skriftliga frågan E-011216/2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/sv/parliamentary-questions.html, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/sv/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Rådets direktiv 2008/120/EG om fastställande av lägsta djurskyddskrav vid svinhållning (EUT L 47, 18.2.2009, s. 5). Rådets direktiv 2008/120/EG om fastställande av lägsta djurskyddskrav vid svinhållning (EUT L 47, 18.2.2009, s. 5).
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003469/14
to the Commission
Kent Johansson (ALDE)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Pigs Directive 2008/120/EC

Since 2010 the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) has carried out 17 inspections in Member States of compliance with the EU Pigs Directive 2009/120/EC as regards environmental enrichment and the ban on tail docking. The FVO noted breaches concerning the provision of straw for pigs and instances of tail-docking at 12 of these inspections (in Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France and Italy in 2010, and in Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria in 2012). At three inspections no breaches were reported and only in two cases (Luxembourg and Sweden) were the inspectors able to note full compliance with the directive.

1. In view of the FVO inspections in a majority of Member States into the provision of manipulation material for pigs and the practice of tail-docking, does the Commission consider that breaches or infringements of the directive take place in most Member States?

2. Does the Commission consider, in the light of the FVO's inspections, that the trade in pigmeat within the EU is taking place on a level playing field and in accordance with the Treaties?

3. When will the Commission impose penalties against those Member States in which routine breaches of the Pigs Directive 2008/120/EC have been shown to take place?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(22 April 2014)

The Commission would refer to its answers to Written Question E-000918/2014 ([1]) as regards the lack of provision of manipulable material for pigs ([2]) and E-011216/2013 ([3]) on action taken by the Commission.

The conditions for the production of pigmeat in the EU are influenced by several factors, animal welfare requirements are only a part of it. It should be noted that with regard to animal welfare, Member States may introduce national rules that go beyond EU requirements. Depending on the nature of these national rules they might have an impact on production costs and profitability.

It is not within the legal powers of the Commission to impose penalties on the Member States. The approach chosen by the Commission has been further explained in the answer to Written Question E-011216/2013.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) Council Directive 2008/120/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs; OJ L 47, 18.2.2009, p. 5.
([3]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003470/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Enterprise Europe Network

Could the Commission disclose the number of British SMEs that benefited from the Enterprise Europe Network?

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

In 2013, Network partners in the UK visited 2 565 SMEs not yet using the Network services, to assess their potential to innovate and internationalise. UK Network partners provided specialised services and advice to 4 565 SMEs, typically on issues such as access to funding, advice on Intellectual Property Rights in foreign markets, counselling services on business partnering and other related services such as the organisation of commercial missions of particular interest to British firms.

In 2013, 244 British SMEs signed business agreements, technology transfer agreements and R&D agreements with enterprises from outside the UK.

Figures on British SMEs assisted by the Enterprise Europe Network :

2008-2012

Clients in local events: 34 919
First company visits: 6 684
Clients receiving advisory services: 13 045
Clients for brokerage services & company missions: 3 088
Partnership agreements signed: 674

2013

Clients in local events: 10 314
First company visits: 2 565
Clients receiving advisory services: 4 565
Clients for brokerage services & company missions: 864
Partnership agreements signed: 244

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003471/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Enterprise Europe Network

Could the Commission explain how the Enterprise Europe Network is being promoted in the UK?

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

The Enterprise Europe Network has partner organisations in eleven regions of the UK, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

They have a common website (http://www.enterprise-europe.net/) showing all activities organised and attended to by Network partners throughout the UK.

UK Network partners also organise local promotion events on a regular basis. In 2013 for example, 10 314 enterprises participated in events organised by Network partners in the UK.

In 2013, 864 UK enterprises participated in brokerage events and company missions organised by Enterprise Europe Network partners.

The Network partners in the UK also regularly publish newsletters and other documents of interest for enterprises, such as country reports or fact sheets. Some partners organise social media campaigns.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003472/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Directive on the protection of the EU's financial interests

While I agree that fraud should be sanctioned, I would like the Commission to explain how the newly proposed 'European Public Prosecutor's Office' will work in the UK. What budget will be used to sustain its actions and staff?

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

The United Kingdom (UK) has not used the possibility provided for by Article 3 of Protocol No 21 (on the position of the United Kingdom and Ireland in respect of the area of freedom, security and justice) to the Treaties to notify, within the required deadline, that it wishes to take part in the adoption and application of the proposed Regulation establishing a European Public Prosecutor's Office that was proposed by the Commission on 17 July 2013. Article 5 of the said Protocol states that a non-participating Member State shall bear no financial consequences of that measure other than administrative costs entailed for the institutions, unless all members of the Council, acting unanimously after consulting the European Parliament, decide otherwise.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003473/14
to the Commission
Phil Bennion (ALDE), George Lyon (ALDE), Rebecca Taylor (ALDE), Fiona Hall (ALDE) and Edward McMillan-Scott (ALDE)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Supporting people with autism

According to the World Health Organisation, autism is a pervasive developmental disorder which affects around 1 in 150 children. Studies have found that people with autism are more likely to be bullied. It has also been shown that underdiagnosis and a lack of gender mainstreaming of the diagnostic tests is a real issue across the EU and leads to autism sufferers, particularly females, not receiving the tailored support necessary to achieve their full potential, notably in education and employment.

1. Is the Commission taking action to collect data on the level of abuse experienced by people with autism and on the lack of societal support?

2. Has the Commission provided funding for research and the collection of statistics on the bullying of people with autism?

3. Does the Commission intend to support research programmes on issues such as underdiagnosis and the lack of gender mainstreaming of the diagnostic tests?

4. Is the Commission taking action to support awareness-raising campaigns, such as Kevin Healey's UK campaign and the Autism in Pink campaign, on the challenges faced by people with autism?

5. Has the Commission been facilitating an exchange of best practices between Member States to fight against the increase in cyber bullying, including trolling and stalking, and physical bullying of young people, including those with autism?

6. Has the Commission been promoting the exchange among Member States of their best practices regarding legislation and police recording of disability hate crime in order to help the relevant authorities tackle abuse and bullying?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Members to its answers to written questions E-014410/2013, E-001268/2014 and E-001419/2014. The EU provides a grant to Autism-Europe in 2014 also covering awareness raising actions. The report on the pilot projects to improve the employment situation of people with autism has been published. ([1])

The communication for a 'European strategy for a better Internet for children' ([2]) underlines the importance of protecting children from harmful online content and of awareness raising among the youngest and most vulnerable children, including those with learning and intellectual disabilities. In addition, Safer Internet Centres support children, parents and teachers through national helplines.

Children as victims of bullying at school were one of the priorities of the 2013 Daphne III call for proposals, ([3]) currently being selected. The 2013 European Forum on the rights of the child had a specific session on bullying and cyber bullying ([4]). The Commission supports the work of FRA to collect data on hate crime in the Member States.

While the content and organisation of education and training rests entirely with Member States ([5]), the Commission supports exchange of good practices and peer learning between Member States to find solutions to common challenges, such as special educational needs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/report_pilot_projects_empl_autism_2014_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2012) 196 final.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2013_dap_ag_en.htm
([4]) Report available on http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/european-forum/eighth-meeting/index_en.htm
([5]) Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

The 'social and civic competences' defined in the European Framework of Key Competences ([6]) include the need to support the development of social well-being and the ability to show tolerance and constructive behaviour. The Commission also emphasised ([7]) the need to develop schools as safe environments based on mutual respect and cooperation, promoting social, physical and mental well-being and where bullying and violence have no place.

([6]) Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December on key competences for lifelong learning, OJ L 394, 30.12.2006.
([7]) In its communication 'Improving Competences for the 21st Century — an Agenda for European cooperation on schools' COM(2008) 425 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003474/14
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Application of EU privacy law with regard to the sale of confidential medical data

It has been reported in the UK that the government plans to allow the sale of 'anonymous' medical data that contains the patient's date of birth and hospital number. There is concern among data experts, such as Professor Sir Brian Jarman, that it would be relatively easy for companies or others to individualise the data. Patients would be required to actively 'opt out', and GPs who have indicated they will not pass on data without the patient's explicit consent have been threatened with disciplinary action by NHS England.

Can the Commission confirm the legality of protocols involving the sale of medical data without explicit patient consent, and whether it has had any communication over the proposals with either NHS England or the UK Department of Health?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable MEP to its reply to Parliamentary Question E-000665/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003476/14
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Carrying of lithium batteries onto aircraft

The UK Civil Aviation Authority has recently expressed concerns over the carrying of lithium batteries by passengers on board commercial aircraft. These batteries, which are used in an increasing number of electronic devices and gadgets, have been known to ignite spontaneously in flight when overheated, and there is particular concern over cheap, counterfeit batteries produced in Asia. The focus of the Commission's air transport policy in recent years has moved away from liberalisation and towards ensuring the safety and comfort of passengers within a Single European Sky.

1. Can the Commission confirm that it has legislative competence in this area, and if so, whether it has discussed concerns over lithium batteries with the UK Civil Aviation Authority or other relevant national or international supervisory bodies?

2. An igniting battery is clearly much easier to deal with on the passenger deck than in the hold. Are any EU regulations currently in place that require items containing batteries to be carried as hand luggage?

3. Finally, does the Commission or Europol know where these sub-standard counterfeit lithium batteries are being produced in Asia, and if so, has the Commission or Europol notified the appropriate national authorities with a view to having the offending factories closed down?

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

1. Lithium batteries are classified by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) as dangerous goods for the purposes of carrying them onto aircraft. The Commission is mandated by Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 ([1]) to adopt rules for the safe operation of aircraft, including procedures and instructions for the safe transportation of dangerous goods. The rules adopted in 2012 ([2]) contain provisions for the transport of dangerous goods by air, which also make dynamic reference to Annex 18 of the Chicago Convention as well as to the ICAO Technical Instructions ([3]). The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the EU technical agency, regularly discusses with the Member States the issue of lithium batteries. EASA also actively participates in the meetings of the ICAO Dangerous Goods Panel.

2. Lithium batteries can be transported in the cabin or in the hold as checked baggage, but always in a safe manner. For example, spare batteries cannot be carried in the hold, but may be placed in a checked bag, if they are contained in equipment. These batteries can also be shipped as cargo both in passenger and cargo aircraft.

3. Europol is aware of the phenomenon thanks mainly to information found on open sources and through exchanges with experts in the field. However, Member States have not shared any operational information on cases involving counterfeited lithium batteries; therefore Europol is currently not supporting any investigations and has no information on potential suppliers in Asia.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC, OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, p. 1.
([2]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L 296, 25.10.2012, p.1.
([3]) Doc 9284 Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous goods.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003477/14
to the Commission
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Legal status of experiments on primates

As experimental psychologists continue to overturn many preconceptions about the abilities of higher animals, experiments on primates remain especially controversial.

1. What is the current legal position regarding experiments on primates? In particular, what experiments, including cranial experiments, are permitted under EC law?

2. Are pain thresholds taken into account?

3. What is the maximum permitted duration of experiments involving the infliction of pain or enforced isolation, and what is the maximum period for which a primate can be kept for experimental purposes?

4. Can the Commission confirm that no experiments for cosmetic products are permitted?

5. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union recognises animals as 'sentient beings' and requires that full regard be paid to their welfare requirements. The Commission has previously brought forward legislative proposals which were defeated in Parliament. Does the Commission intend to bring forward alternative or more limited proposals in the near future?

6. Finally, federal legislation requires the US Food and Drug Administration to certify the testing of a wide class of treatments on at least five primates. Can the Commission indicate whether comparable requirements exist within the EU and, if so, whether the Commission favours EU legislation that would allow the US experiments to be given legal status in the EU in a way that would obviate the need for unnecessary duplication of experiments?

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

1. Directive 2010/63/EU ([1]) in its Article 8 allows the use of non-human primates for basic research and preservation of species, and for translational/applied research and for the development, manufacture or testing of substances only in relation to debilitating or potentially life-threatening clinical conditions in humans. There has to be a scientific justification that the purpose cannot be achieved by the use of other species. The use of Great Apes is prohibited.

2. All procedures have to be assessed for their expected severity on a case-by-case basis. Severe procedures that are likely to be long-lasting and cannot be ameliorated are prohibited.

3. Neither the maximum permitted duration of experiments, nor the duration for which animals can be kept for scientific purposes, is regulated by the directive; all harm to the animals has to be justified by the expected outcome taking into account ethical considerations.

4. Since 11 March 2013, no cosmetic products tested on animals in order to meet the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 ([2]) are permitted to be placed on the Union market. The provisions of this marketing ban are laid down in Article 18 of the regulation.

5. In 2010, the EP and the Council adopted Directive 2010/63/EU introducing significantly more stringent conditions for the use of live animals in procedures and improving the welfare of those animals still needed to be used.

6. There is no routine requirement for safety testing of new pharmaceuticals using animals. Directive 2001/83/EC ([3])provides that studies in animals can be substituted by validated *in vitro* tests provided that the test results are of comparable quality and usefulness for the purpose of safety evaluation.

([1]) Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.
([2]) Regulation 1223/2009/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009.
([3]) Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use. OJ L 311, 28.11.2001.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003478/14
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(21 mars 2014)

Objet: Grand marché transatlantique (GMT) contre l'éducation

Malgré les efforts consentis par la Commission pour tenir les peuples à l'écart des négociations sur le grand marché transatlantique, ils sont de plus en plus nombreux à réclamer un débat public.

C'est au tour de l'Union européenne des étudiants (ESU) de s'inquiéter des effets du grand marché transatlantique. L'enseignement vu comme «un service économique ordinaire» n'est pas encore la vision dominante en Europe, mais celle-ci pourrait s'imposer. En effet, les exemptions proposées pour les services d'enseignement sont très limitées et ne concernent pas les établissements privés. Ainsi, du fait de cet accord, le secteur de l'éducation sera exposé à des pressions accrues de marchandisation et de privatisation.

1. La Commission entend-t-elle pour une fois défendre l'intérêt général plutôt que quelques intérêts privés?

On apprend également que les entreprises américaines «d'enseignement à but lucratif» établies sur le sol européen pourraient intenter un procès contre les gouvernements qui refuseraient de reconnaître leurs diplômes ou s'opposeraient à l'augmentation des frais d'inscription.

2. La Commission ne devrait-elle pas exclure totalement l'éducation de cet accord?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(8 mai 2014)

La Commission a souligné à plusieurs reprises que les négociations en vue d'un accord de partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement étaient menées avec l'objectif primordial d'apporter des bénéfices durables à nos sociétés, nos citoyens et nos entreprises.

En ce qui concerne l'éducation publique, l'UE a suivi une politique très cohérente dans tous ses accords de libre-échange (ALE) jusqu'à présent. L'UE et ses États membres ne prennent aucun d'engagement en matière de libéralisation pour des services d'éducation qui reçoivent un financement public ou toute autre forme de soutien de l'État. Les entreprises étrangères ne peuvent donc pas recourir aux ALE de l'UE pour avoir accès à l'enseignement public primaire, secondaire ou supérieur des États membres. Pour les services d'éducation financés par le secteur privé, la situation varie entre les États membres. Alors que certains États membres préfèrent conserver un espace politique plein et entier, pour toute mesure qu'ils souhaiteraient prendre à l'égard des prestataires de services étrangers, d'autres États membres restreignent seulement certains types d'activités: par exemple, seules les personnes morales du pays sont autorisées à délivrer des diplômes reconnus par l'État, ou la majorité des membres du conseil d'administration d'un établissement fournissant des services d'éducation doivent être des ressortissants de cet État membre. D'autres États membres n'ont aucune restriction en ce qui concerne les services d'éducation financés par le secteur privé.

Dans ce contexte, la Commission estime qu'une exclusion totale de l'éducation des négociations en vue d'un accord de partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement ne serait pas justifiée.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003478/14
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Transatlantic Free Trade Area (TFTA) against education

Despite the Commission's best efforts to exclude the peoples of Europe from the negotiations on the Transatlantic Free Trade Area, there is growing demand for a public debate on this issue.

Now it is the turn of the European Students' Union (ESU) to be alarmed about the impact of the Transatlantic Free Trade Area. Teaching is not yet viewed in Europe as an economic service like any other, but this may change. For the exemptions proposed for educational services are very limited in scope and do not apply to private establishments. This agreement will thus mean that the education sector will be subject to increased pressure of commodification and privatisation.

1. Does the Commission intend, for once, to defend the interests of the mass of the population instead of the interests of the few?

It is also reported that American 'for-profit educational' companies established on European territory could file a lawsuit against governments that refused to recognise their diplomas or opposed an increase in enrolment fees.

2. Should the Commission not completely exclude education from this agreement?

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

The Commission has repeatedly stressed that negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) are conducted with the overarching goal of bringing benefits to our societies, citizens and companies in a sustainable manner.

As regards public education, the EU has followed a very consistent policy in all its Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) so far. The EU and its Member States do not take any liberalisation commitments for any education services which receive public funding or any other form of State support. Hence foreign companies cannot use the EU's FTAs to get access to Member States' primary, secondary or higher public education. For privately funded education, the situation differs per Member State. Whereas some Member States prefer keeping full policy space for any measures they may wish to take with respect to foreign services providers, other Member States restrict only certain kinds of activities, e.g. only domestic legal persons can issue state-recognised diplomas, or the majority of members of the board of directors of an establishment providing education services must be nationals of that Member State. Other Member States do not have any restrictions with respect to privately-funded education services.

Against this background, the Commission believes that a full carve-out of education from the TTIP negotiations would not be warranted.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003479/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(21 maart 2014)

Betreft: Stamcelonderzoek

Wanneer mensen stamcellen doneren, bv. via navelstrengbloed of op een andere manier, worden de gegevens van de patiënt automatisch geregistreerd. Die gegevens komen terecht in een register dat over de grenzen heen raadpleegbaar is. Wanneer een patiënt dan een stamceltransplantatie nodig heeft, kan men makkelijker zien of er een match is met een geschikte donor.

Als Europese stamcel- en navelstrengbloedbanken echter stamcelproducten of -therapieën in de Verenigde Staten willen invoeren, dan hebben zij geen of nauwelijks toegang tot de Amerikaanse markt, terwijl de Amerikaanse banken wel toegang hebben tot Europa.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Erkent de Commissie dit probleem?

2. Is de privacy voldoende gewaarborgd?

3. Maakt de problematiek van invoer-uitvoer deel uit van de onderhandelingen over het nieuwe vrijhandelsakkoord tussen Europa en de Verenigde Staten?

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

De donatie van stamcellen uit navelstrengbloed in de Unie is geregeld bij Richtlijn 2004/23/EG tot vaststelling van kwaliteits- en veiligheidsnormen voor het doneren, verkrijgen, testen, bewerken, bewaren en distribueren van menselijke weefsels en cellen ([1]). Artikel 14 van deze richtlijn stelt de regels vast inzake de bescherming en integriteit van deze gegevens, en bepaalt in het bijzonder dat gegevens die door derden kunnen worden geraadpleegd geanonimiseerd moeten worden, er gegevensbeveiligingsmaatregelen moeten worden getroffen en dat ongeoorloofde bekendmaking van informatie moet worden voorkomen. Daarnaast moeten de donorregisters waarin zulke gegevens worden ingevoerd, voldoen aan de vereisten voor gegevensbescherming die zijn vastgelegd in Richtlijn 95/46/EG betreffende de bescherming van natuurlijke personen in verband met de verwerking van persoonsgegevens en betreffende het vrije verkeer van die gegevens ([2]).

Artikel 3 van het Handvest van de grondrechten van de Europese Unie verbiedt om het menselijk lichaam en bestanddelen daarvan als zodanig als bron van financieel voordeel aan te wenden. Hieruit volgt dat het importeren naar en exporteren uit de Unie van stoffen van menselijke oorsprong zoals stamcellen uit navelstrengbloed geen deel uitmaken van de vrijhandelsovereenkomsten met derde landen.

([1]) Richtlijn 2004/23/EG van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 31 maart 2004, PB L 102 van 7.4.2004, blz. 48.
([2]) Richtlijn 95/46/EC van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 24 oktober 1995, PB L 281 van 23.11.1995, blz. 31 als gewijzigd bij Verordening (EG) nr. 1882/2003 (PB L 284 van 31.10.2003, blz. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003479/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(21 March 2014)

Subject: Stem cell research

Following the donation of stem cells from umbilical cord blood or elsewhere, patient data is automatically entered on a register available for cross-border consultation, making it easier to match up those needing stem cell transplants with suitable donors.

However, European stem cell and umbilical cord blood banks are being given little or no access to the US market for stem cell products and treatments, despite the fact that their US counterparts do have access to the European market.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the problem?

2. Are sufficient guarantees being provided regarding data confidentiality?

3. Is the problem of importing and exporting products and treatments being discussed in the context of negotiations between Europe and the United States on the new free trade agreement?

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

The donation of stem cells from umbilical cord blood is regulated within the Union by Directive 2004/23/EC on setting standards of quality and safety for the donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of human tissues and cells ([1]). Article 14 of this directive lays down rules on data protection and confidentiality and, in particular, states that data to which third parties have access must be rendered anonymous, data security measures must be in place, and that no unauthorised disclosure of information occurs. In addition, donor registries into which such data are entered must meet the data protection requirements of Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data ([2]).

Article 3 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union prohibits the making of the human body and its parts as such a source of financial gain. It follows that imports to and exports from the Union of substances of human origin such as stem cells from umbilical cord blood do not form part of free trade agreements with third countries.

([1]) Directive 2004/23/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004, OJ L 102, 7.4.2004, p. 48.
([2]) Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 1995, OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31 as amended by Regulation (EC) No 1882/2003 (OJ L 284, 31.10.2003, p. 1).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003481/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE) y Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Problemas transfronterizos en el Campo de Gibraltar: violación de los derechos de los trabajadores y valoración del incumplimiento de las recomendaciones

La política fronteriza puesta en marcha por el Gobierno de España en los últimos meses viene provocando notables retenciones de vehículos y personas en el paso fronterizo existente entre Gibraltar y la ciudad de La Línea (Cádiz, España). Las consecuencias de este fenómeno están afectando de manera importante a las condiciones de vida y trabajo de los miles de trabajadores comunitarios que residen y trabajan a ambos lados de la frontera, y que se ven obligados a soportar las inclemencias del clima y retrasos de hasta cuatro horas para poder acceder a sus puestos de trabajo o a sus lugares de residencia.

Este fenómeno está repercutiendo de igual manera y con negativos efectos en la economía de una zona con fuertes lazos comerciales, poniendo en riesgo muchos de los puestos de trabajo que la citada actividad genera. Organizaciones sindicales y empresariales de ambos lados de la frontera de La Línea con Gibraltar se han organizado en torno al denominado «Comité Transfronterizo», cuyos representantes cursaron recientemente una visita a esta institución parlamentaria y trasladaron a los diputados firmantes su malestar y su preocupación por el asunto.

El día 25 de septiembre del pasado año un equipo de expertos de la Comisión cursó una visita a este paso fronterizo con el objeto de analizar los controles de personas y mercancías realizados por las autoridades de ambas partes, fruto de la cual se trasladaron a los gobiernos implicados una serie de recomendaciones destinadas a la mejora del funcionamiento del mencionado paso fronterizo.

Como la situación se mantiene igual en cuanto a las dificultades de tránsito sin que las citadas recomendaciones parezcan haber tenido efecto alguno en la resolución del problema,

1. ¿Qué valoración hace la Dirección General de Empleo, Asuntos Sociales e Inclusión de la Comisión Europea de las negativas repercusiones que sobre el libre ejercicio de tránsito de trabajadores en el seno de la Unión Europea se están registrando en el citado paso fronterizo?

2. ¿Qué medidas ha adoptado o tiene previsto adoptar para procurar el respeto de los derechos reconocidos a este colectivo de ciudadanos comunitarios?

3. ¿Qué valoración se hace desde la Comisión del nivel de cumplimiento de las recomendaciones cursadas por la Comisión a los gobiernos implicados?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de mayo de 2014)

El artículo 45 del TFUE prohíbe los obstáculos injustificados a la libre circulación de los trabajadores. Para determinar si los retrasos causados por los controles de las autoridades españolas en la frontera con Gibraltar constituyen un obstáculo injustificado, habría que examinar, en primer lugar, si existe un obstáculo contrario a lo dispuesto en el artículo 45 del TFUE y, en segundo lugar, si se puede considerar que dicho obstáculo está justificado. En este contexto, hay que tener en cuenta que Gibraltar no pertenece al espacio exento de controles en las fronteras interiores ni forma parte del territorio aduanero de la UE, por lo que se deben realizar controles de personas y mercancías en la frontera entre España y Gibraltar.

Una delegación de la Comisión hizo una visita técnica al paso fronterizo de La Línea de la Concepción el 25 de septiembre de 2013 y formuló una serie de recomendaciones a las autoridades españolas sobre medidas para facilitar el paso de la frontera. En el Diario Oficial se ha publicado información detallada sobre los resultados de la visita ([1]). La Comisión considera que estas recomendaciones también son válidas a la hora de facilitar la libre circulación de los trabajadores entre España y Gibraltar y se ha comprometido a seguir supervisando la situación en la frontera, lo que incluye las repercusiones de dicha situación en la circulación de los trabajadores. En concreto, una vez transcurrido el plazo de seis meses que se dio a España y al Reino Unido, la Comisión volverá a evaluar la situación y se reserva el derecho de realizar otra visita a la frontera, si es necesario.

([1]) DO C 357 de 6.12.2013, p. 5. Véase: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:357:0005:0007:ES:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003481/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL), Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE) and Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Cross-border problems in Campo de Gibraltar: infringement of workers' rights and assessment of noncompliance with the recommendations

The border policy applied by the Spanish Government over the last few months has been seriously obstructing the passage of people and vehicles at the border crossing between Gibraltar and the town of La Línea (Cadiz, Spain). This situation is having a considerable negative impact on the living and working conditions of thousands of Community workers who live and work either side of the border and are having to endure delays of up to four hours, under all weather conditions, just to be able to get to work or return home.

The situation is having a similarly negative impact on the local economy, which relies heavily on trade, and is endangering many of the jobs generated by this activity. Trade union and business organisations on both sides of the frontier between La Línea and Gibraltar have organised themselves through a 'Cross-border Committee', representatives of which recently visited this Parliament and expressed to us their unease and concern at the situation.

On 25 September 2013, a team of experts from the Commission visited the border crossing to assess the checks being made on people and goods by the authorities on both sides. As a result of this visit, they forwarded a series of recommendations to the respective governments, detailing measures which could improve the functioning of the border crossing.

The situation remains unchanged to date, with no improvement in traffic delays, and the recommendations do not seem to have had any effect in terms of solving the problem.

1. How does the Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion assess the negative impact on the right to free movement of workers within the EU of the situation at this border crossing?

2. What steps has it taken to does it plan to take to ensure that these Community citizens are able to exercise their due rights?

3. To what extent does the Commission consider that the recommendations made by the Commission to the respective governments have been complied with?

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

Unjustified obstacles to free movement of workers are prohibited by Article 45 TFEU. Determining whether the delays caused by checks by the Spanish authorities at the border with Gibraltar constitute unjustified obstacles would mean considering, first, whether an obstacle contrary to Article 45 TFEU exists, and secondly, whether such an obstacle can be justified. In this context it must be noted that since Gibraltar is neither part of the area without internal border controls nor of the customs territory of the EU, checks must be carried out on persons and goods at the border between Spain and Gibraltar.

The Commission departments visited the crossing point at La Línea de la Concepción during a technical visit on 25 September 2013 and made various recommendations to the Spanish authorities as regards measures to make crossing the border smoother. Details of the outcome of the visit are published in the Official Journal ([1]). The Commission considers that those recommendations are equally applicable to facilitating free movement of workers between Spain and Gibraltar. It remains committed to continuing monitoring the situation at the border, including the impact on the movement of workers. In particular, after the expiry of the six-month deadline given to Spain and the United Kingdom, the Commission will assess the situation again and reserves the right to pay another visit to the border, where appropriate.

([1]) OJ C 357, 6.12.2013, p. 5: see at: http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:357:0005:0007:EN:PDF

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003482/14
a la Comisión
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(24 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Mecanismo de garantía de préstamos en Erasmus

El Reglamento (UE) n° 1288/2013 del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 11 de diciembre de 2013 establece el nuevo programa «Erasmus+» de educación, formación, juventud y deporte de la Unión. Dicho Reglamento, en su artículo 20, prevé un «mecanismo de garantía de préstamos a estudiantes».

¿Podría ampliarnos la Comisión la información acerca de cómo se implementará este mecanismo?

Si, como parece, serán instituciones intermediarias quienes concedan los créditos a estudiantes ¿cómo se seleccionarán estos intermediarios? ¿Podrá participar cualquier entidad interesada? ¿Cuál será el papel concreto de la Comisión?

Por último, ¿se impondrán ciertas condiciones a los intermediarios para la concesión de préstamos con vistas a facilitar el máximo acceso por parte de los estudiantes interesados?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de junio de 2014)

Los préstamos para la realización de másteres en el marco de Erasmus+ los gestionará a escala de la UE el Fondo Europeo de Inversiones (FEI) y se entregarán a través de intermediarios financieros que se seleccionarán de forma transparente mediante procedimientos competitivos. Para obtener información acerca de la función del FEI y la selección de los intermediarios financieros, remitimos a Su Señoría a la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta escrita P-001424/2014 ([1]).

Para poder optar a la selección, los intermediarios financieros deben atenerse a las condiciones que se describen en el anexo II del Reglamento Erasmus+ ([2]), donde se incluyen, al menos, las medidas de protección de los prestatarios que allí se recogen.

La Comisión seguirá la evolución del instrumento, basándose en los informes de actividad del FEI, los intermediarios financieros y las respuestas de los cuestionarios para estudiantes y titulados.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ES/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1288&qid=1395671967554

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003482/14
to the Commission
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Erasmus loan guarantee facility

Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishes the Union's new Erasmus+ programme for education, training youth and sport. Article 20 of this regulation provides for a Student Loan Guarantee Facility.

Could the Commission provide further information as to how this facility will be implemented?

If, as seems to be the case, the loans are to be granted to students by intermediary institutions, how will these institutions be chosen? Will participation be open to all interested bodies? What will be the Commission's role?

Lastly, will the intermediaries be required to respect certain conditions when granting loans, in order to enable as many students as possible to access them?

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

The Erasmus+ Master loans will be managed at the EU-level by the European Investment Fund (EIF) and delivered via financial intermediaries, selected on an open and competitive basis. For information on the role of the EIF and the selection of financial intermediaries, the Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the Commission's reply to Written Question P-001424/2014 ([1]).

In order to be eligible for selection, financial intermediaries must respect the conditions outlined in Annex II of the Erasmus+ Regulation ([2]), including as a minimum, the 'protections for borrowers' set out therein.

The Commission will monitor the performance of the instrument, based upon activity reports from the EIF, the financial intermediaries and from responses to a student and graduate survey.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://www.eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32013R1288&qid=1395671967554

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003483/14
a la Comisión
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(24 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Política industrial: Grupo de trabajo de tecnologías avanzadas de fabricación para una producción limpia

En su Comunicación «Una industria europea más fuerte para el crecimiento y la recuperación económica» de octubre de 2012, la Comisión Europea anunció que encabezaría un grupo de trabajo sobre tecnologías avanzadas de fabricación para una producción limpia en 2013, con el fin de impulsar el desarrollo y la adopción de dichas tecnologías por la industria europea. Asimismo, la Comisión anunció que, tras las consultas con la industria, evaluaría las repercusiones de una potencial asociación público-privada en el ámbito de los procesos industriales sostenibles.

¿Podría informarnos la Comisión sobre el estado de los trabajos del mencionado grupo? ¿Ha llevado a cabo la Comisión la evaluación de las repercusiones de una asociación público-privada en el ámbito de los procesos industriales sostenibles?

Respuesta del Sr. Tajani en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión creó en enero de 2013 el grupo de trabajo sobre tecnologías avanzadas de fabricación para una producción limpia, a fin de coordinar esfuerzos en el sector de la fabricación avanzada dentro de la Comisión y con las partes interesadas. En marzo de 2014 se publicó un informe sobre las medidas aplicadas en el primer año y las acciones futuras ([1]).

Tras las consultas con la industria, la Comisión ha evaluado el impacto de un posible partenariado público-privado en materia de investigación e innovación en procesos industriales sostenibles. De ahí surgió el convenio de establecimiento del partenariado público-privado *Sustainable Process Industry through Resources and Energy Efficiency* (SPIRE) [Eficiencia energética y de recursos en la industria de transformación sostenible], firmado el 17 de diciembre de 2013, que cuenta con un presupuesto indicativo de 900 millones EUR para 2014-2020 ([2]). Allende el objetivo de política industrial, SPIRE contribuye a los objetivos de Europa 2020 sobre cambio climático, sostenibilidad energética e investigación y desarrollo ([3]).

Lo primero que SPIRE se propone abordar en 2014-2015 son ámbitos prioritarios de I+D+i tales como: control integrado de procesos, procesos que permitan el uso de energías renovables como materias primas flexibles, transformación posterior de mezclas, utilización eficiente de la energía y los recursos, recuperación de calor, sistemas de refrigeración con energía solar, simbiosis industrial, intensificación de procesos, tecnologías de reciclaje y manipulación de sólidos. La financiación que propone Horizonte 2020 es de 116,3 millones EUR para 2014 y de 89 millones EUR para 2015.

Además de SPIRE, la Comisión ha puesto en marcha el II plan de industria sostenible con bajas emisiones de CO_2 (SILC II) ([4]), que, en el marco de Horizonte 2020, cuenta con una financiación de 20 millones EUR para 2014. En este plan se financiarán proyectos de demostración de soluciones tecnológicas de bajas emisiones de CO_2 para industrias de gran consumo de energía.

([1]) SWD(2014) 120 «Si la fabricación avanza, Europa avanza». Siga la actualización de las actividades en http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/amt/index_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1261_es.htm
([3]) http://www.spire2030.eu/uploads/Modules/Publications/spire-roadmap_december_2013_pbp.pdf pp63
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/calls/h2020-silc-ii-2014.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003483/14
to the Commission
Teresa Riera Madurell (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Industrial policy: task force for advanced manufacturing technologies for clean production

In its communication 'A Stronger European Industry for Growth and Economic Recovery', of October 2012, the Commission announced that in 2013 it would be heading a task force for advanced manufacturing technologies for clean production, to promote the development and use of such technologies in European industry. The Commission also announced that, following industry consultations, it would assess the impacts of a potential public-private partnership in the area of sustainable process industries.

Could the Commission provide an update on the work being carried out by this task force? Has the Commission completed its assessment of the impact of a potential public-private partnership in the area of sustainable process industries?

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

The Commission set up in January 2013 the Task Force for advanced manufacturing technologies for clean production to coordinate the efforts with regard to advanced manufacturing within the Commission and with stakeholders. A report about the measures implemented in the first year and upcoming actions was published in March 2014 ([1]).

Following industry consultations, the Commission has assessed the impact of a potential public-private partnership regarding research and innovation in sustainable process industries. As a result, a contractual arrangement setting up a Public-Private Partnership in the area of Sustainable Process Industry through Resource and Energy Efficiency (SPIRE) was signed on 17 December 2013 with an indicative budget of EUR 900 million for the period 2014-2020 ([2]). Beyond the industrial policy objective, SPIRE contributes to the Europe 2020 targets on climate change, energy sustainability and research & development ([3]).

The first SPIRE topics, proposed for 2014-15, cover R&D&I priority areas such as integrated process control, processes allowing the use of renewables as flexible feedstocks, downstream processing of mixtures, efficient solutions for energy and resource, heat recovery, solar cooling systems, industrial symbiosis, process intensification, recovery technologies, and handling of solids. The proposed Horizon 2020 funding for 2014 is EUR 116.3 million and for 2015 EUR 89 million.

In addtion to SPIRE, the Commission has launched the Sustainable Industry Low Carbon II (SILC II) initiative ([4]) with a Horizon 2020 funding for 2014 of EUR 20 million. This initiative will fund demonstration projects of low-carbon technology solutions for energy-intensive industries.

([1]) SWD (2014) 120 'Advancing Manufacturing, Advancing Europe'. For regular updates on the activities see http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/amt/index_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1261_en.htm
([3]) http://www.spire2030.eu/uploads/Modules/Publications/spire-roadmap_december_2013_pbp.pdf pp63 and sq.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/calls/h2020-silc-ii-2014.html

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003484/14
til Kommissionen
Ole Christensen (S&D) og Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(24. marts 2014)

Om: Forvaltningen af torsk i Østersøen

Forvaltningsplanen for torsk i Østersøen er, i lighed med Unionens øvrige forvaltningsplaner for fiskeri i Fællesskabets farvande, ude af trit med virkeligheden grundet den vedtagne reform af fiskeripolitikken. Dertil kommer, at der konstateres et grundlæggende behov for en ny forvaltning af torsken i Østersøen, da den eksisterende praksis er ufleksibel i forhold til den videnskabelige rådgivning og skaber dårlige rammevilkår for fiskeriet. I forbindelse hermed er et af problemerne, at torskeforvaltningsplanen ikke er integreret i en flerartsplan.

Kommissionen bedes på denne baggrund besvare følgende spørgsmål:

1. Hvor langt er Kommissionen kommet med at forberede ny lovgivning for forvaltning af fiskeriet i Østersøen, herunder torskefiskeriet, og specifikt hvorledes agter Kommissionen at sikre den reduktion af mindstestørrelsen for torsk i Østersøen fra de nuværende 38 cm til 35 cm (i begge forvaltningsområder), som både STECF og BSRAC har anbefalet?

2. Påtænker Kommissionen i tråd med sine tidligere tilkendegivelser at fremlægge en flerarts-forvaltningsplan, og i bekræftende fald hvilken rolle tiltænkes Det Regionale Rådgivende Råd for Østersøen i denne forbindelse?

3. Hvorledes vurderer Kommissionen det fremadrettede behov for et sommerstop for torskefiskeriet i Østersøen samt behovet for ikke at tillade fiskeri i »kassen« i den østlige del af Østersøen, herunder specifikt hvorvidt Kommissionen mener, at der vil være mulighed for at fjerne disse forhindringer for fiskerierhvervet?

4. Vil Kommissionen redegøre for den aktuelle situation i forhold til den institutionelle konflikt om fortolkningen af artikel 43, stk. 2 og 3, i Lissabontraktaten, der p.t. blokerer for forhandlingen af en række forvaltningsplaner, og redegøre for, hvilke tiltag der iværksættes for at løse konflikten samt fremkomme med en vurdering af, hvilket tidsperspektiv der måtte være for løsningen af denne konflikt?

Svar afgivet på Kommissionens vegne af Ms Damanaki
(22. maj 2014)

Siden vedtagelsen af Europa-Parlamentets og Rådets forordning (EU) nr. 1380/2013 af 11. december 2013 om den fælles fiskeripolitik har Kommissionen foretaget forberedende arbejde til en ny flerårig plan, som vil erstatte den nuværende forvaltningsplan for torskebestanden i Østersøen ([1]). Denne plan baseres på den bedste foreliggende videnskabelige rådgivning om arternes samspil.

I planen regner Kommissionen med en tilgang, der er i overensstemmelse med den fælles fiskeripolitik, herunder muligheden for regionalisering. Hvis alle berørte medlemsstater er enige om bevaringsforanstaltninger baseret på videnskabelig rådgivning, kan disse forelægges Kommissionen som en fælles henstilling. Medlemsstaterne kan vedtage samt fremlægge fælles henstillinger om bevaringsforanstaltninger inden for rammerne af forvaltningsplanen, og Kommissionen kan vedtage de regionale foranstaltninger gennem en delegeret retsakt. En sådan fælles henstilling kan omfatte en bevarelsesmæssig mindstereferencestørrelse eller et sommerstop for torskefiskeriet.

I forbindelse med forberedelserne til den nye langsigtede forvaltningsplan for Østersøen har Kommissionen allerede hørt og vil yderligere høre Det Regionale Rådgivende Råd for Østersøen samt det regionale forum BALTFISH.

Den interinstitutionelle taskforce, som blev nedsat med henblik på at løse problemet om fortolkningen af artikel 43, stk. 2 og 3 i traktaten om Den Europæiske Unions funktionsmåde i forbindelse med flerårige planer, har netop afsluttet sit arbejde. Kommissionen hilser taskforcens endelige rapport velkommen, da den baner vejen for at genoptage arbejdet med flerårige planer, som er et centralt element i den nye fælles fiskeripolitik.

([1]) Rådets forordning (EF) nr. 1098/2007 af 18. september 2007 om en flerårig plan for torskebestandene i Østersøen og fiskeriet, der udnytter disse bestande, om ændring af forordning (EØF) nr. 2847/93 og om ophævelse af forordning (EF) nr. 779/97.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003484/14
to the Commission
Ole Christensen (S&D) and Claus Larsen-Jensen (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Management of cod in the Baltic Sea

The management plan for cod in the Baltic Sea, like the EU's other management plans for fisheries in Union waters, is out of step with reality now that the reform of the fisheries policy has been agreed. Furthermore, there is a fundamental need for a new approach to cod management in the Baltic, since current practice is inflexible in its response to scientific advice and creates poor framework conditions for fishing. One problem here is that the cod management plan has not been integrated into a multi-species plan.

In the light of the above, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. What progress has the Commission made in preparing new legislation on the management of fisheries in the Baltic Sea, and in particular how does it propose to secure a reduction in the minimum size for cod caught in the Baltic Sea from the present 38 cm to 35 cm (in both management areas), as recommended both by the Scientific and Technical Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) and the Baltic Sea Regional Advisory Council (BSRAC)?

2. Is the Commission considering, in line with its earlier communications, the proposal of a multi-species management plan, and if so what will be the role of the BSRAC in this connection?

3. How great a need does the Commission consider there will be in future for a summer halt to cod fishing in the Baltic and for a ban on fishing in the Eastern Baltic 'box'? Specifically, to what extent does the Commission consider that it will be possible to remove these obstacles to fishing activity?

4. What is the state of play with regard to the interinstitutional dispute on the interpretation of Article 43(2) and (3) TFEU, which is currently holding up negotiations on a number of management plans? What measures are being taken to resolve the dispute? Can it estimate the timescale for the resolution of this dispute?

Answer given by Ms Damanaki on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Since the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common fisheries policy, the Commission has undertaken preparatory work for a new multiannual plan, which would replace the current Baltic cod management plan ([1]). This plan will be based on the best scientific advice available on the species' interactions.

For the plan the Commission envisages an approach in line with the new Common Fisheries Policy, including the option of regionalization. If all concerned Member States agree on conservation measures based on scientific advice, these can be submitted to the Commission as a 'joint recommendation'. Member States can agree and present 'joint recommendations' on conservation measures within the plan framework and the Commission can adopt those regional measures through a delegated act. Such an approach could include the minimum conservation reference size or the summer ban for the cod fishery.

In preparation of the future long-term management plan for the Baltic Sea, the Commission has already consulted and will further consult the Baltic Sea Advisory Council as well as the regional forum called Baltfish.

The interinstitutional Task Force created to resolve the issue of the interpretation of Article 43(2) and (3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in respect of multiannual plans has just finalised its work. The Commission welcomes the final report of the task force, which opens the way to restart work on multiannual plans, which are a core element of the new Common Fisheries Policy.

([1]) Council Regulation (EC) No 1098/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing a multiannual plan for the cod stocks in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 779/97.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003485/14
an die Kommission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(24. März 2014)

Betrifft: Nachfrage: Inhaftierung von Asylantragstellern in Ungarn

Ein Anstieg von Asylanträgen in Ungarn, eine Gesetzesänderung zur Inhaftnahme ohne Benennung individueller Rechtsansprüche, ein generalisiertes Überprüfungsverfahren und mangelnde Flüchtlingsunterkünfte — meine Bedenken, dass dadurch Menschenrechte verletzt werden und dass gegen die Europäische Menschenrechtskonvention und die Europäische Grundrechtecharta verstoßen wird, habe ich am 22. Juli 2013 in einer ersten Anfrage an die Kommission mitgeteilt (E-008939/2013). Aufgrund der sehr allgemeinen Antwort vom 31. Oktober 2013, die Kommission achte als Hüterin der Verträge sorgfältig auf die Einhaltung von EU-Recht in den Mitgliedstaaten, möchte ich nachhaken.

1. Die Kommission hat in der Zwischenzeit ein Vertragsverletzungsverfahren eingeleitet. Worauf bezieht sich das Verfahren? Wurde das Verfahren bereits abgeschlossen? Falls ja: mit welchem Ergebnis? Falls nein: Wann ist mit Ergebnissen zu rechnen?

2. Die Angaben zu konkreten, über den EFF und den Rückkehrfonds finanzierten Projekten auf der angegebenen ungarischen Website sind mir leider nicht verständlich. Deshalb eine genauere Nachfrage: Kann die Kommission ausschließen, dass Projekte über besagte Fonds finanziert wurden, die direkt oder indirekt zur Inhaftierung von Asylsuchenden geführt haben? Wenn ja: warum? Wenn nein, bitte ich um zusätzliche Details.

3. Es liegt die Information vor, dass Ungarn wiederholt und unter Verweis auf nicht vorhandene Aufnahmekapazitäten die Aufnahme von Asylsuchenden verweigert hat, die aufgrund der Dublin-Verordnung nach Ungarn hätten zurückkehren sollen. Unter anderem trifft das auf vier Familien zu, die sich in Baden-Württemberg aufhalten. Wie steht die Kommission dazu? Ist die Kommission der Meinung, dass aus dieser Lage Konsequenzen für das Dublin-System gezogen werden sollten?

Antwort von Frau Malmström im Namen der Kommission
(13. Mai 2014)

1. Die Kommission steht wegen der ungarischen Asylvorschriften und Asylpraxis seit 2012 in Kontakt mit den ungarischen Behörden. Bislang erörtert wurden das Recht auf Verbleib im Hoheitsgebiet, Zugang zu Asylverfahren und deren Qualität, Aufnahmebedingungen und die Anwendung von Haft. Ungarn änderte daraufhin 2013 seine Rechtsvorschriften und Praxis, wodurch einige Probleme, darunter die Zurückweisung von Antragstellern im Rahmen des Dublin-Verfahrens, behoben werden konnten. Die Gespräche mit den Behörden werden fortgeführt.

2. Auf der Grundlage der derzeit vorliegenden Informationen wurden aus dem EFF und RF keine Projekte finanziert, die direkt oder indirekt zur Inhaftierung von Asylsuchenden geführt haben.

3. Fehlende Unterbringungsmöglichkeiten sind kein Kriterium der Dublin-Verordnung und können einem Mitgliedstaat, der einen Transfer vornehmen will, nicht entgegengehalten werden. Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, dass Ungarn seine Verantwortung auf dieser Grundlage abgelehnt hätte. Das Dublin-System ist durch die im Juni 2013 vom Europäischen Parlament und vom Rat erlassene Verordnung Dublin III ([1]) grundlegend reformiert worden. Die Kommission hat nicht die Absicht, in nächster Zeit eine weitere Überarbeitung der Verordnung vorzuschlagen.

([1]) Verordnung (EU) Nr. 604/2013 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 26. Juni 2013 zur Festlegung der Kriterien und Verfahren zur Bestimmung des Mitgliedstaats, der für die Prüfung eines von einem Drittstaatsangehörigen oder Staatenlosen in einem Mitgliedstaat gestellten Antrags auf internationalen Schutz zuständig ist; ABl. L 180 vom 29.6.2013, S. 31-59.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003485/14
to the Commission
Barbara Lochbihler (Verts/ALE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Detention of asylum-seekers in Hungary

In my Written Question E-008939 to the Commission submitted on 22 July 2013, I referred to issues relating to asylum-seekers in Hungary such as an increase in the number of asylum applications, a new law on detention which makes no mention of individual legal rights, a generalised review procedure and a lack of accommodation for refugees. I am concerned that these constitute a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. On 31 October 2013, the Commission gave a very general answer in which it stated that, as guardian of the Treaties, it monitors Member States' compliance with EC law. In the light of this, I would like to broach the subject again.

1. The Commission has since launched infringement proceedings against Hungary. What do the proceedings concern? Have they already been closed? If so, what was the outcome? If not, what outcome is expected?

2. The projects financed by the European Refugee Fund and the European Return Fund are described on a Hungarian website, as cited in the Commission's answer. Unfortunately, I am unable to understand the details. I would therefore like to ask a more precise question. Can the Commission be sure that the above funds have not been used to finance projects which have resulted, directly or indirectly, in asylum-seekers being imprisoned? If so, how? If not, can it provide further details?

3. It appears that Hungary, citing a lack of accommodation facilities, has repeatedly refused to take in asylum-seekers who, under the Dublin Regulation, should have returned to Hungary. Among them are four families who are staying in Baden-Württemberg. What is the Commission's view on this? Does the Commission believe that the Dublin System should be changed as a result?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

1. The Commission has been in contact with the Hungarian authorities since 2012 regarding their law and practice on asylum. These contacts concerned the right to remain on the territory, access to and quality of the asylum procedure, reception conditions and the use of detention. As a result, Hungary modified its law and practice in 2013, which remedied several problems, in particular as regards applicants returned under a Dublin procedure. Discussions with the authorities are on-going.

2. Based on the information available at present, ERF and RF funds have not been used to finance projects which have resulted, directly or indirectly, in asylum-seekers being imprisoned.

3. A lack of accommodation facilities is not a criterion provided for by the Dublin Regulation, and cannot bar a sending Member State from making a transfer. The Commission has no knowledge of Hungary having refused responsibility on this basis. The Dublin system was the subject of substantial reform via the adoption of the Dublin III Regulation ([1]) in June 2013 by the European Parliament and the Council. The Commission does not plan to propose a new revision in the foreseeable future.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person; OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p. 31-59.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003486/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Υποτίμηση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου από Θεσμικά Όργανα της ΕΕ

Μετά τις ατυχείς αποφάσεις της Ευρωομάδας και της Τρόικας για την Κύπρο, τον περασμένο χρόνο, απέστειλα επιστολές προς τους Προέδρους της Ευρωομάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, με τις οποίες ζητούσα διευκρινίσεις για τις αποφάσεις που λήφθηκαν και τις συνέπειές τους. Στη συνέχεια, παρά τις υπενθυμίσεις που απέστειλα προς τους συγκεκριμένους παραλήπτες, είμαι στη δυσάρεστη θέση να αναφέρω ότι δεν υπήρξε καμιά ανταπόκριση στα ερωτήματά μου.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Βάσει των Συνθηκών, οι πιο πάνω αξιωματούχοι έχουν ή όχι υποχρέωση να ανταποκρίνονται στον κοινοβουλευτικό έλεγχο των μελών του μόνου εκλεγμένου από τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες Θεσμικού Οργάνου της ΕΕ;

2. Αν όχι, δεν νομίζει το Συμβούλιο ότι υπάρχει ένα σημαντικό δημοκρατικό κενό και έλλειψη διαφάνειας σ' αυτόν τον τομέα;

3. Δεν θα ήταν σκόπιμο να υπάρξουν οι αναγκαίες αλλαγές στις Συνθήκες, ώστε να διασφαλίζονται ο κοινοβουλευτικός έλεγχος και η λογοδοσία όλων των Θεσμικών Οργάνων και αξιωματούχων της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση
(23 Ιουνίου 2014)

Δυνάμει του Πρωτοκόλλου αριθ. 14 των Συνθηκών σχετικά με την Ευρωομάδα, οι υπουργοί των κρατών μελών με νόμισμα το ευρώ πραγματοποιούν άτυπες συναντήσεις μεταξύ τους. Σύμφωνα με τις διατάξεις της Συνθήκης, δεν προβλέπεται κανένας έλεγχος της Ευρωομάδας από το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο. Ωστόσο, αρκετές φορές, ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωομάδας εμφανίστηκε ενώπιον του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για να το ενημερώσει και να συζητήσει την κατάσταση της οικονομίας της Ευρωζώνης και συναφή ζητήματα.

Δυνάμει του άρθρου 284 παράγραφος 3 της ΣΛΕΕ, ο πρόεδρος της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας και τα άλλα μέλη της εκτελεστικής επιτροπής μπορούν, αιτήσει του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου ή με δική τους πρωτοβουλία, να εμφανίζονται ενώπιον των αρμοδίων επιτροπών του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003486/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Lack of respect for the European Parliament shown by other EU institutions

Following the unfortunate decisions by the Eurogroup and the Troika on Cyprus last year, I sent letters to the President of the Eurogroup and the European Central Bank asking for clarifications about the decisions that had been taken and their consequences. Despite the reminders I sent to specific recipients, I regret to say that there has been no response to my questions.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Under the Treaties, are the above officials required to accept parliamentary scrutiny by Members of the only European institution elected by citizens of the EU?

2. If not, does it agree that there is a significant democratic deficit and a lack of transparency in this area?

3. Would it not be appropriate to make whatever changes are necessary to the Treaties to ensure that all EU institutions and officials are subject to scrutiny by the European Parliament and are answerable to it?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

Pursuant to Protocol No 14 to the Treaties on the Euro Group, the Ministers of the Member States whose currency is the euro shall meet informally. No European Parliament scrutiny of the Euro Group is provided for under the Treaty provisions. However, on several occasions, the President of the Eurogroup has appeared in front of the European Parliament to inform it and discuss the current state of the eurozone economy and related topics.

Pursuant to Article 284(3) TFEU, the President of the European Central Bank and the other members of the Executive Board may, at the request of the European Parliament or on their own initiative, be heard by the competent committees of the European Parliament.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003487/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Υποτίμηση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου από Θεσμικά Όργανα της ΕΕ

Μετά τις ατυχείς αποφάσεις της Ευρωομάδας και της Τρόικας για την Κύπρο, τον περασμένο χρόνο, απέστειλα επιστολές προς τους Προέδρους της Ευρωομάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, με τις οποίες ζητούσα διευκρινίσεις για τις αποφάσεις που λήφθηκαν και τις συνέπειές τους. Στη συνέχεια, παρά τις υπενθυμίσεις που απέστειλα προς τους συγκεκριμένους παραλήπτες, είμαι στη δυσάρεστη θέση να αναφέρω ότι δεν υπήρξε καμιά ανταπόκριση στα ερωτήματά μου.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Βάσει των Συνθηκών, οι πιο πάνω αξιωματούχοι έχουν ή όχι υποχρέωση να ανταποκρίνονται στον κοινοβουλευτικό έλεγχο των μελών του μόνου εκλεγμένου από τους ευρωπαίους πολίτες Θεσμικού Οργάνου της ΕΕ;

2. Αν όχι, δεν νομίζει η Επιτροπή ότι υπάρχει ένα σημαντικό δημοκρατικό κενό και έλλειψη διαφάνειας σ' αυτόν τον τομέα;

3. Δεν θα ήταν σκόπιμο να υπάρξουν οι αναγκαίες αλλαγές στις Συνθήκες, ώστε να διασφαλίζονται ο κοινοβουλευτικός έλεγχος και η λογοδοσία όλων των Θεσμικών Οργάνων και αξιωματούχων της ΕΕ;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή δεν σχολιάζει τις ενέργειες και/ή τη στάση της ΕΚΤ ούτε του προέδρου της Ευρωομάδας. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, το οποίο παρέχει την ευκαιρία για συζήτηση, διεξάγει τακτικό διάλογο με την ΕΚΤ και την Ευρωομάδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003487/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Lack of respect for the European Parliament shown by the other EU institutions

Following the unfortunate decisions by the Eurogroup and the Troika on Cyprus last year, I sent letters to the President of the Eurogroup and the European Central Bank asking for clarifications about the decisions that had been taken and their consequences. Despite the reminders I sent to specific recipients, I regret to say that there has been no response to my questions.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Under the Treaties, are the above officials required to accept parliamentary scrutiny by Members of the only European institution elected by citizens of the EU?

2. If not, does it agree that there is a significant democratic deficit and a lack of transparency in this area?

3. Would it not be appropriate to make whatever changes are necessary to the Treaties to ensure that all EU institutions and officials are subject to scrutiny by the European Parliament and are answerable to it?

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

The European Commission does not comment on the actions and/or stance of the ECB nor of the Eurogroup President. The European Parliament holds regular dialogues with the ECB and the Eurogroup, which provides the opportunity for discussion.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003488/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Παραβίαση των Συνθηκών από Ευρωομάδα και Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «επισημαίνει την ευθύνη της Ευρωομάδας που επέτρεψε στην ΕΚΤ να ενεργεί στο πλαίσιο της Τρόικας, ενώ υπενθυμίζει ότι η αποστολή της ΕΚΤ οριοθετείται από τη ΣΛΕΕ στους τομείς της νομισματικής πολιτικής και της χρηματοπιστωτικής σταθερότητας και ότι η συμμετοχή της ΕΚΤ στη διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων σχετικά με τη δημοσιονομική, φορολογική και διαρθρωτική πολιτική δεν προβλέπεται στις Συνθήκες.»

Ερωτάται σχετικά το Συμβούλιο:

1. Θεωρεί ότι υπάρχει όντως ευθύνη της Ευρωομάδας για τις αποφάσεις που λήφθηκαν για στήριξη των χωρών του Μνημονίου, καθώς και παραβίαση των Συνθηκών της ΕΕ, όπως υπονοεί το Κοινοβούλιο;

2. Συμφωνεί ότι η συμμετοχή της ΕΚΤ στη διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων σχετικά με θέματα δημοσιονομικής, φορολογικής και διαρθρωτικής πολιτικής των κρατών μελών δεν προβλέπεται στις Συνθήκες;

3. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει ώστε να διορθωθεί η κατάσταση και να υπάρχει μελλοντικά πλήρης συμμόρφωση όλων των Θεσμικών Οργάνων της ΕΕ με τις πρόνοιες των Συνθηκών;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003488/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Violation of the Treaties by the Eurogroup and the European Central Bank

In the European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) , Parliament 'points to the responsibility of the Eurogroup in allowing the ECB to act within the Troika, but recalls that the ECB's mandate is circumscribed by the TFEU to the areas of monetary policy and financial stability and that involvement of the ECB in the decision-making process related to budgetary, fiscal and structural policies is not foreseen by the Treaties'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it consider that the Eurogroup really bears responsibility for the decisions taken to support the Memorandum countries and the violation of the EU Treaties, as Parliament has implied?

2. Does it agree that the ECB's involvement in decision-making on matters relating to the budgetary, fiscal and structural policies of Member States is not foreseen by the Treaties?

3. What will it do to remedy the situation and ensure that in future all EU institutions fully comply with the provisions of the Treaties?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

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

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003490/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανεπίτρεπτη συμπεριφορά της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας στη διαμόρφωση των προγραμμάτων προσαρμογής κρατών μελών

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)) προσάπτονται έμμεσες πλην σαφείς κατηγορίες κατά της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας, ότι άσκησε ανεπίτρεπτη επιρροή «σε φορείς λήψης αποφάσεων, τουλάχιστον όσον αφορά την αναδιάρθρωση του ελληνικού χρέους, όταν η ΕΚΤ επέμενε να αποσυρθούν οι ρήτρες συλλογικής δράσης (CAC) από τα κρατικά ομόλογα που είχε στην κατοχή της, τις ενέργειες επείγουσας ενίσχυσης της Κύπρου υπό μορφή ρευστότητας, καθώς και, στην περίπτωση της Ιρλανδίας, τη μη συμμετοχή των ομολογιούχων αυξημένης εξοφλητικής προτεραιότητας στην εσωτερική διάσωση».

Στην περίπτωση της Κύπρου αυτό ισοδυναμούσε με αδικαιολόγητη φόρτωση χρέους ύψους 9,5 δισ. ευρώ στη μεγαλύτερη τράπεζα της Κύπρου, ένα ποσό που υπερβαίνει το 50% του ΑΕΠ της χώρας.

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί τις επισημάνσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τις ενέργειες της ΕΚΤ;

2. Θεωρεί ότι η συμπεριφορά της ΕΚΤ ήταν ορθολογιστική και συμβατή με το πραγματικό συμφέρον της ευρωπαϊκής οικονομίας, καθώς και με τα συμφέροντα των κρατών μελών που βρίσκονται σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής;

3. Πώς μπορούν να αποκατασταθούν οι ζημιές που υπέστησαν οι τρεις προαναφερόμενες χώρες, λόγω της εκβιαστικής και συμφεροντολογικής συμπεριφοράς της ΕΚΤ;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει συζητήσει την έκθεση που συνέταξε το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο εξ ιδίας πρωτοβουλίας για τον ρόλο και τις ενέργειες της Επιτροπής, της Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας (ΕΚΤ) και του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου στις χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα.

Στη δήλωσή της στις 25 Μαρτίου 2013, η Ευρωομάδα χαιρέτησε τα σχέδια των κυπριακών αρχών για αναδιάρθρωση του χρηματοπιστωτικού τομέα, όπως περιγράφονται στο παράρτημα της δήλωσης ([1]).

Στη δήλωσή της στις 21 Φεβρουαρίου 2012, η Ευρωομάδα αναγνώρισε την κοινή αντίληψη στην οποία κατέληξαν οι ελληνικές αρχές και ο ιδιωτικός τομέας σχετικά με τους γενικούς όρους της προσφοράς ανταλλαγής για τη συμμετοχή του ιδιωτικού τομέα, η οποία καλύπτει όλους τους ομολογιούχους του ιδιωτικού τομέα και αναμένεται να συμβάλει σημαντικά στη βιωσιμότητα του χρέους της Ελλάδας.

Στις 12 Απριλίου 2013, τα κράτη μέλη συμφώνησαν, κατ' αρχήν και με την επιφύλαξη των εθνικών διαδικασιών, να επιμηκύνουν τη διάρκεια του Ευρωπαϊκού Μηχανισμού Χρηματοοικονομικής Σταθεροποίησης και των δανείων του Ευρωπαϊκού Ταμείου Χρηματοπιστωτικής Σταθερότητας προκειμένου να στηρίξουν τις προσπάθειες της Ιρλανδίας για πλήρη επιστροφή της στις αγορές και επιτυχή έξοδο από τα προγράμματα σταθεροποίησης ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20 CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136772.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003490/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Unacceptable behaviour by the European Central Bank in shaping Member States' adjustment programmes

The European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) accuses the European Central Bank indirectly but clearly of exerting unacceptable influence 'on decision-makers, at least in the cases of the Greek debt restructuring, where the ECB insisted that CACs were to be removed from government bonds it held, the Cypriot ELA operations, and the Irish non-inclusion of senior-bondholders in the bail-in.'

In the case of Cyprus, this meant unjustifiably encumbering the largest bank in Cyprus with a debt of EUR 9.5 billion, which amounted to more than 50% of the country's GDP.

Will the Council say:

1. How does it assess the points made by the European Parliament about the actions of the ECB?

2. Does it consider that the conduct of the ECB was rational and compatible with the real interests of the European economy and the interests of the adjustment programme Member States?

3. What can be done to repair the damage suffered by the three abovementioned countries due to the blackmail and self-serving conduct of the ECB?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

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

In its statement of 25 March 2013 the Eurogroup welcomed the Cyprus authorities' plans for restructuring the financial sector, as specified in the annex to the statement ([1]).

In its statement of 21 February 2012 the Eurogroup acknowledged the common understanding that had been reached between the Greek authorities and the private sector on the general terms of the private sector involvement exchange offer, covering all private sector bondholders, which should deliver a significant positive contribution to Greece's debt sustainability.

On 12 April 2013, Member States agreed in principle, subject to national procedures, to lengthen the maturities of the European Financial Stabilisation Mechanism and the European Financial Stabilisation Facility loans to support Ireland's efforts to regain full market access and successfully exit its programmes ([2]).

([1]) http://www.eurozone.europa.eu/media/404933/EG%20EG%20Statement%20on%20 CY%2025%2003%202013.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ecofin/136772.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003492/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Σύγκρουση συμφερόντων Ευρωπαϊκής Κεντρικής Τράπεζας(ΕΚΤ)

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)) επισημαίνεται ότι υπήρξε «πιθανή σύγκρουση συμφερόντων μεταξύ του τρέχοντος ρόλου της ΕΚΤ στην Τρόικα ως "τεχνικού συμβούλου" και της θέσης της ως πιστωτή των τεσσάρων κρατών μελών, καθώς και της εντολής της βάσει της Συνθήκης, επειδή έχει συναρτήσει τις δράσεις της με αποφάσεις στις οποίες συμμετέχει και η ίδια».

Το Συμβούλιο καλείται να απαντήσει τα εξής ερωτήματα:

1. Θεωρεί ότι υπήρξε όντως σύγκρουση συμφερόντων αναφορικά με την ΕΚΤ και τη δράση της στα προγράμματα προσαρμογής των χωρών που έχουν υπαχθεί σε Μνημόνιο;

2. Γεννάται θέμα δεοντολογίας για την ΕΚΤ, από τις πιο πάνω επισημάνσεις;

3. Υπάρχει, κατά την άποψη του Συμβουλίου, θέμα παραβίασης των Συνθηκών και του ευρωπαϊκού κεκτημένου, λόγω της δραστηριότητας της ΕΚΤ στα πλαίσια της Τρόικας;

4. Προτίθεται το Συμβούλιο να αναλάβει οποιαδήποτε πρωτοβουλία για το θέμα;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003660/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη διαφανούς και δεσμευτικού εσωτερικού κανονισμού για τη συνεργασία μεταξύ των θεσμικών οργάνων εντός της Τρόικας

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «ζητεί, σαν πρώτο βήμα, τη θέσπιση σαφούς, διαφανούς και δεσμευτικού εσωτερικού κανονισμού για τη συνεργασία μεταξύ των θεσμικών οργάνων εντός της Τρόικας και τον καταμερισμό καθηκόντων και ευθυνών στο πλαίσιο αυτό».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Συμφωνεί ότι όντως υπάρχει θέμα ανεπαρκούς συνεργασίας μεταξύ των θεσμικών οργάνων της ΕΕ που μετέχουν στην Τρόικα;

2. Τι προτίθεται να πράξει για βελτίωση της συνεργασίας και τον καλύτερο καταμερισμό καθηκόντων και ευθυνών, όπως εισηγείται το Κοινοβούλιο;

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003664/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανάληψη ευθύνης για τις δραστηριότητες της Τρόικας

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο «καλεί την Ευρωομάδα, το Συμβούλιο και το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο να αναλάβουν πλήρη ευθύνη για τις δραστηριότητες της Τρόικας».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Πώς αξιολογεί την πιο πάνω εισήγηση του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Ποιες επιπτώσεις μπορεί να έχει, για την Ένωση και τα κράτη μέλη που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής, τυχόν υλοποίηση της πιο πάνω πρότασης του Κοινοβουλίου;

3. Προτίθεται να αναλάβει οποιαδήποτε πρωτοβουλία για υλοποίηση της πρότασης του Κοινοβουλίου;

Κοινή απάντηση
(23 Ιουνίου 2014)

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

Ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωομάδας απάντησε τον Ιανουάριο του 2014 στο αίτημα που απηύθυνε στις 21 Νοεμβρίου 2013 ο Πρόεδρος της Επιτροπής Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής (ECON) προς την Επιτροπή, την Ευρωπαϊκή Κεντρική Τράπεζα, το Διεθνές Νομισματικό Ταμείο, την Ευρωομάδα και το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο, για την υποβολή προτάσεων προς στήριξη της έκθεσης πρωτοβουλίας σχετικά με την αξιολόγηση της δομής, του ρόλου και των εργασιών της Τρόικας στις χώρες της ζώνης του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής. Η εν λόγω απάντηση δημοσιεύτηκε από το ΕΚ στον ιστότοπο της Επιτροπής ECON ([1]).

Σχετικά με τη νομιμότητα των ενεργειών της ΕΚΤ στο πλαίσιο της Τρόικας, δεν είναι αρμοδιότητα του Συμβουλίου να αξιολογεί κατά πόσον οι ενέργειες ή οι πράξεις άλλων θεσμικών οργάνων συνάδουν με τις Συνθήκες.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201401/20140114ATT77339/20140114ATT77339EN.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003492/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Conflict of interest the European Central Bank (ECB)

The European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)) points out that there was a 'potential conflict of interest between the current role of the ECB in the Troika as technical advisor and its position as creditor of the four Member States, as well as its mandate under the Treaty as it has made its own actions conditional on decisions it is itself part of'.

In view of the above, will the Council answer the following questions:

1. Does it consider that there was in fact a conflict of interest with respect to the ECB and its action in the adjustment programmes of Memorandum countries?

2. Do the above points create an ethical issue for the ECB?

3. Do the activities of the ECB as part of the Troika, in the Council's opinion, constitute a possible violation of the Treaties and the *acquis communautaire*?

4. Will it take an initiative on this issue?

Question for written answer E-003660/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Need for transparent and binding rules of procedure for the interaction between the institutions within the Troika

In the European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika (ECB, Commission and IMF) with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)), Parliament: 'Calls, as a first step, for the establishment of clear, transparent and binding rules of procedure for the interaction between the institutions within the Troika and the allocation of tasks and responsibility therein'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it agree that insufficient interaction between the EU institutions within the Troika is indeed a problem?

2. What will it do to improve this interaction and achieve a better allocation of tasks and responsibilities, as recommended by Parliament?

Question for written answer E-003664/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Assuming responsibility for the operations of the Troika

In the European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)), Parliament: 'Calls on the Eurogroup, the Council and the European Council to assume full responsibility for the operations of the Troika'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. How does it view the above recommendation by Parliament?

2. What impact could the implementation of the above proposal by Parliament have on the Union and those of its Member States under adjustment programmes?

3. Does it intend to take any initiative to implement Parliament's proposal?

Joint reply
(23 June 2014)

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

The Eurogroup President did respond in January 2014 to the request by the Chair of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) on 21 November 2013 to the Commission, European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund, Eurogroup and European Council for input to support the own-initiative report evaluating the structure, role and operations of the Troika actions in euro area programme countries. The response was published by the EP on the ECON website ([1]).

Concerning the legality of actions of the ECB as part of the 'Troika', it is not for the Council to assess whether actions or acts of other institutions comply with the Treaties.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201401/20140114ATT77339/20140114ATT77339EN.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003495/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Δικαίωμα στην Υγεία

Το άρθρο 12 του Διεθνούς Συμφώνου για τα οικονομικά, κοινωνικά και πολιτιστικά δικαιώματα (ICESCR) προβλέπει ότι «κάθε άνθρωπος έχει δικαίωμα στο υψηλότερο δυνατό επίπεδο σωματικής και διανοητικής υγείας». Σημειώνουμε ότι και οι τέσσερις χώρες που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής (Ελλάδα, Ιρλανδία, Κύπρος, Πορτογαλία) έχουν υπογράψει το Σύμφωνο και, επομένως, έχουν αναγνωρίσει το δικαίωμα στην υγεία για όλους.

Με τις αυστηρές πολιτικές λιτότητας χωρίς ανάπτυξη και επενδύσεις, πώς μπορούν, κατά τη γνώμη της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, να ξεπεραστούν τα προβλήματα και οι χώρες μέλη να ανταποκριθούν στις δεσμεύσεις τους;

Ερωτάται συγκεκριμένα η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχουν πρόσθετοι χρηματοδοτικοί πόροι διαθέσιμοι για τις χώρες των μνημονίων;

2. Πώς μπορεί η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή να βοηθήσει έμπρακτα, ειδικά την Κύπρο, στον νευραλγικό τομέα της υγείας και στην εφαρμογή ενός Γενικού Σχεδίου Υγείας που σήμερα δεν έχει;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

1. Τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά και επενδυτικά ταμεία μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν για την βελτίωση των υποδομών υγειονομικής περίθαλψης καθώς και για πολιτικές συνοχής, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της υγείας. Επιπλέον, το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο και το Συμβούλιο έχουν θεσπίσει το τρίτο Πρόγραμμα για τη δράση της Ένωσης στον τομέα της υγείας ([1]) που παρέχει χρηματοδότηση για τη συμπλήρωση, στήριξη και προσθήκη αξίας στις πολιτικές των κρατών μελών. Επίσης, στο πολυετές δημοσιονομικό πλαίσιο προβλέπονται άλλα προγράμματα, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των στόχων στον τομέα της υγείας. Για την Κύπρο, το ποσοστό συγχρηματοδότησης (κοινοτική συνεισφορά) από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία και το Ταμείο Συνοχής αυξήθηκε από το 2013 από 50% σε 95%. Σχετικά με την υγειονομική περίθαλψη, θα μπορούσαν να προβλεφθούν κονδύλια για το πρόγραμμα πληροφορικής του εθνικού συστήματος υγείας (ΕΣΥ) καθώς και για τον τομέα της «κοινωνικής ένταξης και καταπολέμησης της φτώχειας».

2. Με βάση το μνημόνιο συνεννόησης του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, η Κύπρος έχει δεσμευθεί να θεσπίσει εθνικό σύστημα υγείας (ΕΣΥ). Σε τεχνικό επίπεδο, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει την υλοποίηση του ΕΣΥ, παρέχοντας τεχνική βοήθεια, η οποία, μεταξύ άλλων, επιταχύνει την πρόοδο όσον αφορά την εγκατάσταση του αναγκαίου συστήματος πληροφορικής για το ΕΣΥ και την αναδιοργάνωση των δημόσιων νοσοκομείων. Επίσης, η Επιτροπή χρηματοδοτεί μόνιμο εμπειρογνώμονα σε θέματα υγείας, που θα στηρίξει τις κυπριακές αρχές στον σχεδιασμό και την εφαρμογή του συστήματος ([2]).

([1]) ΚΑΝΟΝΙΣΜΟΣ (ΕΕ) αριθ. 282/2014 ΤΟΥ ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟΥ, της 11 Μαρτίου 2014, που θεσπίζει το τρίτο Πρόγραμμα για τη δράση της Ένωσης στον τομέα της υγείας (2014-2020):
http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_el.htm 446 εκατ. ευρώ θα διατεθούν για την επίτευξη των στόχων του προγράμματος.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/documents/2014-04-02_sgcy_first_activity_report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003495/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Right to health

Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) recognises 'the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health'. The four countries in the economic adjustment programme (Greece, Ireland, Cyprus and Portugal) are signatories to the Covenant and accordingly recognise the right to health for all.

How does the Commission consider it possible for Member States to overcome their problems and meet their commitments while being forced to comply with austerity policies and in the absence of growth and investment?

More specifically:

1. Is additional funding available for the Memorandum countries?

2. What practical assistance can the Commission provide, particularly in Cyprus, for the development of the key health sector and the implementation of an, as yet, inexistent general health programme?

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

1. European structural and investment funds (ESIF) can be used to improve healthcare infrastructure as well as cohesion policies, including health. In addition, the European Parliament and the Council have established the third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health ([1]) that provides financing to complement, support and add value to the Member States' policies. Also, the Multiannual Financial Framework envisages other programmes including health objectives. For Cyprus, the co-financing rate (community contribution) of the structural and cohesion funds increased since 2013 from 50% to 95%. On healthcare, funds for the IT project of the National Health System (NHS) and for the area 'social inclusion and combating poverty' could be envisaged.

2. Based on the memorandum of understanding of the economic adjustment programme, Cyprus is committed to put in place a NHS. On the technical level, the European Commission is supporting the implementation of the NHS by providing technical assistance, which shall, *inter alia*, speed up progress on implementing the necessary IT-system for NHS and restructure public hospitals. Also, the Commission is financing a resident health expert, who will support the Cypriot authorities with the design and implementation of the system ([2]).

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11.3.2014 established the third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020): http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm EUR 446 million will be allocated to the objectives of the programme

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/documents/2014-04-02_sgcy_first_activity_report_en.pdf

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003496/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ριζικές μεταρρυθμίσεις του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος

Κατά την αξιολόγηση από την Επιτροπή Εμπειρογνωμόνων της ΔΟΕ της εφαρμογής της σύμβασης αριθ. 102 στην περίπτωση των μεταρρυθμίσεων στην Ελλάδα, η ΔΟΕ άσκησε έντονη κριτική στις ριζικές μεταρρυθμίσεις του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος. Η ίδια επικριτική παρατήρηση συμπεριελήφθη στην 29η ετήσια έκθεσή της το 2011.

Η ΔΟΕ υπενθυμίζει ότι η σύμβαση αριθ. 102 ισχύει εν γένει και για τις τέσσερις χώρες των μνημονίων (Ελλάδα, Ιρλανδία, Κύπρος, Ισπανία) και θα έπρεπε να έχει ληφθεί υπόψη.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Τι έκανε η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ως θεματοφύλακας των Συνθηκών και των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων για να διασφαλίσει ότι η συμβολή αυτή έπρεπε να ληφθεί υπόψη;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(17 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το ελληνικό συνταξιοδοτικό σύστημα ήταν σαφώς μη βιώσιμο και η μεταρρύθμιση του 2010 ήταν αναγκαία για τη διασφάλιση της βιωσιμότητάς του. Η μεταρρύθμιση του συνταξιοδοτικού συστήματος στην Ελλάδα είχε διάφορους στόχους: εξασφάλιση της δημοσιονομικής βιωσιμότητας του συστήματος· απλοποίηση του ιδιαίτερα κατακερματισμένου συστήματος· βελτίωση της διαφάνειας και αύξηση της δικαιοσύνης, αφενός, με την ενίσχυση της σχέσης μεταξύ των καταβληθεισών συνεισφορών και των παροχών που λαμβάνουν οι συνταξιούχοι και, αφετέρου, με την καθιέρωση ελάχιστης βασικής σύνταξης. Οι μεταρρυθμίσεις ήταν απαραίτητες για τη χορήγηση επαρκών και ασφαλών συντάξεων βραχυπρόθεσμα, μεσοπρόθεσμα και μακροπρόθεσμα. Για τον σκοπό αυτό, ελήφθησαν μέτρα για τον περιορισμό του βάρους της προσαρμογής σε όσους παίρνουν χαμηλές συντάξεις, ενώ θεσπίστηκε βασική σύνταξη, η οποία αντιμετωπίζει αποτελεσματικά περιπτώσεις συνταξιούχων έσχατης ένδειας.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003496/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Radical pension reforms

Regarding the reforms being carried out in Greece, the ILO Committee of Experts on the application of Convention 102 reiterated in its 29th annual report for 2011 its strongly-worded criticisms of the new and radically different pension arrangements.

The ILO is at pains to stress that account should have been taken of Convention 102, which applies also to the four memorandum countries (Greece, Ireland, Cyprus and Spain).

In view of this:

Can the Commission say what it has done as guardian of the Treaties and of fundamental rights to ensure compliance with Convention 102?

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

The Greek pension system was clearly unsustainable and its reform since 2010 was essential in order to guarantee its viability. The Greek pension reform had several objectives: ensure the fiscal sustainability of the system; simplify the highly fragmented system; enhance transparency and increase fairness by strengthening the link between contributions paid and pension benefits received and introducing a minimum pension. Reforms were needed to provide adequate and safe pensions over the short, medium and long run. To this end, measures were taken to contain the burden of the adjustment on the less well-off segment of pensioners and a basic pension was introduced which effectively combats the most extreme poverty amongst pensioners.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003498/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Μέτρα αποκατάστασης των αδικιών ενάντια στην Ελληνική Μειονότητα της Τουρκίας

Η απέλαση των Ελλήνων υπηκόων της Κωνσταντινούπολης, από την οποία συμπληρώθηκαν 50 χρόνια στις 16 Μαρτίου, υπήρξε το ισχυρότερο πλήγμα που δέχθηκε ο ελληνισμός της Κων/πολης. Στις 16 Μαρτίου 1964 η τότε Κυβέρνηση της Τουρκίας, έχοντας υπογράψει μόλις μερικούς μήνες πριν (1963) την πρώτη Συμφωνία Σύνδεσης με την Ευρωπαϊκή Κοινότητα ([1]) και κατά παραβίαση της Συνθήκης της Λωζάννης, προέβη στην απέλαση των Ελλήνων υπηκόων μόνιμων κατοίκων της Κωνσταντινούπολης με μεθόδους μαζικής καταπάτησης των δικαιωμάτων του ανθρώπου, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της βίαιης απέλασής τους και της δέσμευσης όλων των περιουσιακών τους στοιχείων. Με αυτά τα σκληρά διωκτικά μέτρα, η Ελληνορθόδοξη Κοινότητα της Κωνσταντινούπολης, της Ίμβρου και Τενέδου, με 100 000 μέλη το 1960, μειώθηκε το 1966 σε 30 000 μέλη. Σήμερα η Κοινότητα αυτή δεν υπερβαίνει τα 3 000 μέλη.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή ερωτάται:

1. Σε ποιο βαθμό η Τουρκία έχει προβεί σε μέτρα αποκατάστασης και θεραπείας των αδικιών που έχει υποστεί η Ελληνική Μειονότητα της Τουρκίας; Για τα θέματα αυτά έχουν επανειλημμένως ενημερωθεί το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή και η τουρκική κυβέρνηση και έχουν λάβει προτάσεις από ομάδες πληγέντων.

2. Πώς εντάσσεται η παραπάνω κατάσταση στις ενταξιακές διαπραγματεύσεις της Τουρκίας στην ΕΕ; Εντάσσεται η ανάγκη αποκατάστασης των αδικιών και βιαιοτήτων εις βάρος των ελληνικών κοινοτήτων στην Τουρκία στις απαιτήσεις της ΕΕ για τον σεβασμό του κοινοτικού κεκτημένου ως προς τα δικαιώματα των μειονοτήτων και του διεθνούς δικαίου;

Απάντηση του κ. Füle εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(14 Μαΐου 2014)

Στο πλαίσιο των διαπραγματεύσεων για την προσχώρηση της Τουρκίας στην ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή παρακολουθεί εκ του σύνεγγυς όλες τις εξελίξεις που αφορούν τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των δικαιωμάτων των ατόμων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες, και παρέχει λεπτομερή στοιχεία για την κατάσταση στη χώρα, στο πλαίσιο της ετήσιας έκθεσης προόδου ([2]), την οποία η κ. βουλευτής καλείται να συμβουλευτεί.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή εστιάζεται κυρίως στα δικαιώματα και τις ελευθερίες των Τούρκων πολιτών, συμπεριλαμβανομένων εκείνων που ανήκουν σε μειονότητες. Ενθαρρύνει επίσης την Τουρκία να εφαρμόσει, ως μέρος των διεθνών της υποχρεώσεων, όλες τις αποφάσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Δικαστηρίου Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/el/dossier/dossier_07.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003498/14
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Measures to put right the injustices suffered by the Greek minority in Turkey

The expulsion of Greek nationals from Istanbul, which took place exactly 50 years ago on 16 March, was the harshest measure to which they had been subjected. On 16 March 1964, the Government of Turkey, having only a few months previously (in 1963) signed the first Association Agreement with the European Community ([1]), proceeded to expel Greek nationals from their homes in Istanbul in violation of the Treaty of Lausanne, using methods amounting to human rights infringements on a massive scale, including forcible expulsion and confiscation of all their property, with the result that, from 100 000 in 1960, the Greek community in Istanbul, Imbros and Tenedos had fallen to only 30 000 by 1966, while today it numbers no more than 3 000.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say to what extent Turkey has taken measures to compensate for and put right the injustices suffered by the Greek minority in Turkey, in line with those repeatedly requested by their representatives in response to the European Parliament, the Commission and the Turkish Government?

2. How is this situation being dealt with in the context of EU accession talks with Turkey? Is the need for reparations for the injustices and acts of violence suffered by Greek minorities in Turkey among the requirements regarding compliance with basic EU tenets and the provisions of international law regarding the rights of minorities?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

In the context of Turkey's EU accession negotiations, the Commission follows closely all developments related to fundamental rights, including those of persons belonging to minorities, and provides a detailed account of the situation in the country in its yearly Progress Report ([2]), which the Honourable Member is encouraged to consult.

In this context, the Commission focuses primarily on the rights and freedoms of Turkish citizens including those belonging to minorities. It also encourages Turkey to implement, as part of its international obligations, all judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/el/dossier/dossier_07.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/strategy-and-progress-report/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003499/14
à la Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Traité transatlantique et protection de l'acquis de l'Union

La Commission européenne négocie en ce moment les modalités du futur accord transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement.

Des inquiétudes demeurent quant aux risques posés par le mécanisme de règlement des différends proposé dans le cadre de cet accord.

1. La Commission veille-t-elle à ce que le mécanisme de règlement des différends qui sera utilisé dans cet accord n'entraîne pas la primauté du droit privé sur le droit national? L'entreprise Schuepbach avait poursuivi la France parce qu'elle lui avait retiré ses permis de forer du gaz de schiste, mais la plainte a ensuite été déboutée par le Conseil constitutionnel. Étant donné qu'un tribunal de règlement des différends est prévu à Washington, ce sera lui qui s'occupera des arbitrages de ce genre à l'avenir. Il serait très inquiétant qu'un conseil constitutionnel et un tribunal national ne soient plus en mesure d'utiliser ce genre de prérogatives.

2. Dans le cadre de la protection des investissements, la Commission prévoit-elle des mesures qui certifieront que l'acquis de l'Union ne sera pas remis en cause, afin d'assurer le plus haut degré de protection sanitaire et environnementale aux Européens? De telles dispositions empêcheraient que des entreprises américaines poursuivent des États européens souhaitant mener des politiques en faveur de la santé ou de l'environnement et qui diminueront de fait la rentabilité des investissements.

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(3 juin 2014)

Le système de règlement des différends entre investisseurs et États est un moyen de faire appliquer les engagements en matière de protection des investissements dans les accords de commerce et d'investissement internationaux. L'Union européenne (UE) et les États-Unis ont décidé de ne pas donner un effet direct aux accords de libre-échange et ce sera également le cas du partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement. Cela signifie que les juridictions nationales des États-Unis et de l'Union ne seront pas compétentes pour faire appliquer les engagements pris dans le cadre de ce partenariat. Toutefois, aucune disposition des accords de commerce et d'investissement internationaux ne prive les tribunaux nationaux de leurs compétences pour statuer sur des questions de droit national. En principe, l'UE préconise que les différends relatifs à l'application de la législation nationale soient soumis à des juridictions nationales. Elle cherche à inciter les investisseurs à porter plainte auprès des juridictions nationales ou à rechercher des solutions à l'amiable au moyen, par exemple, d'une médiation. En vertu de l'approche adoptée par l'UE, l'investisseur a l'interdiction de former en même temps des recours sur la même question devant un tribunal arbitral et devant des juridictions nationales.

Dans les accords commerciaux et d'investissement de l'UE, y compris le partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement, la Commission veille à ce que les mesures réglementaires adoptées dans l'intérêt général par l'UE ou ses États membres, pour autant qu'elles s'appliquent de manière non discriminatoire et n'aillent pas à l'encontre des règles d'un procès équitable, ne puissent être contestées. Dès lors, le fait qu'une mesure réglementaire ait une incidence, par exemple, sur la valeur économique de l'investissement, ne donnerait pas lieu, en soi, à une indemnisation. En outre, l'abandon des normes de l'Union européenne, telles qu'elles sont inscrites dans la législation existante, ne sera pas négocié.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003499/14
to the Commission
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Transatlantic agreement and protecting the EU *acquis*

The Commission is currently in negotiations over the details of the future Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

The dispute settlement mechanism proposed under the agreement has given rise to concerns.

1. Is the Commission working to ensure that the dispute settlement mechanism that will be employed under the agreement does not lead to private law taking precedence over national law? Schuepbach Energy took legal action against the French Government following the revocation of the company's shale gas exploration licenses, but the complaint was thrown out by the French Constitutional Court. Plans to create a dispute settlement court in Washington suggest that this new institution is set to assume responsibility for resolving such disagreements in future. It would be very worrying if a constitutional court and a national court no longer had these powers.

2. In the interest of protecting investments, is the Commission planning to introduce measures to safeguard the EU *acquis* in order to ensure that the public continues to receive the highest levels of health and environmental protection? Such provisions would prevent American companies from taking legal action against EU Member States wishing to implement health and environment policies which would make investments less profitable.

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

The Investor-to-State dispute settlement system (ISDS) is a means to enforce commitments on investment protection in international trade and investment agreements. The Investor-to-State dispute settlement system (ISDS) is a means to enforce commitments on investment protection in international trade and investment agreements. The EU and the US have chosen not to give direct effect to FTAs and this will also be the case with TTIP. This means that domestic tribunals in the US and the EU are not competent to enforce commitments taken under TTIP. However, nothing in these agreements deprives domestic courts of their powers to rule on issues of domestic law. As a matter of principle, the EU favours use of domestic courts to resolve disputes arising from application of domestic legislation. The EU aims to provide incentives for investors to pursue claims in domestic courts or to seek amicable solutions such as mediation. Under the EU's approach, the investor is prohibited from bringing claims on the same matter at the same time in front of an arbitration tribunal and domestic courts.

In EU trade and investment agreements, including the TTIP, the Commission aims at ensuring that genuine regulatory action passed in the public interest by the EU or its Member States, as long as it is applied in a manner which is non-discriminatory and does not contravene the rules of due process, cannot be successfully challenged. Therefore, the fact that a regulatory measure has an impact e.g. on the economic value of the investment, would not on its own give rise to compensation. In addition, EU standards, as enshrined in the existing legislation will not be negotiated away.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003500/14
upućeno Komisiji
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Borba protiv raka dojke

Rak dojke najčešća je zloćudna bolest u žena i čini više od jedne četvrtine svih malignih bolesti te će prema procjenama liječnika od ove bolesti tijekom života oboljeti čak jedna od osam žena. Prema podacima Svjetske zdravstvene organizacije 2012. godine u svijetu je od ove bolesti oboljelo 1,67 milijuna žena. U Europskoj uniji čak 367 000 žena oboljelo je od ove bolesti od čega je čak 91 000 žena umrla.

Nažalost, ni u Hrvatskoj situacija nije bolja pa u Hrvatskoj od te zloćudne bolesti oboli preko 2 000 žena od čega 2012. godine čak 1 033 nisu uspjele pobijediti ovu opasnu bolest, što je zabrinjavajući porast smrtnosti od 15 %.

Najčešće se rak dojke javlja nakon 50. godine života iako su mlađe dobne skupine sve češće pogođene ovom bolešću nego ranije. Dobna granica žena oboljelih od raka dojke spušta se sve niže, a uzroci tomu mogu se detektirati u nizu faktora poput stresa, zagađenja i nezdrave prehrane.

Zadnje, četvrto izdanje smjernica Europske komisije za borbu protiv ove opake bolesti izdano je prije 8 godina, 2006. godine. Od tada je i Europski parlament u svojoj rezoluciji iz 2008. godine upozorio na nedopustive razlike među državama članicama u načinima liječenja raka dojke. U studenom prošle godine Europska komisija najavila je objavljivanje novog, petog izdanja smjernica u suradnji sa Zajedničkim istraživačkim centrom Europske unije.

Uzimajući u obzir znatne razlike u načinima liječenja raka dojke kao i zabrinjavajuće podatke o broju oboljelih žena, kada Komisija planira izdati peto izdanje smjernica za osiguranje kvalitete u dijagnosticiranju raka dojke kako bismo se na europskoj razini što učinkovitije borili protiv te opake bolesti?

Odgovor g. Borga u ime Komisije
(26. svibnja 2014.)

Europska komisija je 2006. poduprla izradu četvrtog izdanja europskih smjernica za osiguravanje kvalitete ranog otkrivanja i dijagnosticiranja raka dojke ([1]) u suradnji s Međunarodnom agencijom za istraživanje raka. Navedenim se smjernicama želi podići svijest i poboljšati primjena najboljih praksi udruživanjem na razini EU-a najboljih primjera iz regionalnih i nacionalnih programa ranog otkrivanja raka dojke.

U suradnji sa spomenutom međunarodnom agencijom Komisija je 2013. objavila dopune ([2]) četvrtom izdanju. Ti su dodaci (novosti o digitalnoj mamografiji i osiguranju kvalitete) uslijedili kao odgovori na brzi tehnološki razvoj koji je pratio sve raširenu uporabu digitalnog snimanja pri mamografskom probiru i dijagnosticiranju od objave četvrtog izdanja.

Zajednički istraživački centar (JRC) Europske komisije u prosincu 2012. obvezao se izraditi novo izdanje europskih smjernica za borbu protiv raka dojke. Novim izdanjem smjernica bit će obuhvaćene sve faze zdravstvene skrbi u borbi protiv te bolesti, od probira i dijagnoze do liječenja, rehabilitacije i praćenja nakon izlječenja. Nadalje, JRC će osmisliti dobrovoljni europski program osiguranja kvalitete za usluge povezane s otkrivanjem i liječenjem raka dojke koji će biti zasnovan na tim smjernicama. Predviđeni vremenski okvir za provedbu oba projekata je 2,5 do 3 godine.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2002/cancer/fp_cancer_2002_ext_guid_01.pdf
([2]) http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/european-guidelines-for-quality-assurance-in-breast-cancer-screening-and-diagnosis-pbND0213386/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003500/14
to the Commission
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Combating breast cancer

Breast cancer is the most common malignant disease affecting women and accounts for more than one-quarter of all cases of malignant diseases. Doctors estimate that up to one-in-eight women will suffer from this disease during their lifetime. According to World Health Organisation data, 1.67 million women fell ill with breast cancer in 2012. In the European Union, as many as 367 000 women fell ill with this disease, of whom 91 000 died.

Sadly, the situation in Croatia is no better. In 2012, over 2 000 women fell ill with breast cancer and 1 033 died of the disease. This marks a worrying 15% rise in the mortality rate.

Breast cancer usually appears after the age of 50, although younger age groups are increasingly falling victim to this illness. The age of women falling ill with breast cancer is dropping constantly. A number of factors could be contributing to this, including stress, pollution and an unhealthy diet.

The fourth and most recent time the Commission issued guidelines on combating this terrible illness was in 2006 — eight years ago. Since then, Parliament adopted a resolution in 2008 which warned of unacceptable discrepancies between Member States in the way breast cancer is treated. In November 2013, the Commission announced that the fifth edition of the guidelines would be published in cooperation with the Commission's Joint Research Centre.

Given the significant discrepancies in the ways in which breast cancer is treated and the worrying data on the number of women suffering from breast cancer, when does the Commission plan to issue the fifth edition of its guidelines for quality assurance in breast cancer screening and diagnosis, so that we might combat this terrible illness more effectively at European level?

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

In 2006 the European Commission supported, in cooperation with the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the production of the 4th edition of the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis ([1]). These guidelines aimed, at raising awareness and improving the application of best practices by bringing together at EU level the best examples from regional and national breast cancer screening programmes.

In 2013 the Commission, in cooperation with this International Agency, published supplements ([2]) to the 4th edition. These supplements (digital mammography and quality assurance updates) responded to the rapid technological development that has accompanied a wide increase in the use of digital imaging in mammography screening and diagnosis since the fourth edition was published.

In December 2012, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) undertook to develop a new edition of the European Guidelines for Breast Cancer. This edition will cover all stages of breast cancer healthcare from screening and diagnosis to treatment, rehabilitation, and follow-up. In addition, the JRC will develop a voluntary European quality assurance scheme for breast cancer services which will build upon the guidelines. The projected timeframe for both projects is approximately 2.5 to 3 years.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_projects/2002/cancer/fp_cancer_2002_ext_guid_01.pdf
([2]) http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/european-guidelines-for-quality-assurance-in-breast-cancer-screening-and-diagnosis-pbND0213386/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003501/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Interventi a tutela dei lavoratori dell'azienda Carrier S.p.A. di Villasanta (Monza e Brianza)

L'azienda Carrier S.p.A. nel mese di gennaio del corrente anno ha espresso la ferma intenzione di abbandonare lo stabilimento lombardo di Villasanta a giugno per delocalizzare le proprie attività nella Repubblica ceca. Tale azienda ha sempre rappresentato un elemento fondamentale nel tessuto produttivo della Brianza e in anni recenti, visto l'incalzante susseguirsi di chiusure di fabbriche e impianti, l'ultima grande realtà produttiva della zona.

Di fronte alla preoccupante inerzia del governo nell'intervenire a difesa della dimensione occupazionale e delle famiglie dei 212 addetti, oltreché delle svariate decine di lavoratori dell'indotto coinvolti nelle piccole imprese locali, ritiene la Commissione prioritario occuparsi al più presto della questione?

Inoltre può essa far sapere se è possibile un impiego delle risorse e dei fondi comunitari per finalità più razionali e opportune, a cominciare dalla tutela della dignità dei lavoratori, attraverso la salvaguardia dei livelli produttivi nazionali?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

La Commissione non ha il potere di interferire sulle decisioni di una specifica società. Essa invita, tuttavia, tutte le società a seguire buone prassi nella anticipazione dei cambiamenti e delle ristrutturazioni, come sottolineato nella sua comunicazione del 13 dicembre 2013 che stabilisce un quadro UE per la qualità nell'anticipazione dei cambiamenti e delle ristrutturazioni ([1]).

Il Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) interviene per migliorare le possibilità di occupazione, promuovere l'istruzione e l'apprendimento permanente e sviluppare le politiche di inclusione attiva ([2]). In quanto tale, esso non fornisce un aiuto d'emergenza ai lavoratori, come quelli impiegati dalla Carrier S.p.A., ma i lavoratori interessati possono beneficiare delle attività cofinanziate dal FSE. Per ulteriori informazioni sulle possibilità di finanziamento, invitiamo l'Onorevole parlamentare a mettersi in contatto con le autorità di gestione del Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) nella regione interessata ([3]).

D'altro canto, dalle informazioni contenute nell'interrogazione dell'Onorevole parlamentare, non sembra che il Fondo europeo di adeguamento alla globalizzazione (FEG) possa garantire un'assistenza ai lavoratori i cui esuberi sono presi in considerazione, poiché non sembra che tali esuberi derivino dalla continuazione della crisi economica e finanziaria globale, né che siano conseguenza di trasformazioni rilevanti nella struttura del commercio mondiale, come stabilito dal regolamento FEG ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013) 882 final.
([2]) Conformemente all'articolo 162 del trattato.
([3]) Regione Lombardia:
http://www.ue.regione.lombardia.it/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=ProgrammazioneComunitaria%2FPROCOMLayout&cid=1213567806969&p=1213567806969&pagename=PROCOMWrapper
([4]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1309/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003501/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Action to protect employees of the firm Carrier S.p.A in Villasanta (Monza and Brianza province)

In January of this year, Carrier S.p.A made known its firm intention of closing down its plant in Villasanta, Lombardy, in June and moving its business to the Czech Republic. This company has always formed a fundamental part of the industrial fabric in Brianza and in recent years, with factory and plant closures coming one after another at an ever increasing rate, has become the last major producer in the area.

Given the worrying lack of action by the government to defend the jobs and families of the 212 employees, to say nothing of the several dozen workers employed in satellite industries in small firms locally, does the Commission believe that addressing this issue as quickly as possible delay should be a priority?

Furthermore, could the Commission state whether it is possible to use EU funds and resources for more rational and appropriate ends, beginning with protection of workers' dignity, by safeguarding national levels of production?

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

The Commission has no powers to interfere in a specific company's decisions. It urges them, however, to follow good practices in anticipation and socially responsible management of restructuring as outlined in its communication of 13 December 2013 establishing an EU Quality Framework for Anticipation of Change and Restructuring ([1]).

The European Social Fund (ESF) intervenes to improve employment opportunities, promote education and life-long learning, and develop active inclusion policies ([2]). As such, it does not provide emergency support to workers such as those employed by Carrier S.p.A, but the workers concerned may benefit from the ESF co-financed activities. For detailed information about funding possibilities, the Honourable Member is invited to contact the European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authority in the concerned region ([3]).

On the other hand, from the information provided in the Honourable Member's question it does not appear that the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) could provide assistance to the workers whose redundancies are being considered, because these do not seem to result from the continuation of the global financial and economic crisis nor to be linked to structural changes in world trade patterns, as laid down in the EGF Regulation ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013) 882 final.
([2]) In accordance with Article 162 of the Treaty.
([3]) Regione Lombardia:
http://www.ue.regione.lombardia.it/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=ProgrammazioneComunitaria%2FPROCOMLayout&cid=1213567806969&p=1213567806969&pagename=PROCOMWrapper
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-003503/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(24 de março de 2014)

Assunto: Concessão a privados dos transportes públicos de Lisboa e do Porto

Notícias na imprensa portuguesa dão conta da existência de um memorando assinado entre o Governo português e a troica, no âmbito da décima avaliação do programa de ajustamento, que prevê «a venda a privados, através da concessão do serviço público», da Carris, do Metro de Lisboa, da Transtejo e Soflusa, para além dos transportes públicos do Porto, STCP e Metro, «até ao final de Março».

De acordo com as referidas notícias, «a reestruturação das empresas públicas de transporte de Lisboa e Porto está encaminhada, esperando-se que cinco concessões sejam lançadas até final de março de 2014». Ademais, estará a ser considerada a expansão «do programa de privatizações de forma a incluir outros ativos para venda ou concessão».

Afirma-se que «não existem valores para os negócios, mas o encaixe, que abaterá ao défice, ainda não estará contabilizado no plano para as contas públicas deste ano».

Importa sublinhar que, desde o início da intervenção da UE e do FMI, o ataque ao serviço público de transportes foi brutal. Os preços aumentaram significativamente e a qualidade do serviço degradou-se. Sublinhe-se que a Carris e o Metro perderam nos últimos três anos, respetivamente, 32 % e 24 % dos passageiros.

Em face do exposto, perguntamos à Comissão:

1. Confirma a existência do memorando acima mencionado — que prevê a venda a privados, através da concessão do serviço público, da Carris, do Metro de Lisboa, da Transtejo e Soflusa? Como o justifica?

2. Exerceu a Comissão alguma pressão sobre o governo português para impor esta solução? Em caso afirmativo, como a justifica estas pressões, à luz do disposto no Tratado, onde se estipula a «neutralidade» da UE relativamente à propriedade — pública ou privada — de empresas?

3. Como compagina a Comissão a evolução negativa na procura dos transportes públicos em resultado do aumento brutal do seu preço e da degradação da qualidade, decorrente da intervenção da UE e do FMI, com a retórica da mobilidade sustentável, do combate às alterações climáticas, etc., que percorre inúmeros documentos e estratégias da UE?

Resposta dada de Olli Rehn em nome da Comissão
(30 de maio de 2014)

O memorando de entendimento não prevê a venda de quaisquer empresas públicas de transporte de Lisboa ou do Porto ou quaisquer concessões neste domínio. Os relatórios da 10.ª avaliação (Documento de Trabalho Ocasional n.° 171, fevereiro de 2014, n.ºs 46 e 75) e da 11.ª avaliação (Documento de Trabalho Ocasional n.° 191, abril de 2014, n.° 52) do programa de ajustamento económico para Portugal informam sobre as medidas que foram adotadas pelas autoridades portuguesas para reestruturar os serviços de transporte público do Porto e de Lisboa.

O lançamento das concessões para a prestação desses serviços foi decidido pelo Governo, não tendo a Comissão exercido qualquer pressão sobre o mesmo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003503/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Privatisation of public transport in Lisbon and Oporto

The Portuguese press has reported the existence of a memorandum signed between the Portuguese Government and the Troika as part of the tenth review of the adjustment programme, providing for 'the sale to private operators, through the concession of public services' of Lisbon's Carris bus and tram system, Metro de Lisboa, Transtejo and Soflusa ferry service and Oporto's STCP and Metro do Porto, by the end of March 2014.

According to these reports, 'the restructuring of Lisbon and Oporto's public transport services is underway and five concessions are expected to be launched by the end of March 2014'. The expansion of the privatisation programme to include the sale or concession of further assets is also said to be under consideration.

Apparently 'no figures are available for the enterprises, but the operation, which will reduce the deficit, is not thought to have been included in this year's public accounts plan'.

It is important to note that public transport services have been viciously attacked since the start of the EU and IMF-sponsored intervention. Prices have risen dramatically and quality of service has deteriorated. Most notably, Carris and the Lisbon metro have respectively lost 32% and 24% of their passengers over the last three years.

In light of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Can it confirm the existence of the abovementioned memorandum providing for the sale to private operators through public service concessions of Carris, Metro de Lisboa, and Transtejo/Soflusa? How does it justify this?

2. Was any pressure exerted by the Commission on the Portuguese Government to impose this solution? If so, how does it justify exerting such pressure, when the terms of the Treaty guarantee the EU's 'neutrality' concerning the ownership — whether public or private — of enterprises?

3. How does this downturn in the use of public transport, as a result of drastic price hikes and declining quality caused by EU and IMF intervention, fit in with the Commission's rhetoric on sustainable mobility, combating climate change and suchlike, which pervades countless EU documents and strategies?

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

Neither the sale of Lisbon or Porto state-owned enterprises (SOEs) providing transport services nor its concessions are part of the memorandum of understanding. The compliance reports following the 10th (Occasional Papers 171, February 2014, Paragraphs 46 and 75) and the 11th review (Occasional Papers 191, April 2014, Paragraph 52) of the Economic Adjustment Programme for Portugal inform about the action taken by the Portuguese authorities in order to restructure the public transport services in Porto and Lisbon.

Launching concessions for these services was a Government decision and the Commission did not exert any pressure on the Government.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-003505/14
do Komisji
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(24 marca 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Atak na konsulat Indii w Afganistanie

W dniu 3 sierpnia 2013 r. w samobójczym ataku bombowym na konsulat Indii w Dżalalabadzie, na wschodzie Afganistanu, śmierć poniosło dziewięciu cywilów. Rośnie liczba ataków na indyjskie placówki dyplomatyczne w Afganistanie przeprowadzanych z terytorium Pakistanu przez organizację terrorystyczną Lashkar-e-Taiba. W 2008 i 2009 r. bojownicy podłożyli bomby pod ambasadę Indii w Kabulu, a w wyniku wybuchów zginęło około 75 osób. W 2010 r. przeprowadzono ataki na dwa pensjonaty w Kabulu popularne wśród obywateli Indii. W rezultacie śmierć poniosło ponad sześciu obywateli Indii.

Ugrupowanie Lashkar-e-Taiba prowadzi aktywną działalność w Afganistanie i współpracuje z innymi grupami rebeliantów aktywnymi we wschodnim Afganistanie w pobliżu granicy z Pakistanem. Te grupy terrorystyczne otrzymują wsparcie pakistańskich służb wywiadowczych ISI.

1. Jakimi informacjami dysponuje Komisja na temat skali terroryzmu na granicy afgańsko-pakistańskiej?

2. Czy Komisja będzie domagać się od Pakistanu wyjaśnienia powiązań między ISI i ugrupowaniami terrorystycznymi?

3. Czy Komisja rozważy ponownie kwestię pomocy udzielanej Pakistanowi na walkę z terroryzmem, skoro państwowe służby Pakistanu wspierają działania terrorystów? ([1])

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

UE jest aktywnie zaangażowana wspólnie z rządem Pakistanu w wypracowywanie podejścia do kwestii zwalczania terroryzmu, które znajdowałoby się pod cywilnym przewodnictwem; w Islamabadzie powołano grupę ds. zwalczania terroryzmu oraz grupę ds. rządów prawa, której celem jest wzmocnienie współpracy z szeregiem podmiotów pakistańskich mających kluczowe znaczenie w obszarze bezpieczeństwa i stabilności. Jest to okazja, aby poruszyć szereg pytań i wątpliwości oraz przedyskutować, w jaki sposób najlepiej dostosować nasze wsparcie w zakresie zwalczania terroryzmu do potrzeb rządu Pakistanu w kontekście całego kraju.

W praktyce, od momentu przyjęcia w 2012 r. unijnej strategii dotyczącej walki z terroryzmem w Pakistanie, UE przygotowuje podstawy dla przyszłej współpracy UE w tym obszarze. Wsparcie UE skupia się obecnie na przeszkalaniu policji, służb ścigania oraz mediów. Na ostatnim etapie projektowania znajduje się nowy, obszerny unijny program rządów prawa dla prowincji Chajber Pasztunchwa. W prowincji Pendżab, wsparcie w zakresie zwalczania terroryzmu jest realizowane również za pośrednictwem inicjatywy dotyczącej reformy procedur ścigania, kierowanej przez ZK; nieco później w tym roku rozpocznie się nowy program na rzecz zapewniania dostępu do wymiaru sprawiedliwości oraz świadczenia usług sądowych w wybranych okręgach na południu prowincji.

UE aktywnie angażuje się w kontakty z rządem, wspierając jego zamiary normalizacji stosunków zarówno z Afganistanem jak i z Indiami, w szczególności w drodze wzmacniania regionalnych i dwustronnych stosunków handlowych. W interesie zarówno UE, jak i stabilności szerzej pojętego regionu, jest uczynienie wszystkiego, co tylko możliwe, aby wesprzeć zdecydowaną większość Pakistańczyków, którzy odrzucają ekstremistyczną przemoc i którzy oczekują większych postępów, dobrobytu i demokracji w swoim kraju.

([1]) Źródło: http://www.humanrights.asia/news/urgent-appeals/AHRC-UAC-085-2013

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003505/14
to the Commission
Tadeusz Cymański (EFD)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Attack on Indian consulate in Afghanistan

On 3 August 2013, suicide bombers targeted the Indian consulate in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, leading to the killing of nine civilians. There have been increasing numbers of attacks on Indian diplomatic missions in Afghanistan by the Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba. In 2008 and 2009, the Indian embassy in Kabul was bombed by militants, leaving some 75 people dead. In 2010, two Kabul guest-houses popular among Indians were attacked, killing more than six Indians.

The Lashkar-e-Taiba group is active in Afghanistan and collaborates with other insurgent groups active in eastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan. These terror groups are backed by the Pakistani intelligence services, ISI.

1. What information does the Commission have on the level of terrorism on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border?

2. Will the Commission seek an explanation from Pakistan about the links between ISI and terror groups?

3. Will the Commission reconsider the aid given to Pakistan to fight terror, given that official Pakistani agencies are supporting terror activity? ([1])

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

The EU is actively engaged with the government of Pakistan on civilian-led approaches to counter-terrorism and has set up a Counter-Terrorism and Rule of Law Group in Islamabad to strengthen interaction with a range of key Pakistani actors in the field of security and stability. This is an opportunity to raise a number of questions and concerns and to discuss how best to tailor our support in the field of counter-terrorism to the needs of the government of Pakistan country-wide.

In practical terms, following the 2012 adoption of an EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy on Pakistan, the EU has been preparing the ground to guide future EU cooperation in the area. The EU's support currently focuses on training of police, criminal prosecution services and media. A new comprehensive EU rule of law programme for the province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa is in its final design stage. In Punjab, support for CT is also provided via a UK-led prosecution reform initiative and a new programme will be launched later this year addressing access to justice and delivery of judicial services in selected districts in the south of the province.

The EU is actively engaging the government to support its intention to normalise relations with both Afghanistan and India, in particular through enhanced bilateral and regional trade. It is in the interests of the EU as well as the stability of the wider region, to do as much as possible to support the vast majority of Pakistanis who reject extremist violence and want to see more progress, prosperity and democracy in their country.

([1]) *Source:* http://www.humanrights.asia/news/urgent-appeals/AHRC-UAC-085-2013

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003506/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sikurezza tat-tfal fil-karozzi

Is-siġġijiet tas-sikurezza tat-tfal huma manifatturati sabiex jipproteġu lit-tfal minn korrimenti jew imwiet f'inċidenti tat-traffiku. Huwa ppruvat li l-użu tas-siġġijiet tas-sikurezza tat-tfal inaqqas l-imwiet tat-trabi fil-karozzi b'madwar 71 % u l-imwiet ta' tfal żgħar b'54 %, filwaqt li s-sits ta' sostenn (booster seats) jistgħu jnaqqsu l-korrimenti f'inċidenti li jinvolvu tfal fl-età ta' bejn erba' u seba' snin b'59 %.

F'xi Stati Membri, ir-regolamenti dwar is-sikurezza tat-tfal m'humiex applikati b'mod sodisfaċenti. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tindika liema mod ikun l-iktar effiċjenti biex jiġu applikati n-normi tas-sikurezza tat-tfal fil-livell nazzjonali sabiex jitnaqqsu l-korrimenti u l-imwiet ta' tfal f'ħabtiet bil-karozzi?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Kallas f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Mejju 2014)

L-użu ta' sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal huwa obbligatorju fl-UE skont id-Direttiva 91/671/KEE dwar l-użu obbligatorju taċ-ċintorini tas-sigurtà u s-sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal fil-vetturi ([1]).

Il-Kummissjoni reċentament emendat ([2]) din id-Direttiva sabiex tqis l-iżviluppi teknoloġiċi li rriżultaw f'sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal aktar sikuri.

Is-sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal użati fl-UE jridu jkunu konformi mal-istandard definit mir-Regolament 44/03 tal-UNECE ([3]) jew l-istandard il-ġdid, li jistipula sistemi tat-trażżin aktar sikuri eżekuzzjoni tas-sikurezza mtejba, kif definit fir-Regolament 129 tal-UNECE ([4]).

L-Istati Membri huma responsabbli biex jinfurzaw l-obbligu tal-użu ta' sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal u l-Kummissjoni mhijiex konxja ta' problemi partikolari marbuta mal-applikazzjoni tagħhom.

([1]) Id-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 91/671/KEE tas-16 ta' Diċembru 1991 dwar l-approssimazzjoni tal-liġijiet tal-Istati Membri dwar l-użu obbligatorju taċ-ċintorini tas-sigurtà f'vetturi ta' anqas minn 3,5 tunnellati, ĠU L 373, 31/12/1991, p. 26-28.

([2]) Id-Direttiva ta' Implimentazzjoni tal-Kummissjoni 2014/37/UE tas-27 ta' Frar 2014 li temenda d-Direttiva tal-Kunsill 91/671/KEE dwar l-użu obbligatorju taċ-ċintorini tas-sikurezza u s-sistemi tat-trażżin għat-tfal fil-vetturi.

([3]) Dispożizzjonijiet uniformi li jikkonċernaw l-approvazzjoni ta' tagħmir tat-trażżin għat-tfal li jirkbu f'vetturi bil-mutur ("Sistemi tat-Trażżin għat-Tfal").

([4]) Dispożizzjonijiet uniformi dwar l-approvazzjoni ta' Sistemi tat-Trażżin għat-Tfal aktar sikuri użati abbord vetturi bil-mutur (ECRS).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003506/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Child safety in cars

Child safety seats are produced to protect children from injury and death during accidents. The use of child safety seats has been shown to reduce infant deaths in cars by approximately 71% and deaths of small children by 54%, while booster seats can reduce injury in accidents involving children between the ages of four and seven by 59%.

In some Member States, child safety regulations are not sufficiently applied. Can the Commission advise as to what would be the most efficient way to apply child safety norms at national level in order to reduce injury and death of children in car collisions?

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

The use of child restraint systems is mandatory in the EU in accordance with Directive 91/671/EEC on the compulsory use of safety belts and child restraint systems in vehicles ([1]).

The Commission has recently amended ([2]) this directive to take into account technological developments that have resulted in safer child restraint systems.

Child restraint systems used in the EU must conform to the standard defined by UNECE Regulation 44/03 ([3]) or to the new standard, which provides for enhanced safety performance, defined by UNECE Regulation 129 ([4]).

Member States are responsible for the enforcement of the obligation to use child restraint systems and the Commission is not aware of particular application problems.

([1]) Council Directive 91/671/EEC of 16 December 1991 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to compulsory use of safety belts in vehicles of less than 3,5 tonnes, OJ L 373, 31.12.1991, p. 26-28.
([2]) Commission Implementing Directive 2014/37/EU of 27 February 2014 amending Council Directive 91/671/EEC relating to the compulsory use of safety belts and child restraint systems in vehicles.
([3]) Uniform provisions concerning the approval of restraining devices for child occupants of power-driven vehicles ('Child Restraint Systems').
([4]) Uniform provisions concerning the approval of enhanced Child Restraint Systems used on board of motor vehicles (ECRS).

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003507/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Ħinijiet tal-iskola itwal biex tonqos id-disparità bejn is-sessi

Sabiex tonqos id-disparità bejn is-sessi fl-Ewropa, huwa importanti li n-nisa fl-Istati Membri kollha jkollhom opportunitajiet ta' xogħol indaqs. Sfortunatament, mhuwiex dejjem faċli għan-nisa biex ilaqqgħu flimkien il-ħajja professjonali u r-responsabbiltajiet tal-familja.

Taqbel il-Kummissjoni li l-ħinijiet tal-iskola jistgħu jittawlu billi jiġu introdotti aktar attivitajiet sportivi għat-tfal wara l-lezzjonijiet?

Taqbel il-Kummissjoni li dan ikun ta' għajnuna għan-nisa biex jinvolvu ruħhom aktar fid-dinja tax-xogħol u, fl-istess ħin, jagħti lit-tfal iċ-ċans li jkunu aktar attivi u jissoċjalizzaw aktar?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Mejju 2014)

Rapport minn espert dwar servizzi wara l-iskola ([1]) identifika strateġiji differenti fil-livell tal-Istati Membri biex jiġu żviluppati servizzi ta' indukrar tat-tfal għal tfal tal-iskola. It-titwil tal-ġurnata tal-iskola hija waħda minnhom. Il-Ġermanja, il-Greċja, il-Portugall, Ċipru, l-Estonja u l-Kroazja rriorganizzaw is-servizzi attwali billi estendew is-sigħat ta' ftuħ tal-iskejjel, li spiss ikunu part-time. Ġurnata tal-iskola li tkun iktar full-time tista' tkun estremament utli għall-ħajja ta' kuljum ta' ġenituri ħaddiema. F'Ġunju 2013, il-Kunsill Ewropew indirizza rakkomandazzjoni speċifika għall-pajjiż lill-Ġermanja biex iżżid id-disponibilità ta' skejjel b'ġurnata sħiħa.

Fl-istrateġija Ewropea għall-ugwaljanza bejn in-nisa u l-irġiel ([2]), il-Kummissjoni tagħraf l-importanza ta' politika għar-rikonċiljazzjoni bejn ix-xogħol u l-ħajja privata. Il-Kummissjoni taqbel li servizzi wara l-iskola ta' kwalità tajba u affordabbli, flimkien ma' arranġamenti flessibbli tax-xogħol u l-disponibilità ta' sistema adegwata ta' liv tal-familja, jistgħu jgħinu lill-ġenituri biex isibu qbil aħjar bejn is-sigħat tax-xogħol u s-sigħat tal-iskola ta' wliedhom u b'hekk jappoġġaw is-sehem (full-time) tagħhom fis-suq tax-xogħol.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2010) 491.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003507/14
to the Commission
Marlene Mizzi (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Lengthening the school day in order to bridge the gender gap

In order to bridge the gender gap in Europe, it is important that women in all Member States have equal job opportunities. Unfortunately, it is not always easy for women to combine professional life and family responsibilities.

Does the Commission agree that the school day could be lengthened by introducing more sporting activities for children after lessons?

Does the Commission agree that this would help women to be more involved in the world of work and, at the same time, give children the chance to be more active and socialise more?

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

An expert report on out of school services ([1]) identified different strategies at Member State level to develop childcare services for school-going children. Lengthening the school days is one of them. Germany, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Estonia and Croatia have reorganised current services by extending opening hours of schools, which are often part-time. A more full-time coverage of the school day might be extremely helpful in the daily life of working parents. In June 2013, the European Council addressed a country-specific recommendation to Germany to increase the availability of all-day schools.

In the European strategy for equality between women and men ([2]), the Commission acknowledges the importance of the policy-mix for reconciliation between work and private life. The Commission agrees that affordable and good quality out-of-school services, together with flexible working arrangements and the provision of a suitable system of family leave, could help parents to find a better match between their working hours and the school hours of their children and hence support their (full-time) labour market participation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130910_egge_out_of_school_en.pdf
([2]) COM(2010) 491.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003508/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ευρωομάδα και βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη

Η πρόσφατη δήλωση της Ευρωομάδας για την Κύπρο, στις 10 Μαρτίου 2014, αναφέρει ότι η Ευρωομάδα χαιρετίζει το συμπέρασμα της Τρόικας, μετά την τρίτη αποστολή ελέγχου, ότι το πρόγραμμα δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής της Κύπρου έχει δρομολογηθεί και σχολιάζει τη διαρκή σύνεση που επιδεικνύουν οι αρχές στην εκτέλεση του προϋπολογισμού. Παράλληλα, επισημαίνει ότι οι προσπάθειες για να δημιουργηθούν οι συνθήκες για βιώσιμη ανάπτυξη πρέπει να ενταθούν.

Μπορεί η Επιτροπή να υποβάλει συγκεκριμένες προτάσεις, μέτρα και λύσεις και να παράσχει πρόσθετη χρηματοδότηση στις αρχές της Δημοκρατίας της Κύπρου για να τις βοηθήσει στην επίτευξη της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή επιβεβαιώνει ότι το πρόγραμμα μακροοικονομικής προσαρμογής της Κύπρου, ένα χρόνο μετά τη συμφωνία του στις 24 Απριλίου 2013, εφαρμόζεται ικανοποιητικά. Σύμφωνα με τους όρους του προγράμματος απαιτούνται διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις για την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και της βιώσιμης ανάπτυξης. Η εφαρμογή των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων έχει προχωρήσει, ιδίως όσον αφορά τη δημόσια διοίκηση, τη φορολογική διοίκηση, τη διαχείριση των δημόσιων οικονομικών, τον φόρο ακίνητης ιδιοκτησίας, και τις πολιτικές ενεργοποίησης της αγοράς εργασίας. Σε ορισμένους τομείς, οι μεταρρυθμίσεις πρέπει να επιταχυνθούν, μεταξύ άλλων, η έγκριση της μεταρρύθμισης στον τομέα της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, η εφαρμογή του σχεδίου ιδιωτικοποίησης, και η υιοθέτηση ενός χάρτη πορείας για το Εθνικό Σύστημα Υγείας.

Στο επικαιροποιημένο μνημόνιο συνεννόησης του Μαρτίου του 2014, η Κύπρος δεσμεύτηκε να αναπτύξει μια ολοκληρωμένη και συνεκτική στρατηγική ανάπτυξης που πρέπει να ενσωματωθεί στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο που βασίζεται στις μεταρρυθμίσεις του προγράμματος προσαρμογής της Κύπρου και τις σχετικές πρωτοβουλίες της ΕΕ, λαμβανομένης υπόψη της συμφωνίας εταιρικής σχέσης για την εφαρμογή των ευρωπαϊκών διαρθρωτικών και επενδυτικών ταμείων.

Ο Όμιλος της ΕΤΕπ και η Κύπρος διαπραγματεύτηκαν ένα καθεστώς στήριξης για τη χρηματοδότηση των κυπριακών ΜΜΕ που πλήττονται από την κρίση. Με τη χρηματοδοτική της συνεισφορά, η προτεινόμενη δράση της ΕΤΕπ συμβάλλει στην αντιμετώπιση των πιέσεων που υφίστανται τα ΜΜΕ λόγω της αδυναμίας χρηματοδότησής τους από την αγορά. Επιπλέον, η Κύπρος υπέβαλε, στο πλαίσιο της πρωτοβουλίας για την απασχόληση των νέων, το σχέδιό της για την εφαρμογή των εγγυήσεων για τη νεολαία, προκειμένου να υποστηρίξει τη δημιουργία θέσεων εργασίας και την είσοδο των νέων στην αγορά εργασίας, χρηματοδοτούμενο από τα διαρθρωτικά ταμεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Τέλος, η Επιτροπή σύστησε μια ομάδα υποστήριξης για την Κύπρο, η οποία έχει ως στόχο να συνδράμει την Κύπρο στην άμβλυνση των κοινωνικών συνεπειών του οικονομικού σοκ με την κινητοποίηση πόρων από τα μέσα της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ([1]).

([1]) Για λεπτομέρειες σχετικά με τις δραστηριότητες ομάδας στήριξης παρακαλούμε δείτε την πρώτη έκθεση δραστηριοτήτων που διατίθεται στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/documents/2014-04-02_sgcy_first_activity_report_el.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003508/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Eurogroup and sustainable growth

The recent Eurogroup statement on Cyprus, of 10 March 2014, declares that the Eurogroup welcomes the Troika's conclusion, following its third review mission, that Cyprus's adjustment programme is on track, and comments on the authorities' 'continued prudence in budgetary execution'. At the same time, it notes that efforts to create the conditions for sustainable growth need to be intensified.

Is the Commission able to put forward specific suggestions, measures and solutions and offer additional funding to the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus, in order to assist them in achieving sustainable growth?

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

The European Commission confirms that Cyprus' macroeconomic adjustment programme remains on track, a year after its agreement on 24 April 2013. Programme conditionality calls for structural reforms to support competitiveness and sustainable growth. The implementation of structural reforms has advanced, notably on public administration, revenue administration, public financial management, immovable property tax, and labour market activation policies. In certain areas, reforms should accelerate, *inter alia* the adoption of a social welfare reform, the implementation of the privatisation plan, and the adoption of a roadmap for a National Health System.

In the updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of March 2014, Cyprus committed to develop a comprehensive and coherent growth strategy that should be integrated in the institutional framework building on the reforms in Cyprus's adjustment programme and relevant EU initiatives, taking into account the Partnership Agreement for the implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds.

The EIB Group and Cyprus negotiated a support scheme to finance Cypriot SME businesses affected by the crisis. Through its funding contribution, the proposed EIB operation addresses the SMEs pressing financing market gap. Moreover, Cyprus submitted its Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan (YGIP) under the Youth Employment Initiative, to support job creation and the entrance of youth to the labour market, funded under the EU Structural Funds. Finally, the Commission also set up a Support Group for Cyprus whose aim is to assist Cyprus in alleviating the social consequences of the economic shock by mobilising funds from European Union instruments. ([1])

([1]) For details of the Support Group activities please see the First Activity Report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/assistance_eu_ms/documents/2014-04-02_sgcy_first_activity_report_en.pdf

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande E-003510/14
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Angående: Etableringskrav för registrering av toppdomännamn

Genom att skapa större konkurrens på den digitala inre marknaden kan vi främja tillväxten och sysselsättningen i Europa. Mycket har redan åstadkommits vad gäller att undanröja hinder för e-handel över gränserna. Det behöver dock fortfarande göras mer. Ett exempel på återstående hinder är vissa medlemsstaters krav på att registrera ett webbföretag vid ett fysiskt kontor för att få tillgång till ett toppdomännamn.

Med tanke på att sökmotorer vanligtvis rangordnar lokalt innehåll högre än utländskt innehåll ligger det i ett webbföretags intresse att registrera sin webbsida under ett lokalt toppdomännamn (såsom se. när det gäller affärsintressen i Sverige). Vissa medlemsstater – närmare bestämt Tyskland, Finland, Danmark och Estland – ställer ytterligare krav beträffande fysisk etablering för erhållande av en sådan domän. Det är inte bara dyrt för ett webbföretag som vill bedriva verksamhet effektivt i EU utan snedvrider också konkurrensen, som bör vara fri och rättvis på hela vår gemensamma marknad. Siffror från små och medelstora företag som ägnar sig åt e-handel och som tvingades etablera sig i andra medlemsstater visar att de administrativa kostnaderna knutna till dessa krav med lätthet kan överskrida 9 000 euro per år och per land.

Medlemsstater som ställer sådana krav motiverar dem med behovet av att följa nationell lagstiftning och förhindra så kallad ”domänockupation”. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) har föreslagit att konflikter med koppling till toppdomännamn ska lösas genom att ge företräde till lokala intressenter. Dessa icke bindande rekommendationer missbrukas emellertid ofta för att skapa en förebyggande barriär innan en konflikt verkligen har uppstått.

Kan kommissionen mot denna bakgrund klargöra huruvida sådana nationella etableringskrav är förenliga med EU:s bestämmelser om fri rörlighet? Anser kommissionen att de är diskriminerande? Är det verkligen berättigat och lämpligt att ett webbföretag från en medlemsstat ska behöva bära ytterligare kostnader för att kunna verka på lika villkor som andra på hela den digitala inre marknaden? Hur har kommissionen tänkt ta itu med denna diskriminering som drabbar utländska e-handelsföretag?

Svar från Michel Barnier på kommissionens vägnar
(16 maj 2014)

Kommissionen delar parlamentsledamotens uppfattning att en digital inre marknad är en viktig källa till tillväxt och att ytterligare insatser behövs för att den ska kunna fullbordas.

Den 11 januari 2012 antog kommissionen därför meddelandet ”Samstämmiga ramar för att öka tilltron till en inre e-marknad för e-handel och nättjänster” ([1]), med åtgärder för att stärka förtroendet för den digitala inre marknaden. En av de åtgärder som lyftes fram var att utvärdera ländernas tilldelning av toppdomännamn enligt reglerna för den inre marknaden ([2]).

Utvärderingen från 2013 visade att gällande nationella bestämmelser kan försvåra tilldelningen av toppdomännamn till företag från andra medlemsländer som tillhandahåller tjänster eller säljer varor på nätet. Slutsatsen blev dock att kraven inte hindrar företag från att tillhandahålla tjänster eller sälja varor på nätet i ett annat medlemsland, eftersom deras webbplats kan nås även utanför det egna landet.

Kommissionen diskuterade nyligen frågan med alla medlemsländer i expertgruppen för e-handel. Målet är att öka kunskapen om reglerna i de olika länderna och att göra det lättare för företagen, särskilt små och medelstora företag, att få toppdomännamn utan onödiga administrativa krav. Den senaste anmälan av utkastet till föreskrifter för informationssamhällets tjänster från Finland enligt direktiv 98/34/EG visar till exempel att de nationella kraven för att få toppdomännamn kommer att försvinna inom den närmaste framtiden. ([3]) Kommissionen kommer att fortsätta att diskutera frågan med medlemsländerna.

([1]) KOM(2011) 942 slutlig.
([2]) SEK(2011) 1641 slutlig (punkt 4.3.3).
([3]) 2014/58/FIN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003510/14
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Establishment requirements for the registration of top-level domain names

By providing for greater competition in the digital single market, we can boost growth and job creation in Europe. Much has already been achieved in removing obstacles to cross-border e-commerce, but more still needs to be done. One example of the obstacles that remain is the requirement in some Member States to register an online company with a physical office in order to gain access to a top-level domain name.

Given that search engines usually rank local content higher than foreign content, it is in the interest of an online company to register its website under a local top-level domain name (such as ' .se', in the case of business interests in Sweden). However, some Member States, namely Germany, Finland, Denmark and Estonia, impose further requirements regarding physical establishment in order to acquire such a domain. Not only is this very costly for an online company that wishes to operate efficiently in the EU, but it also distorts competition that should be free and fair throughout our common market. Figures provided by small and medium-sized enterprises engaged in e-commerce that were forced to establish themselves in other Member States indicate that the administrative costs associated with these requirements can easily exceed EUR 9 000 per year and per country.

Member States that impose such rules justify them by the need to follow national legislation and prevent so-called 'domain grabbing'. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has suggested that conflicts relating to top-level domain names can be resolved by giving priority to local stakeholders. However, these non-binding recommendations are often abused to build a preventive barrier before any conflict has actually occurred.

In this context, could the Commission clarify whether such national establishment requirements are compatible with EU rules on free movement? Does the Commission consider them to be discriminatory? Is it honestly justified and appropriate that an online company from one Member State should have to bear additional costs in order to operate on a level playing field across the digital single market? What does the Commission intend to do to address this discrimination affecting non-national e-commerce companies?

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

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that a Digital Single Market represents an important source of growth and that further efforts are needed to ensure its completion.

In this vein, the Commission adopted on 11 January 2012 a communication on 'A coherent framework to build trust in the Digital single market for e-commerce and online services' ([1]), which lays down a comprehensive framework of actions to boost trust in the Digital Single Market. Among the actions identified was the need to assess the allocation of top-level-domain names (TLDs) by Member States from the perspective of internal market rules ([2]).

The assessment carried out in 2013 showed that national rules in place can indeed lead to obstacles to the allocation of TLDs to companies providing their services or selling their goods online and established in other Member States. However, it was concluded that these requirements alone do not prevent online service providers from selling their goods or providing their services in another Member State, as their website would still be accessible outside of their home country.

More recently, the Commission discussed this issue with all Member States in the context of the e-commerce expert group, to raise awareness of different rules in this area in various Member States, and to make it easier for companies, especially SMEs, to obtain TLDs without unnecessary administrative and regulatory requirements. The recent notification of the draft Information Society Code from Finland under Directive 98/34/EC shows, for example, that national requirements for obtaining the TLD will be abandoned in the near future. ([3]) The Commission will continue to pursue this issue with Member States.

([1]) COM(2011) 942 final.
([2]) SEC(2011) 1641 final (point 4.3.3).
([3]) 2014/58/FIN.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003511/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: L-Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew

Fl-4 ta' Marzu 2014, il-Kunsill Ġustizzja ddiskuta għall-ewwel darba l-proposta tal-Kummissjoni biex jiġi stabbilit Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew u l-kwistjonijiet ċentrali tiegħu. Fost l-elementi ċentrali, il-proposta tiddikjara li l-Uffiċċju għandu jkollu struttura deċentralizzata, li jfisser li dan ikun integrat fis-sistemi ġudizzjarji nazzjonali u li jkun jinvolvi l-parteċipazzjoni ta' persunal nazzjonali.

Jekk il-proposta tidħol fis-seħħ u l-Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew jiġi stabbilit, il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha tipproċedi fir-rigward tal-integrazzjoni tiegħu fis-sistemi ġudizzjarji nazzjonali? F'dan ir-rigward, il-Kummissjoni se tgħin l-Istati Membri biex jiġu mgħammra bir-riżorsi meħtieġa? Il-Kummissjoni se tkun qed tipprovdi taħriġ għall-uffiċjali nazzjonali biex ittejjeb il-kapaċitajiet tagħhom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(13 ta' Mejju 2014)

Skont il-proposta tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea tas-17 ta' Lulju 2013 l-Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew (UPPE) ikollu struttura deċentralizzata bi prosekuturi Delegati Ewropej f'kull Stat Membru parteċipanti. Dawn il-prosekuturi jmexxu l-investigazzjonijiet fit-territorju ta' Stat Membru skont il-liġi domestika u jkunu assistiti minn persunal tal-infurzar tal-liġi nazzjonali. Filwaqt li l-UPPE jserraħ prinċipalment fuq dawn ir-riżorsi nazzjonali eżistenti, huwa għandu jkollu l-possibilità li jalloka temporanjament riżorsi u persunal addizzjonali lil prosekutur UPPE. Barra minn hekk, il-programmi finanzjarji tal-UE għall-ġuristi jistgħu jipprovdu assitenza għal proġetti ta' taħriġ.

Il-Kummissjoni tenfasizza l-bżonn li jkollha Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew fis-seħħ biex isaħħaħ il-ħarsien tal-baġit tal-UE mill-kriminalità. L-Uffiċċju tal-Prosekutur Pubbliku Ewropew se jimla l-vojt bejn is-sistemi ta' investigazzjoni kriminali tal-Istati Membri, li l-kompetenzi tagħhom jieqfu fil-fruntieri nazzjonali, u korpi tal-Unjoni li ma jistgħu jmexxu investigazzjonijiet kriminali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003511/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: European Public Prosecutor's Office

On 4 March 2014, the Justice Council debated the Commission's proposal to establish a European Public Prosecutor's Office and its key issues, for the first time. Amongst the key elements, the proposal states that the Office should have a decentralised structure, meaning it would be integrated into national judicial systems and involve the participation of national staff.

Should the proposal come into effect and the European Public Prosecutor's Office be established, how does the Commission intend to proceed with regard to its integration into national judicial systems? In this regard, will the Commission help the Member States equip it with the necessary resources? Will the Commission be providing national officials with training to enhance their capabilities?

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

According to the proposal of the European Commission of 17 July 2013 the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) would have a decentralised structure with European Delegated prosecutors located in all participating Member States. These prosecutors would conduct the investigations on the territory of a Member State in accordance with domestic law and would be assisted by national law enforcement staff. While the EPPO would principally rely on such existing national resources, it should also have the possibility of temporarily allocating additional resources and staff to an EPPO prosecutor. In addition, the EU financial programmes for legal practitioners can provide assistance for training projects.

The Commission underlines the need to have the European Public Prosecutor's Office in place to strengthen the protection of the EU budget against crime. The European Public Prosecutor's Office will bridge the gap between Member States' criminal systems, whose competences stop at national borders, and union bodies that cannot conduct criminal investigations.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003512/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Il-prevenzjoni tal-vjolenza fuq in-nisa

Il-Konvenzjoni tal-Kunsill tal-Ewropa dwar il-prevenzjoni u l-ġlieda kontra l-vjolenza fuq in-nisa u l-vjolenza domestika (il-Konvenzjoni ta' Istanbul) tirrappreżenta pass importanti fl-isforz sabiex titnaqqas il-vjolenza fuq in-nisa.

Il-Kummissjoni għandha l-intenzjoni li toħroġ strateġija komprensiva fil-livell tal-UE li tiffoka fuq il-prevenzjoni tal-vjolenza fuq in-nisa?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Mejju 2014)

L-UE adottat għadd ta' miżuri legali fil-qasam tal-ġustizzja kriminali u ċivili li jipproteġu d-drittijiet tal-vittmi ta' vjolenza sessista: Id-Direttiva 2011/36/UE dwar it-traffikar tal-bnedmin, id-Direttiva 2011/93/UE dwar il-ġlieda kontra l-abbuż sesswali u l-isfruttament sesswali tat-tfal u l-pedopornografija, id-Direttiva dwar l-Ordni Ewropea ta' Protezzjoni, applikabbli f'materji kriminali u kkumplimentata mir-Regolament 606/2013, applikabbli fi kwistjonijiet ċivili, u d-Direttiva 2012/29/UE dwar id-drittijiet tal-vittmi tal-kriminalità.

Il-Kummissjoni tipprovdi għall-Istati Membri kollha gwida dwar l-implimentazzjoni ta' dawn il-miżuri riċenti, u hija wkoll attenta sabiex tiżgura li l-Istati Membri jittrasponu u japplikaw il-liġijiet b'mod korrett.

Minbarra l-leġiżlazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni ħejjiet sensiela ta' miżuri preventivi: hija impenjata tgħin fi proġetti ta' livell rudimentali li jiġġieldu l-vjolenza ta' kontra n-nisa. Dan attwalment qed isir permezz tal-programm Daphne III, u se jkompli fil-futur bil-Programm tad-Drittijiet, l-Ugwaljanza u ċ-Ċittadinanza.

Il-Kummissjoni tgħin ukoll lill-Istati Membri biex ma jħallux il-vjolenza kontra n-nisa sseħħ permezz ta' skambji ta' prattiki tajbin u ta' attivitajiet ta' sensibilizzazzjoni, l-aktar reċenti permezz ta' sejħa għal proposti li tammonta għal EUR 3.7 miljun (2013).

Il-miżuri li ttieħdu diġà mill-Kummissjoni sabiex tgħin lill-Istati Membri jipprevjenu u jeliminaw kull forma ta' vjolenza kontra n-nisa jikkostitwixxu qafas b'saħħtu u komprensiv għal azzjoni konkreta li ġġib riżultati tanġibbli.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003512/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Prevention of violence against women

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) represents an important step in the efforts to reduce violence against women.

Does the Commission intend to issue a comprehensive strategy at EU level focusing on the prevention of violence against women?

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

The EU has adopted a number of legal measures in the field of criminal and civil justice which protect the rights of victims of gender based violence: Directive 2011/36/EU on trafficking in human beings, Directive 2011/93/EU fighting against the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, the directive on the European Protection Order applicable in criminal matters complemented by the regulation 606/2013 applicable in civil matters, and the directive 2012/29/EU on the rights of crime victims.

The Commission provides all Member States with guidance on implementing these recent measures and is also vigilant in ensuring that Member States transpose and apply the laws correctly.

Besides legislation, the Commission has put in place a range of prevention measures: it is committed to supporting projects at grass-roots level for combating violence against women. This is currently done by the Daphne III program and will continue under the future Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program.

The Commission also supports Member States to prevent violence against women through exchanges of good practices and awareness raising activities, most recently with a call for proposals for an amount of EUR 3.7 million (2013).

The measures already undertaken by the Commission to support Member States in preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women constitute a solid and comprehensive framework for concrete action, bringing tangible results.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003513/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: L-Edukazzjoni Intraprenditorjali

Fil-komunikazzjoni tagħha rigward il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni dwar l-Intraprenditorija 2020 intitolata "Tkebbis mill-ġdid tal-ispirtu tal-intraprendenza fl-Ewropa", il-Kummissjoni qalet "l-investiment fl-edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali huwa wieħed mill-iktar investimenti li jrendu li tista' tagħmel l-Ewropa". Din hija appoġġjata bir-riżultati ta' studji li jissuġġerixxu li bejn 15 % u 20 % ta' studenti tas-sekondarja li jipparteċipaw fi programmi ta' kumpaniji żgħar għad jifthu kumpanija iktar 'il quddiem.

Fid-dawl ta' dan ta' hawn fuq:

1. Il-Kummissjoni taf jekk il-qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ huwiex iktar baxx f'dawk l-Istati Membri li jinkludu l-edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali fil-kurrikulu tagħhom?

2. Il-Kummissjoni kif qed tgħin istituzzjonijiet edukattivi sabiex jiffaċilitaw l-introduzzjoni tal-edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali fil-kurrikulu tagħhom? Hemm xi programmi jew inizjattivi li jipprovdu taħriġ għall-għalliema f'dan il-qasam?

3. Il-Kummissjoni taf jekk ir-rata li biha jitniedu l-istart-ups fl-Istati Membri differenti hijiex marbuta direttament mar-rata tal-qgħad fl-istess Stati Membri? X'qed tagħmel il-Kummissjoni sabiex tinkoraġġixxi kultura ta' start-ups?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Tajani f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Mejju 2014)

Huwa diffiċli li tiġi stabbilita rabta kawżali waħda bejn l-inklużjoni ta' edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali fil-kurrikuli tal-iskejjel, li saret fi ftit pajjiżi, u l-qgħad fost iż-żgħażagħ, li jiddependi minn diversi fatturi. Ma saritx biżżejjed riċerka f'dan il-qasam. Ġie kkummissjonat studju dwar l-impatt tal-edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali, mhux biss dwar il-ħolqien ta' kumpaniji ġodda iżda wkoll dwar l-effetti fuq il-karriera taż-żgħażagħ u l-impjegabbiltà. Ir-riżultati se jkunu disponibbli fl-aħħar kwarta tas-sena 2014. Studju tal-Kummissjoni ppubblikat fl-2012 kien diġà wera impatt pożittiv f'termini ta' perjodi iqsar ta' qgħad wara l-gradwazzjoni fil-livell universitarju u l-ħolqien iktar kmieni ta' kumpaniji.

Il-Kummissjoni tinkoraġġixxi l-iskambju ta' għarfien u esperjenza. Torganizza sessjonijiet ta' ħidma għall-prattikanti u dawk li jfasslu l-politika, tippubblika linji gwida u studji ta' każijiet, u tiffinanzja proġetti Ewropej dwar kwistjonijiet ewlenin bħat-taħriġ għall-għalliema. Dan l-aħħar ġiet ippubblikata Gwida dwar it-taħriġ għall-għalliema fl-intraprenditorija. Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni qed tiżviluppa għodda għall-awtovalutazzjoni għall-iskejjel u l-universitajiet.

Meta jinfetaħ negozju ġdid, dan ikun jew ħabba li jinħass il-bżonn tiegħu ([1]) jew inkella għax wieħed jara fih opportunità. L-edukazzjoni intraprenditorjali se tippromwovi b'mod partikolari t-tieni tip ta' negozju ġdid imsemmi. Hemm stħarriġiet li jikkonfermaw li l-impriżi li jiġu mnedija minħabba opportunità normalment ikollhom rata ta' sopravivenza iktar għolja. Skont il-Monitoraġġ Intraprenditorjali Globali, in-nies iħarsu lejn l-iktar livell baxx ta' opportunitajiet u l-iktar livell baxx ta' kapaċità personali biex jibdew kumpanija fil-pajjiżi tal-UE bl-ogħla rati ta' qgħad. Fl-Ewropa hemm bżonn ta' iktar intraprendituri mmexxija mill-opportunità u ta' aktar SMEs li jikbru iktar malajr. Din hija r-raġuni għaliex il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni għall-Intraprenditorija jipproponi sett ta' azzjonijiet biex tingħata ħajja mill-ġdid lill-kultura intraprenditorjali fl-Ewropa, billi jibda mill-edukazzjoni.

([1]) eż. il-qgħad.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003513/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Entrepreneurship education

In its communication about the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan entitled 'Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe', the Commission stated that 'investing in entrepreneurship education is one of the highest return investments Europe can make'. This is complemented by the results of surveys which suggest that between 15% and 20% of secondary school students who participate in mini-company programmes will later start their own company.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission know whether youth unemployment is lower in those Member States which include entrepreneurship education in their curricula?

2. How is the Commission helping educational institutions to facilitate the introduction of entrepreneurship education into their curricula? Are there any programmes or initiatives which provide for teacher training in this field?

3. Does the Commission know whether the rate at which start-up enterprises are launched in the different Member States is directly linked to the rate of unemployment in the same Member States? What is the Commission doing to encourage a start-up culture?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(26 May 2014)

It is difficult to establish a single cause connection between including entrepreneurship education in school curricula, done by a few countries, and youth unemployment, which depends on several factors. There is little research in this area. A study was commissioned on the impact of entrepreneurship education, not only on the creation of new companies but also on the effects on young people's careers and employability. Results will be available in Q4 2014. A Commission study published in 2012 has already shown a positive impact in terms of shorter periods of unemployment after graduation at university and earlier company creation.

The Commission encourages the sharing of knowledge and experience. It organises workshops for practitioners and policy-makers, publishes guidelines and case studies, funds European projects on key issues such as teachers' training. A Guide on training teachers in entrepreneurship has recently been published. Also, the Commission is developing self-assessment tools for schools and universities.

Start-ups can be launched either because of necessity ([1]) or because of perceived opportunities. Entrepreneurship education will especially promote the second of these types of start-ups. Surveys confirm that opportunity-driven ventures usually have a higher survival rate. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, people perceive the lowest level of opportunities and the lowest level of personal capability to start a company in EU countries with the highest unemployment rates. Europe needs more opportunity-driven entrepreneurs and more fast-growing SMEs. This is why the Entrepreneurship Action Plan proposes a set of actions to re-ignite the entrepreneurial culture in Europe, starting with education.

([1]) e.g. unemployment.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003514/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Klassifikazzjoni mill-ġdid u reviżjoni tal-kriterji ta' evalwazzjoni fil-proċeduri ta' akkwist

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tindika jekk il-klassifikazzjoni mill-ġdid tal-offerenti, li ssegwi klassifika stabbilita minn kumitat għall-evalwazzjoni, tikkostitwix ksur tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-akkwist applikabbli tal-UE?

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tindika wkoll jekk reviżjoni tal-kriterji ta' evalwazzjoni waqt il-proċess tal-għażla tikkostitwix ksur tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-akkwist applikabbli tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(21 ta' Mejju 2014)

Filwaqt li d-Direttivi dwar l-Akkwist Pubbliku ma jirreferux għal "kumitati ta' evalwazzjoni" fil-kuntest ta' kuntratti pubbliċi bħala tali, id-dispożizzjonijiet li jirregolaw il-kompetizzjonijiet ta' disinn jirreferu b'mod espliċitu għall-possibbiltà li d-deċiżjoni tal-ġurija tista' ma tkunx vinkolanti fuq l-awtorità kontraenti.

Għalhekk, jekk ir-riklassifikazzjoni tal-offerti mill-awtorità kontraenti li ssegwi l-ewwel klassifikazzjoni minn "kumitat ta' evalwazzjoni" hijiex legali jew le jiddependi fuq analiżi ta' każ b'każ (kien hemm xi ħaġa indikata bħala ta' natura mhux vinkolanti, għaliex u kif twettqet ir-riklassifikazzjoni …).

It-tibdil tal-kriterji tal-għoti wara l-preżentazzjoni tal-offerti ([1]), bħala punt ta' tluq, ikun jikkostitwixxi bidla sostanzjali fil-proċedura ta' akkwist li tmur kontra l-prinċipju tat-trattament ugwali.

Jekk ċerti bidliet jiġu introdotti qabel ma jinfetħu l-offerti u jekk dawn jinżammu fi ħdan il-limiti stretti stabbiliti mill-Qorti fis-sentenza tagħha tal-24 ta' Novembru 2005 fil-Każ C-331/04, dawn jistgħu jkunu legali, jiddependi, għal darb'oħra, fuq analiżi każ b'każ.

([1]) Mistoqsija: "ir-reviżjoni tal-kriterji ta' evalwazzjoni waqt il-proċess tal-għażla".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003514/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Re-ranking and revision of evaluation criteria in procurement procedures

Can the Commission indicate whether the re-ranking of tenderers following a ranking established by an evaluation committee constitutes a violation of the applicable EU procurement legislation?

Can the Commission also indicate whether a revision of the evaluation criteria during the selection process constitutes a violation of the applicable EU procurement legislation?

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

While the Public Procurement Directives do not refer to 'evaluation committees' in the context of public contracts as such, the provisions governing design contests explicitly refer to the possibility that the jury's decision might not be binding on the contracting authority.

Whether re-ranking of tenders by the contracting authority following a first ranking by an 'evaluation committee' is lawful or not would therefore depend on a case-by-case analysis (was anything indicated as to a non-binding character, why and how was the re-ranking carried out …).

Changing the award criteria after the presentation of the tenders ([1]) would, as a starting point, constitute a substantial change of the procurement procedure contrary to the principle of equal treatment.

If introduced before the tenders are opened and provided they are kept within the strict limits established by the Court in its judgment of 24.11.2005 in Case C-331/04, then certain changes might be lawful, depending, again, on a case by case analysis.

([1]) Question: 'revision of the evaluation criteria during the selection process'.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003515/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sikurezza tal-anzjani fid-djar

Eżerċizzju tal-awditjar reċenti tad-djar residenzjali għall-anzjani, imwettaq mill-Uffiċċju tal-Kummissarju għas-Saħħa Mentali u l-Anzjani f'Malta, sab li s-sikurezza tal-pazjenti fid-djar tal-anzjani qiegħda f'riskju minħabba l-prattiki mifruxa mhux xierqa fit-tqassim u d-dokumentazzjoni tal-mediċini.

Fid-dawl ta' dan, tista' l-Kummissjoni tagħti xi tip ta' informazzjoni dwar il-miżuri ta' sikurezza li hemm fid-djar tal-anzjani fl-Istati Membri l-oħra u kemm dawn qed jitħarsu tajjeb?

Tista' tagħti sommarju qasir tar-regoli rilevanti tal-UE li qegħdin fis-seħħ?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Mejju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea ma għandha ebda informazzjoni speċifika dwar il-miżuri tas-sikurezza fis-seħħ fid-djar għall-anzjani fl-Istati Membri u lanqas dwar jekk dawk il-miżuri humiex qed jiġu osservati. Id-definizzjoni ta' politiki dwar is-saħħa, kif ukoll l-organizzazzjoni u t-twassil tas-servizzi tas-saħħa, il-kura medika u l-kura tas-saħħa fit-tul huma responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri.

Ir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill dwar is-sikurezza tal-pazjenti ([1]) tistabbilixxi dawk l-azzjonijiet li għandhom jieħdu l-Istati Membri sabiex iħarsu "l-pazjenti . Dawn l-azzjonijiet jinkludu: li tingħata prijorità lis-sikurezza tal-pazjent fil-politiki tas-saħħa, li tingħata ċertu setgħa lill-pazjenti, li jiġu stabbiliti sistemi ta" rappurtar meta xi ħaġa tmur ħażin, li jingħataw edukazzjoni u taħriġ lill-professjonisti tas-saħħa, u li jkun hemm skambju ta' prassi tajba. Id-dispożizzjonijiet japplikaw għal kull qasam fejn tingħata l-kura tas-saħħa.

Barra minn hekk, l-Azzjoni Konġunta ALCOVE ("Joint Action Alzheimer Cooperative Valuation in Europe") ([2]), implimentata bejn l-2010 u l-2013 b'kofinanzjament mill-Programm tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa, identifikat il-preskrizzjoni żejda ta' sustanzi psikotropiċi bħala wieħed mill-problemi prinċipali ta' sikurezza u etika fid-djar tal-kura residenzjali għall-anzjani, b'mod partikolari fost ir-residenti bid-dimenzja. Għalhekk, l-Azzjoni Konġunta żviluppat l-"online toolbox for antipsychotics limitation in dementia" (għodda onlajn biex jitnaqqsu l-antipsikotiċi fid-dimenzja). Barra minn hekk, il-proġett "MHP Hands" (Multimedia Home Platform, 2010-2013) żviluppa manwal biex jippromwovi s-saħħa mentali għall-ambjenti residenzjali għall-anzjani ([3]).

([1]) Ir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill (2009/C 151/01) tad-9 ta' Ġunju 2009 dwar is-sikurezza tal-pazjent, inklużi l-prevenzjoni u l-kontroll ta' infezzjonijiet assoċjati mal-kura tas-saħħa (ĠU C 151, 3.7.2009, p. 6).
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/.
([3]) http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/?i=handbook.en.e-handbooks-old.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003515/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Safety of the elderly in homes

A recent audit of residential homes for the elderly, conducted by the Office of the Commissioner for Mental Health and Older Persons in Malta, has found that patients' safety in homes for the elderly is at risk from widespread inappropriate practices for dispensing and documenting medication.

In light of the above, can the Commission give any information on the safety measures in place in homes for the elderly in the other Member States and how well such measures are being complied with?

Can it provide a brief summary of the relevant EU rules in place?

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

The European Commission does not have any specific information on the safety measures in place in homes for the elderly in the Member States nor on how such measures are being complied with. The definition of health policies, as well as the organisation and delivery of health services, medical care and long term care is under the responsibility of the Member States.

The Council Recommendation on patient safety ([1]) sets actions to be taken by Member States in order to reduce harm to patients. They include: prioritising patient safety in health policies, empowering patients, establishing reporting systems on adverse events, education and training of health professionals and exchange of good practice. The provisions apply to all settings where healthcare is dispensed.

In addition, the 'Joint Action Alzheimer Cooperative Valuation in Europe (Alcove)' ([2]), implemented between 2010 and 2013 with co-funding from the EU-Health Programme, identified the over-prescription of psychotropic drugs as a major safety and ethics issue in residential care home for older people, in particular among residents with dementia. The Joint Action therefore developed an 'online toolbox for antipsychotics limitation in dementia'. Furthermore, the 'MHP Hands'-project (2010-2013) developed a handbook for mental health promotion for older people's residential settings ([3]).

([1]) Council Recommendation (2009 C 151/01) of 9 June 2009 on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections (OJ C 151, 3.7.2009, p. 6).
([2]) http://www.alcove-project.eu/
([3]) http://www.mentalhealthpromotion.net/?i=handbook.en.e-handbooks-old

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003516/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: L-intrapriżi soċjali

Fil-komunikazzjoni tagħha dwar il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni dwar l-Intraprenditorija 2020, bit-titolu "Tkebbis mill-ġdid tal-ispirtu tal-intraprendenza fl-Ewropa", il-Kummissjoni fost l-oħrajn tagħmel referenza għall-intrapriżi soċjali (distinti minn intrapriżi kummerċjali). F'dan il-kuntest, hija tenfasizza li l-atturi tal-ekonomija soċjali u l-intrapriżi soċjali jitqiesu bħala katalisti importanti fil-ħolqien tax-xogħol inklużiv u fl-innovazzjoni. Min-naħa l-oħra, il-Kummissjoni tirrikonoxxi li l-intrapriżi soċjali jistgħu jiffaċċjaw diffikultajiet oħrajn minbarra dawk li jiltaqgħu magħhom l-SMEs.

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja ta' xi analiżi komparattiva li turi kif l-intrapriżi soċjali huma regolati fi Stati Membri differenti? Barra minn hekk, l-għadd ta' intrapriżi soċjali u r-rata tat-tkabbir tagħhom huma korrelatati mal-indiċi tal-innovazzjoni tal-pajjiż?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(16 ta' Mejju 2014)

F'April 2013, il-Kummissjoni varat studju ta' ġbir ta' informazzjoni sabiex timplimenta l-azzjoni ewlenija nru 5 tal-Inizjattiva ta' Negozju Soċjali ([1]).

Dan l-istudju ta' valutazzjoni jkopri t-28 Stat Membru tal-Unjoni Ewropea u l-Isvizzera u għandu jitlesta sal-aħħar ta' Lulju 2014. Ir-riżultat ġenerali għandu jkun analiżi raġunata bir-reqqa u motivata tajjeb li tipprovdi bażi għall-iżvilupp u l-implimentazzjoni tal-politika kif ukoll għal riċerka ulterjuri f'dan il-qasam.

Fost il-ħidmiet li jridu jitwettqu nsibu l-immappjar tal-oqfsa legali u t-tikketti, u l-identifikazzjoni tal-ostakli regolatorji. L-istudju għandu:

— Jagħti deskrizzjoni tal-leġiżlazzjoni nazzjonali rilevanti li tapplika għall-intrapriżi soċjali kollha jew is-sottogruppi tagħhom f'kull Stat Membru

— Jinkludi sommarju komparattiv li jipprovdi informazzjoni għal kull pajjiż dwar l-aktar regoli importanti li japplikaw għall-"aspetti tal-liġi tal-kumpaniji" tal-intrapriżi soċjali.

Mill-informazzjoni li għandha l--Kummissjoni, din il-korrelazzjoni qatt ma ġiet investigata. Il-qafas ta' kejl tat-Tabella ta' Valutazzjoni tal-Unjoni ([2]) tqis diversi fatturi, li mhux kollha huma marbuta mal-intrapriża soċjali u għalhekk ikun diffiċli li tiġi stabbilita l-kawżalità.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/ius/ius-2014_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003516/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Social enterprises

In its communication on the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, entitled 'Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe', the Commission inter alia makes reference to social enterprises, as distinct from business enterprises. In this context, it emphasises that social economy actors and social enterprises are considered as important drivers of inclusive job creation and innovation. On the other hand, the Commission recognises that social enterprises may encounter difficulties that are additional to those encountered by SMEs.

Is the Commission aware of any comparative analysis showing how social enterprises are regulated in different Member States? Moreover, are the number of social enterprises and the rate of their growth correlated to the country's innovation index?

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

In April 2013, the Commission launched a mapping study in order to implement key action 5 of the Social Business Initiative ([1]).

This evaluative study covers all 28 Member States of the European Union and Switzerland and should be completed by the end of July 2014. The overall result should be a carefully reasoned and well-founded analysis that provides a basis for policy development and implementation as well as for further research in this area.

Among the tasks to be carried out is the mapping of legal frameworks and labels, and identification of regulatory barriers. The study should:

— Give a description of the pertinent national legislation applying to all or subsets of social enterprises in each Member State

— Include a comparative summary table providing information for each country on the most important rules applicable to the 'company law aspects' of social enterprises.

To the Commission's knowledge, such a correlation has never been investigated. The measurement framework of the Innovation Union Scoreboard ([2]) takes into account multiple factors, not all of which relate to social enterprise thus a causality would be difficult to establish.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/ius/ius-2014_en.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003517/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sigurtà u d-difiża

Fl-indirizz tiegħu waqt il-konferenza ta' livell għoli dwar is-settur tas-sigurtà u d-difiża Ewropew, il-President tal-Kummissjoni, José Manuel Durão Barroso, irrefera għall-ambjent strateġiku u ġeopolitiku li qed jevolvi l-ħin kollu, u li jippreżenta medda wiesgħa ta' sfidi ġodda u kumplessi ta' natura transnazzjonali dwar is-sigurtà. Il-President semma t-terroriżmu internazzjonali, it-theddidiet ċibernetiċi, il-piraterija u l-ksur tad-drittijiet tal-bniedem bħala eżempji ta' sfidi bħal dawn. Filwaqt li appella għal politika ta' sigurtà u ta' difiża komuni msaħħa u aktar kredibbli, is-Sur Barroso insista li dawn l-isfidi l-ġodda jistgħu jiġu indirizzati biss permezz ta' approċċ estensiv li "jgħaqqad flimkien politiki u strumenti differenti, sostnuti minn medda kbira ta' kapaċitajiet ċivili u militari".

Tista' l-Kummissjoni tikkjarifika l-messaġġ tal-President? X'valutazzjoni tagħti l-Kummissjoni tal-kapaċità tal-UE biex tindirizza dawn it-theddidiet ġodda għas-sigurtà? X'eżerċizzji qegħdin isiru biex tiġi analizzata r-reazzjoni tal-UE għal dawn it-theddidiet ġodda għas-sigurtà?

Tweġiba mogħtija mir-Rappreżentant Għoli/Viċi President Ashton f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(10 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-Ewropa u l-bqija tad-dinja jaffrontaw firxa wiesgħa ta' sfidi tas-sigurtà, ħafna minnhom ta' natura transnazzjonali jew globali. F'konformità mal-kompetenzi tagħha, l-UE għalhekk impenjat ruħha biex tiżviluppa rispons għal dawn l-isfidi pereż. permezz tal-Komunikazzjoni riċenti tagħna "L-approċċ komprensiv tal-UE għal kunflitt u kriżijiet esterni" (JOIN(2013) 30 finali). Din il-Komunikazzjoni timmira li tkabbar l-impatt u l-konsistenza ta' strumenti u riżorsi tal-UE fl-indirizzar ta' kunflitt u kriżijiet esterni, li ħafna drabi jkollhom riperkussjonijiet tas-sigurtà kemm ġewwa kif ukoll barra l-Unjoni. Strumenti tal-UE disponibbli jinkludu missjonijiet tal-PSDK, twissijiet bikrin, prevenzjonijiet tal-kunflitt u għodod għall-konsolidazzjoni tal-paċi kif ukoll assistenza esterna u għajnuna umanitarja. Filwaqt li l-Kumitat Politiku u ta' Sigurtà (KPS) jissorvelja x-xogħol fuq theddid ta' sigurtà estern, il-Kumitat Permanenti għall-Kooperazzjoni Operattiva dwar is-Sigurtà Interna (COSI) jikkoordina attivitajiet relatati ma' sigurtà interna fl-UE. Iż-żewġ kumitati wkoll jiltaqgħu regolarment f'sessjonijiet konġunti, filwaqt li jiddiskutu kwistjonijiet bħall-ġellieda barranin, il-Mali/Sahel jew il-Viċinat tan-Nofsinhar. Kwistjonijiet trasversali bħas-sigurtà marittima jew iċ-ċibersigurità huma diskussi fi gruppi "tal-Ħbieb tal-Presidenza" dedikati li jlaqqgħu esperti madwar dipartimenti differenti. Pereżempju "L-Istrateġija ta' Ċibersigurità tal-Unjoni Ewropea: Ċiberspazju Miftuħ, Sikur u Sigur" (JOIN (2013) 1 finali) tas-sena l-oħra timmira li tkabbar iċ-ċibersigurità, filwaqt li tippromwovi l-valuri prinċipali u d-drittijiet fundamentali tal-UE. Hija tirrappreżenta l-ewwel dokument ta' politika komprensiva tal-UE f'dan il-qasam li jikkonsisti fis-suq intern, il-ġustizzja u l-affarijiet interni u angoli barranin u ta' sigurtà komuni ta' dan is-suġġett kumpless.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003517/14
to the Commission
Roberta Metsola (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Security and defence

In his address to the high-level conference on the European security and defence sector, the President of the Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, referred to the constantly evolving strategic and geopolitical environment, which presents a wide range of new and complex security challenges of a transnational nature. The President mentioned international terrorism, cyber threats, piracy and human rights violations as examples of such challenges. While advocating a strengthened and more credible common security and defence policy, Mr Barroso insisted that these new challenges can only be addressed in a comprehensive approach 'combining different policies and instruments, underpinned by a large range of civil and military capabilities'.

Can the Commission clarify the President's message? What is the Commission's assessment of the EU's capacity to address these new security threats? What exercises, if any, are being carried out to review the EU's responses to these new security threats?

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

Europe and the rest of the world face a wide range of security challenges, many of them of a transnational or global nature. In accordance with its competences, the EU has therefore endeavoured to develop responses to these challenges e.g. through our recent Communication 'The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflict and crises' (JOIN(2013) 30 final). This communication aims at enhancing the impact and consistency of EU instruments and resources in tackling external conflict and crises, which often have security repercussions both within and outside the Union. Available EU instruments include CSDP missions, early-warning, conflict prevention and peace-building tools as well as external assistance and humanitarian aid. While the Political and Security Committee (PSC) oversees work on external security threats, the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI) coordinates activities relating to EU-internal security. Both committees also meet regularly in joint sessions, discussing issues such as foreign fighters, Mali/Sahel or the Southern Neighbourhood. Cross-cutting issues such as maritime or cyber security are discussed in dedicated 'Friends of Presidency' groups that assemble experts across different departments. For example last year's 'Cybersecurity Strategy of the European Union: An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace' (JOIN(2013) 1 final) aims at enhancing cybersecurity, while promoting EU core values and fundamental rights. It represents the first comprehensive policy document of the EU in this area comprising internal market, justice and home affairs and common foreign and security angles of this complex topic.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003518/14
to the Commission
Catherine Stihler (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Inclusive growth pillar

Now that the Commission is beginning its mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy, can it indicate what it has done under the inclusive growth pillar? Furthermore, with poverty and social exclusion rates rising across Europe, can the Commission also detail how it will ensure that inclusive growth is a key driver of EU policy over the next six years?

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

The Commission provides comprehensive employment and social policy guidance under the Europe 2020 strategy. It sets overall budget, economic and social priorities to boost growth, employment and social cohesion through the European Semester, under which country-specific recommendations are issued in the employment and social policies. The Social Investment Package urges EU countries to put emphasis on human capital development, giving them guidance on efficient and effective social policies. The SIP is implemented through the European Semester and with the support of EU Funds. Between 2014-20, EU Funds will support the fight against poverty and social exclusion with at least around 23% of cohesion policy funds to be allocated to the ESF and at least 20% of total ESF in each Member State to be allocated to 'promoting social inclusion and combating poverty'.

The Commission supports Member States in tackling poverty and social exclusion. It promotes cooperation among EU Members through a framework for multilateral surveillance and mutual learning to support reforms of national social protection systems. The Commission communication ([1]) on the social dimension of EMU aims to strengthen employment and social policy coordination within the European Semester.

The Commission communication 'Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy' ([2]) sets the scene for a mid-term review of the strategy. This includes an EU-wide public consultation to ascertain the views of all parties concerned on how the strategy should develop over the next five years. Following the consultation, the Commission will put forward proposals early in 2015.

([1]) 'Strengthening the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union' (COM(2013) 690 final of 2.10.2013).
([2]) COM(2014) 130 final/2 of 19.3.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003519/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Rise in cases of scarlet fever

According to findings published by the Public Health Agency (PHA) in my constituency, Northern Ireland, there was a sharp rise in cases of scarlet fever in the first eight weeks of 2014, compared with those of 2013. The number of cases reported overall rose to 199 last year, compared to 130 cases in 2011.

In this context, can the Commission detail what action it has taken — and will take — to assist Member States in the prevention and treatment of this childhood disease?

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

Scarlet fever is not included in the list of communicable diseases monitored at EU level under the European Parliament and Council Decision 1082/2013/EU ([1]) on serious cross-border health threats amending Decisions 534/2003/EC ([2]) and 875/2007/EC ([3]) to previous Decision 2119/98/EC ([4]).

Thus measures and actions to prevent the further transmission of the disease fall under national competence.

([1]) http://eu-rlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:293:0001:0015:EN:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:184:0035:0039:EN:PDF
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:344:0048:0049:EN:PDF
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02000D0096-20120905&from=EN

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003520/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Anniversary of genocide in Rwanda

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, an atrocity against humanity that has been forever etched in the memories of all of us who can recall even the media coverage at the time, it is right that we in this Parliament put on record our solidarity with the victims. We must build a better future and renew our commitment to assist where we can and to do everything within our power to ensure that such evil can never happen again.

In Northern Ireland, society is still coming to terms with a sectarian terror campaign waged against its population by Irish Republican terrorists, and many innocent victims can empathise with the pain and scars carried by the Rwandan people.

In this context, what is the Commission doing:

1. to mark the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide?

2. to assist the victims and reconciliation efforts in Rwanda?

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

HR/VP Catherine Ashton issued a Declaration on behalf of the EU on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the start of the genocide in Rwanda (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142130.pdf), and sent the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis to the commemoration ceremonies in Kigali on 7 April.

The EU has been very active in supporting transitional justice and reconciliations efforts in Rwanda:

Specific EU support was provided for the 'Gacaca' jurisdictions dealing with genocide perpetrators. On the issue of Transitional Justice the EU has also supported the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha. Since April 2010 a EUR 12 million Sector Budget Support for Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order, also aims at the eradication of genocide ideology and the reinforcement of reconciliation mechanisms.

Many more EU-funded, relatively small scale projects addressing the issue of reconciliation in Rwanda have been launched and implemented with the support and active involvement of Rwanda's civil society over the past years (examples can be seen here: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/rwanda_peace_media_reconciliation_en.pdf); they include trauma support, culture ('Art and memory'), social research, movie productions etc.

EU commitment to poverty reduction in Rwanda, with over EUR 380 million from the 10th European Development Fund (2008-2013) has been crucial in providing basic services to the most vulnerable (i.e. widows, victims of gender based violence, survivors, orphans), thus contributing to unity and reconciliation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003521/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Suspected war criminals living in the EU

Recently, it was reported that between January 2012 and April 2013, the UK Home Office investigated nearly 800 cases where individuals residing in the United Kingdom were suspected of war crimes and crimes against humanity. In addition, between 2005 and 2012 more than 700 suspected war criminals were identified by UK immigration officials.

In this context, what steps have been and will be taken at EU level to better detect, detain and facilitate prosecution of individuals suspected of war crimes, especially in developing countries on the African continent?

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

Competence to investigate, prosecute and try cases of war crimes, as well as other serious international crimes lies with the Member States, whilst the International Criminal Court (ICC) has complementary competence, i.e. when national courts are unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute such crimes.

The Union backs the effective functioning of the ICC and seeks to advance universal support for it by promoting the widest possible participation in the Rome Statute. Together with the Member States it also aims at ensuring consistency and coherence between its instruments and policies in all areas of its external and internal actions ([1]).

The Union established the European network of contact points in respect of persons responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes ('Genocide Network') at Eurojust and laid the ground for facilitating and enhancing the cooperation and assistance between Member States' investigation and prosecution authorities through designated national Contact Points ([2]). In particular the decision of 2003 underlines the need for an effective exchange of information between the relevant national law enforcement and immigration authorities in order to carry out their tasks effectively.

([1]) The Union and the ICC signed an agreement on cooperation and assistance on 10.4.2006, OJ L 115, 28.4.2006. Cf. also Common Positions 2001/443/CFSP of 11.6.2001 and Council Decision 2011/168/CFSP of 21.5.2011.

([2]) Decision 2002/494/JHA, of 13.6.2002 and Decision 2003/335/JHA, of 8.5.2003.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003522/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Dissuading terror in the Sahel-Saharan countries

In the past month, the UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee indicated its view that the UK's 'light' diplomatic work in countries of the Sahel-Saharan region has not contributed to the uprooting of violent extremism, including jihadism.

In this context, can the Commission detail what steps are being taken at EU level to support the fight against terror and endorse the rule of law in this region of the world?

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

Over the last years, the EU has enhanced considerably its level of engagement in support of counter-terrorism efforts in the Sahel-Saharan region.

The EU supported the African led stabilisation mission in Mali and continues to support it in its UN format (Minusma). The EU also funds a wide range of cooperation programs in the field of security, governance, counter-terrorism and counter-radicalization. One of this programs in particular, funded under the European Neighbourhood Partnership, supports rule-of-law-compliant investigations and prosecutions in the Maghreb region.

Moreover, specific CSDP missions resourced by the EU and its Member States were deployed since July 2012: (i) a EU military training and advisory mission (EUTM Mali) with the objective to restructure the defence forces there; (ii) EUCAP SAHEL (civilian) in order to help strengthen the rule of law and regional and international security coordination in Niger (iii) EUBAM Libya (civilian) to support Integrated Border Management (border police, customs, immigration authorities). An additional civilian mission is being prepared to support internal security forces (police, gendarmerie, National Guard) in Mali.

In 2011, the European Commission launched a Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) in order to promote best practices and methods to mitigate the risk and it will continue its endeavours along the lines of the January 2014 Communication on preventing radicalisation to terrorism and violent extremism (COM(2013) 941). Political and security developments which may translate into terrorist threat are reviewed regularly by the Council with the objective to better coordinate Member States' and the EU responses.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003524/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Competitiveness in EU medical device manufacturing

US medical device entrepreneurs who have relocated their businesses to Europe in search of a more favourable regulatory climate fear that an overhaul of EU rules will slow down approvals.

A series of US manufacturers of new medical devices have shifted to Europe, where more liberal regulations have allowed them to get quicker access to finance and markets for their products. In view of the possible tightening of these regulations, companies are now looking at options for relocating from Europe to countries such as China.

What is the current state of play in relation to stronger regulation, and what mechanisms are in place to keep Europe an attractive place for foreign investors to do business?

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

The fundamental objective of the Union's medical devices legislation is to ensure a high level of public health and patient safety, as well as the good functioning of the internal market.

In 2012, the Commission presented legislative proposals ([1]) in order to take account of technical and international developments and respond to a number of weaknesses of the current regulatory framework. The proposals aim at strengthening the safety of medical devices while at the same time preserving an innovative and competitive medical device industry in the Union.

The proposals are based on a thorough impact assessment which has carefully analysed the impact of various options on the safety of medical devices and the industry's competitiveness. Rapid market access of innovative products whose safety has been adequately proven is important for patients and for producers. On this basis, the Commission has proposed to improve the current system for market access but not to replace it through a pre-market approval by public authorities.

The Parliament voted at first reading a number of amendments to the proposals on 2/04/2014 while discussions in Council are ongoing.

([1]) COM(2012) 541 final and COM(2012) 542 final, 26 September 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003525/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Tackling lung cancer

Lung cancer rates among women in the UK have risen by 73% since 1975, while falling by 47% among men.

What steps has the Commission taken to raise awareness of climbing cancer rates among women?

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

The International Agency for Research on Cancer has just revised and updated the European Code Against Cancer. The Code includes information on cancer preventive measures to address risk factors. Addressing the public at large in a citizen-friendly manner, the Code is the key communication tool on the prevention of cancer, including lung cancer in women.

In addition, as regards tobacco smoking, the European Commission has recently revised the health warning messages that are currently being printed on the back of tobacco packages ([1]). Two out of the 14 messages used are related to cancer ('Smoking causes 9 out of 10 lung cancers' and 'Smoking causes mouth and throat cancer'). Under the new Tobacco Products Directive, these warning messages will be complemented by images on both sides of cigarette packages, so as to improve their effectiveness.

Furthermore, several of the provisions of the new Tobacco Products Directive are expected to limit the appeal of such products in particular to young people, e.g. by prohibiting products with characterising flavours and attractive packaging that can appeal to young women.

([1]) Commission Directive 2012/9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003526/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Combating obesity and related diseases

Obesity rates in Europe have been growing at an accelerated rate over the past two decades. In the European Union, between 36.9% and 56.7% of all women — and between 51% and 69.3% of all men — are overweight or obese, according to data gathered in 2008 and 2009. Estimates on the growth of obesity suggest that by 2030 more than 40% of the population in the United Kingdom will be obese.

An obese individual is at serious risk of developing diseases like type 2 diabetes, and the risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases increases considerably with obesity.

In light of the above, what steps has the Commission taken to highlight the alarming rise in obesity and related diseases?

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

The European Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its replies to written questions E-002541/2014, E-001176/2014 and E-00930/2014 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003528/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Impact of exercise on prevalence of flu

A recent study suggests that 100 cases of flu per 1 000 people could be prevented just by engaging in vigorous exercise. Around 4 800 people took part in this year's online flu survey, run by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The results clearly show the health benefits of exercise.

In light of the above, what steps has the Commission taken to highlight the benefits of exercise in combating illnesses such as flu across Europe?

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

Physical activity plays an important role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The benefits of physical activity are well documented: it contributes to reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases, of some cancers and of type 2 diabetes; it is linked to improvements in musculoskeletal health and weight control ([1]). There is also a growing body of evidence suggesting a positive association between physical activity and mental health ([2]).

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([3]) and the 2014 Action Plan on Childhood Obesity ([4]) promote both a balanced diet and active lifestyles.

The results of the study mentioned by the honourable Member of the European Parliament should however be interpreted with caution as it is not unexpected that healthy young people performing vigorous exercise may have a better natural immunity. This association is furthermore in accordance with another study in which vigorous exercise associated with supplementation of vitamin C was considered as a beneficial factor for preventing common cold ([5]). However, the decreased rate of flu-like illness might also be linked with a bias in reporting: healthy people are more likely to respond to this kind of survey than sick people or persons with underlying conditions.

In the case of infectious diseases, further studies, with different design and settings, are needed to show a possible causal relationship of vigorous exercise on upper respiratory infections.

([1]) Lee IM, Shiroma EJ, Lobelo F, Puska P, Blair SN, Katzmarzyk PT, Lancet Physical Activity Series Working Group. Effect of physical activity on major non-communicable disease worldwide: an analysis of burden of disease and life expectancy 2012 Jul. Lancet; 380 (9838): 219 -29.

([2]) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Report 2008 — http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/Report/pdf/CommitteeReport.pdf

([3]) COM(2007) 279.

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf

([5]) Douglas RM et al. PLos Medicine 2005. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pmed.0020168 — http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.0020168

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003529/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Tackling isolation among older people

A new report reveals that isolation among the elderly could reach 'epidemic proportions' by 2030. Loneliness and isolation have become a 'serious issue' for our ageing population, according to a report by charity Independent Age and the International Longevity Centre — UK (ILC UK). What mechanisms or long-term plans does the Commission have in place to help tackle this epidemic before it begins?

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

The EY2012 ([1]) highlighted the importance of participation of older people in the life of their communities. It encouraged involvement of seniors in social, cultural and political activities that would give them opportunities to stay active and involved, thereby preventing loneliness and isolation. Many activities were highlighted in the database of initiatives of the EY2012 ([2]), and some Member States offered financial support for promoting social participation of seniors. ([3]) The Active Ageing Index ([4]) developed during the EY2012 also covers the participation of the older people.

The EIP ([5]) on Active and Healthy Ageing ([6]) furthermore aims to improve the quality of life of older people in Europe. In particular, partners working on innovation for age-friendly environments highlight the importance of engaging and empowering older people in society ([7]).

Social connectedness is closely related to measures of subjective well-being, which are monitored through EU-wide surveys. One of them is the European Quality of Life Survey ([8]), which found higher levels of life satisfaction among older people ([9]) than among people aged 25 to 64. A more in-depth analysis of the situation of older people will be possible on the basis of the results of the subjective well-being module of the EU-SILC survey to be released in 2015 ([10]).

Public policies can only play a limited role in tackling the problems of loneliness and isolation (compared to the role of families and local communities). Whatever public policy measures can be taken would remain a responsibility of the authorities in the Member States.

([1]) European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012: http://europa.eu/ey2012/
([2]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?catId=972&langId=en
([3]) For example in Polish Seniors' Activity Programme: http://www.mpips.gov.pl/seniorzyaktywne-starzenie/rzadowy-program-asos/
([4]) http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home
([5]) European Innovation partnership.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing&pg=home
([7]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/eipaha/actiongroup/index/d4
([8]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2012/64/en/1/EF1264EN.pdf
([9]) Namely those over the age of 65.
([10]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/gdp_and_beyond/quality_of_life/context

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003531/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Condemning child marriage

The scourge of child marriage prevents girls and women across the globe from fulfilling their potential in life and in society, often violating their right to health, education and freedom from violence in the process. It also robs them of the free will to choose for themselves who, when and if they wish to marry. Malawi is a prime example, as UN agencies such as Unicef and Human Rights Watch have repeatedly highlighted. In Malawi, 1 in 2 girls will be married before the age of 18, and 12% by the age of 15.

What is the Commission doing at European level to help defend girls in countries where this practice is prevalent, and also to ensure that it does not occur within EU borders?

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

Child marriage is most common in South Asia and in West and Central Africa, where 46% and 41%, respectively, of girls marry or enter into union before 18. While child marriage is a global phenomenon, its prevalence varies significantly among countries.

The EU advocates for a coherent approach to protect the rights of the child based on a systematic action. 60 EU Delegations worldwide have prioritised children in their Human Rights Country Strategies. The EU Action Plan under the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy has prioritised concrete actions aiming to prevent early and forced marriages affecting children.

Draft Terms of Reference for a diplomatic campaign aiming to lend further visible, political support to preventing and addressing child, early and forced marriages is being prepared.

Through the EIDHR, the EU supports civil society organisations focused on women's and children's rights worldwide. Financial assistance also came from the Investing in People programme and its focus on fighting violence against children. This focus will be maintained within the new programme Global Public Goods and Challenges.

At the multilateral level, the campaign to prevent and end child, early and forced marriages recently gained momentum. As manifested by the call to action by the 2013 UN Commission on the Status of Women, there has been an increased commitment to end violence against girls and women by placing special focus on prevention. During the 23rd session of the Human Rights Council, the EU and the African group took the initiative for a joint statement on ending child, early and forced marriage. The EU cooperates closely with the UN, in particular with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN Women and Unicef.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003532/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Raising autism awareness

A recent report by a committee in the UK House of Lords said that the UK's Mental Capacity Act was failing those it was intended to help. It reported that vulnerable adults are being failed by the act designed to protect and empower them. Social workers, healthcare professionals and others involved in the care of vulnerable adults are not aware of the act, and are failing to implement it. Some MPs in the House of Commons also expressed concerns that individuals who have conditions such as autism were unable to fully comprehend the commitments they were making when financial services companies pushed them into signing up to credit arrangements or contracts.

With these concerns in mind, and with World Autism Awareness Day approaching on 2 April, is there anything the Commission is doing, or can do, to help educate and spread awareness within wider society, and to give vulnerable adults greater protection?

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

The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 ([1]) contributes to empowering people with disabilities, so that they can participate fully in society on an equal basis with others. One particular action in its list of actions for 2010-2015, ([2]) aims to 'ensure inclusion of concerns of person with disabilities in initiatives aimed to address consumer rights in Europe, in particular with regard to access to services of general economic interest'.

As regards consumer legislation, Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices ([3]) provides for a specific protection for consumers who are particularly vulnerable to a commercial practice because of their mental or physical infirmity, age or credulity.

The 2013 Report on Consumer Protection under European Union law and policy, ([4]) prepared by the Academic Network of European Disability Experts, explores and examines the protection of consumers with disabilities in the EU and includes examples of good practice.

In addition, Autism Europe ([5]) is a beneficiary of an action grant for 2014. Its work plan also covers awareness raising actions.

With a view to improving the employment situation of people with autism, the Commission funded in 2011-2013 four pilot projects (VP/2010/017). The report with the results of the projects was published on 2 April 2014, on the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day. [(6)]

([1]) COM/2010/0636 final.
([2]) SEC(2010)1324 final.
([3]) Directive 2005/29/EC of 11 May 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 ('Unfair Commercial Practices Directive'), OJ L 149. 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([4]) http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/consumer-protection/report-consumer-protection-under-european-union-law-and-policy
([5]) http://www.autismeurope.org/
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/report_pilot_projects_empl_autism_2014_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003534/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Situation in Mozambique

Just a couple of weeks ago, the Agriculture Minister in Mozambique warned that 300 000 people in the central and southern regions of his country were facing famine caused variously by drought, flooding and plagues of insects. Is there anything the Commission is doing or plans to do to help alleviate the suffering in Mozambique?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The Commission's humanitarian and civil protection department (ECHO) and the EU Delegation in Maputo are fully aware of Agricultural Minister Pacheco's comments and are following the food security situation closely. The key food security monitoring organisations for the region, such as Famine Early Warning System Net (FEWSNET), report that 'The food security of most rural households across the country is relatively favourable'. Nonetheless World Food Programme (WFP)'s food assistance mechanism has been mobilised to support close to 280 000 people in the specifically affected areas.

Since 2008, ECHO has been involved in disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives in Mozambique in a bid to provide more sustainable approaches to addressing challenges faced by the communities susceptible to these disasters. Under the food security component of the DRR programme, populations in Mozambique are being introduced to climate smart agricultural techniques, including the use of short cycle seed varieties. Furthermore, the EU prioritises food security and rural development within its development cooperation strategy in Mozambique, which intends to make farmers more resilient to natural calamities in the future.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003535/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Sex-selective abortions

British Prime Minister David Cameron said this week that he plans to question the UK's chief medical officer on the appalling practice of sex-selective abortions. Any violation of the rights of unborn children is obviously something I strongly oppose, and sex-selective abortion is a particularly worrying and sickening occurrence where women are often pressured by their partners to kill an unborn child purely because of misguided cultural attitudes which still favour a male over a female child. Paul Uppal MP raised the issue in *The Independent*, highlighting that it is a problem which is often hidden in some British Asian communities.

What is the Commission doing at European level to help protect and safeguard women within all sections of society who may come under pressure to abort a life for purely superficial reasons or under cultural pressure?

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

According to the Treaty of the European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the EU has no powers to adopt legal rules governing abortion. Such rules therefore pertain to the exclusive competence of Member States.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003536/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Doping in sport

The last few years have seen a number of high profile doping scandals hit various different sports, notably the Lance Armstrong saga and the doubts which rightly or wrongly arose over the performance of a number of well-respected Jamaican athletes. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has recently called for a more consistent approach to catching cheats; indeed, football and tennis are the latest sports examining the idea of introducing doping passports for athletes to avoid duplication, following the likes of athletics and cycling.

It is important that sport retains its integrity, not simply because doping is unfair, or because sport today has an awful lot more than pride riding on it: significant funding, sponsorship and commercial interests are connected to the reputation and results of both the sport and individual athletes.

1. What is the Commission doing at European level, together with anti-doping authorities, to encourage and assist attempts to catch doping cheats?

2. Can the Commission play a role in helping WADA bring about a more consistent, joined up approach to international anti-doping?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

The Commission agrees that the fight against doping is important for the integrity of sport as well as the protection of individual and public health.

Under the upcoming EU Work Plan for Sport 2014-17, the Commission will continue working with Member States on issues in the field of anti-doping. In 2012, the Council requested recommendations on doping in recreational sport; they were prepared by an expert group and presented to the Council earlier this year. An EU study on doping prevention, it too requested by the Council in 2012, is currently being conducted by external experts; the final report will be available in the autumn. Furthermore, the Commission is involved as an observer in the Council of Europe's and Unesco's anti-doping groups and maintains regular contacts with other major actors, such as WADA. The Commission also protects athletes' rights laid down in EC law. Finally, funding for prevention projects is available under 'Erasmus+: Sport'.

The Commission, however, is not involved in WADA governance and so cannot advise it on its anti-doping approach. It respects WADA's role and the way in which Member States have chosen to participate in WADA.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003537/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Giro d'Italia in Northern Ireland

There are now less than 50 days to go until the Giro d'Italia begins in Northern Ireland. This week we had the great news that the approximately 200 miles of road in our province which will be used for the event have been approved by Giro d'Italia's organisers, who called them 'almost perfect'. Interest in cycling in Northern Ireland, like in the rest of the UK, has had a boost from the tremendous success of British cyclists in recent years, both on road and track. In particular, the many victories of Team Great Britain & Northern Ireland cyclists at the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London, coupled with Bradley Wiggins' victory in the Tour de France, have helped create greater interest.

In this context, what is the Commission doing at European level to:

1. encourage cycling among its citizens and invest in the sport of cycling?

2. invest in cycling infrastructure across Europe?

3. raise awareness of the health and environmental benefits of encouraging commuters, and other potential casual cyclists, to get on their bikes?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

Major sport competitions have the potential to attract more people to engage in sport and physical activity as part of their daily lives. There is a need to capitalise on such events, because a recent Eurobarometer survey ([1]) has shown that participation levels in sport remain low. For major events, there is a need to ensure a legacy that goes beyond elite sports.

Through the 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([2]) and the recently adopted Action Plan on Childhood Obesity ([3]) ([4]), the Commission promotes actions to increase physical activity. The Health Programme (2014-2020) ([5]) and Horizon 2020 ([6]) can fund projects in this regard.

Cycling as a sport and leisure activity can play a crucial role in promoting public health. This is reflected in the 2008 EU Physical Activity Guidelines which form the basis for the monitoring framework set up by the Council under its 2013 Recommendation on promoting health-enhancing physical activity across sectors ([7]).

The Commission recognises the contribution cycling can make to improving the quality of life in urban areas. It supports the development of long-term plans for sustainable urban mobility in partnership with stakeholders. The most appropriate mix of transport modes is determined by the local authorities and, where necessary, the key stakeholders concerned.

The 2014-2020 regulatory framework specifies that ERDF shall support sustainable urban development through integrated actions to tackle the economic, environmental, climate, demographic and social challenges affecting urban areas. Such urban strategies may include provisions for cycling infrastructure. The UK Partnership Agreement and the corresponding programmes are still under negotiation.

([1]) 'Sport and Physical Activity'.
([2]) COM(2007) 279.
([3]) With reserve of The Netherlands.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/childhoodobesity_actionplan_2014_2020_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm
([6]) COM(2011) 809 final, 30.11.2011.
([7]) OJ C 354, 4.12.2013, 1-5.

(Svensk version)

Frågor för skriftligt besvarande P-003538/14
till kommissionen
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Angående: Kontroll av finansiering från EU för integrering av romer

I EU-ramen för nationella strategier som syftar till integrering av romer uppmanas medlemsstaternas att anslå tillräcklig finansiering för integrering av romer från nationella budgetar, som i förekommande fall ska kompletteras av EU-finansiering. De tillgängliga EU-fonderna är Europeiska socialfonden, Europeiska regionala utvecklingsfonden och Europeiska jordbruksfonden för landsbygdsutveckling. Tyvärr visar kommissionens lägesrapport från 2012 att dessa fonder inte nyttjas till sin fulla potential av medlemsstaterna.

Kan kommissionen ange vilka orsaker som ligger bakom medlemsstaternas mycket låga nyttjandegrad av EU-finansiering, särskilt fonderna som är särskilt avsedda för marginaliserade grupper?

Vad gör kommissionen för att säkerställa att medlemsstaterna använder de tillgängliga fonderna mer effektivt för att öka integreringen av romer och förbättra levnadsförhållandena för dem i deras hemländer?

Hur bedömer kommissionen effektiviteten i EU-finansierade projekt i medlemsstaterna?

Vad kan göras för att kontrollera att de verkligen används till att förbättra situationen för romer, särskilt beträffande tillgång till utbildning, arbete, sjukvård och bostäder?

Svar från László Andor på kommissionens vägnar
(12 maj 2014)

Under åren 2007 till 2013 har länder med stor romsk befolkning ställts inför stora utmaningar gällande nyttjandet av EU-fonderna för integrering av romer. Skälen till detta är bl.a. bristande administrativ kapacitet och sakkunskap, otillräcklig användning av tekniskt stöd och bristande samarbete mellan myndigheterna och romer.

För åren 2014 till 2020 har länderna ansträngt sig för att åtgärda dessa brister genom att stärka vissa instrument som till exempel partnerskap eller användning av förenklade kostnader. Genom de förhandsvillkor som är kopplade till de nationella strategierna för integrering av romer kommer man att se till att den nödvändiga politiska bakgrunden finns för en effektiv användning av fonderna.

Minst 20 % av Europeiska socialfonden är öronmärkta för social integrering, och samtidigt bör möjligheten i Europeiska socialfondens program till att prioritera en särskild investering för integrering av marginaliserade grupper, såsom romer, förbättra resultaten.

De medlemsstater som är mest berörda av förhandlingarna om partnerskapsavtalen och de operativa programmen diskuterar om hur de Europeiska struktur- och investeringsfonderna skulle kunna stödja integreringen av marginaliserade grupper såsom romer för åren 2014 till 2020.

Intressenterna kommer även i fortsättningen att få sitt stöd till kapacitetsuppbyggnad såsom de har fått under åren 2007 till 2013. Medlemsstaterna får också använda globala bidrag till att anförtro förvaltningen av delar av sina program till intermediära organ med styrkt erfarenhet.

Den nya perioden är mer resultatinriktad och innefattar ett effektivare övervakningssystem med kvantitativa och kvalitativa analyser av slutmottagarna och effektivare bedömningar av resultaten. Eftersom fondernas förvaltning är uppdelad ligger grundansvaret för övervakning och utvärdering av förvaltningen på medlemsstaterna. Genomförandet av de nationella strategierna för integrering av romer kommer dock att utvärderas årligen och att rapporteras till rådet och Europaparlamentet.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003538/14
to the Commission
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Monitoring of EU funding for Roma inclusion

The EU framework of national strategies aimed at Roma integration invites Member States to allocate sufficient funding for Roma inclusion from national budgets, to be complemented, where appropriate, by EU funding. The EU funds available are the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Unfortunately, the Commission's 2012 progress report shows that these funds are not used to their full potential by Member States.

Can the Commission explain the reasons behind the very low absorption of EU funding by Member States, in particular the funds which are specifically intended for marginalised groups?

What is the Commission doing to ensure that Member States use the funds available more effectively in order to increase integration of Roma people and improve their living conditions in their homeland?

How is the Commission evaluating the effectiveness of EU-funded projects in Member States?

What can be done to verify that they are actually used to improve the situation of Roma people, specifically concerning access to education, work, medical care and housing?

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

In the 2007-2013 period countries with large Roma populations faced major challenges in using EU funds for Roma inclusion. The reasons include lack of administrative capacity and expertise, insufficient use of technical assistance, and poor cooperation between authorities and Roma.

For the 2014-2020 period an effort has been made to address these deficiencies, by reinforcing some instruments, such as partnership or using simplified costs. The *ex-ante* conditionality linked to NRIS ([1]) will ensure that the necessary policy background for efficient use of funds.

At least 20% of the ESF ([2]) is earmarked to social inclusion and a possibility of using a specific investment priority for the integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma in ESF programs should also improve results.

Possibilities to support the integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma by the ESIF ([3]) through programs in the period 2014-2020 are also being discussed with the Member States most directly concerned within the framework of the negotiations on PA and OPs ([4]).

Capacity building activities of stakeholders supported in the 2007-2013 period will be continued. Member States may also use global grants to entrust the management of parts of their programmes to intermediary bodies with proven experience.

The new period has a stronger result-orientation including a more efficient monitoring system with quantitative and qualitative analysis on the end-beneficiaries and assessment on the results. Since the Funds are implemented in shared management, the Member States have the primary responsibility of monitoring and evaluation. However, the implementations of NRIS will be assessed on annual basis and reported to the Council and the European Parliament.

([1]) National Roma Integration Strategy.
([2]) European Social Fund.
([3]) European Structural and Investments Funds.
([4]) Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003539/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Road charges in Northern Ireland

The Lorry Road User Levy (LRUL) will take effect in Northern Ireland from 1 April 2014 and will require any commercial vehicle of 12 tonnes or more to pay a daily charge of up to GBP 10 in order to enter Northern Ireland and Great Britain from the Republic.

In relation to the charges for hauliers using roads in Northern Ireland and Great Britain, does the Commission not feel it would be prudent to carry out a formal assessment of the proposed new measures, which would see charges levied on Republic of Ireland road hauliers but not on their counterparts from Northern Ireland?

Has the UK Government formally notified the Commission of its intention to implement such a charging system, and if it has not been notified, would the Commission, on foot of this question, contact the UK authorities for further information about the new charges?

Is the Commission aware of the long list of jurisprudence and articles in the Treaties which prohibit discrimination against service providers operating in one Member State by a neighbouring Member State, especially if this has an impact on the operation of the internal market?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The UK vignette for lorries, which was introduced on 1 April 2014, is in principle welcomed by the Commission as being in line with objective 39 of the 2011 White Paper on transport ([1]). The EU Member States not having national road charging schemes in place are Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Cyprus and Malta.

The Commission has not been notified of the UK vignette for lorries, as this is not an obligation according to Directive 1999/62/EC on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructure, as amended ([2]). The Commission does, as a general approach, support prior impact assessment of any policy measure. It is unknown to the Commission whether the impact of road charging in Northern Ireland took place and if it was assessed with respect to the circulation of the lorries between these two Member States.

The Commission would contact the UK authorities if any substantial complaints were to arise.

The Commission recalls that any road charging scheme established by a Member State should not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of the nationality of the haulier, in respect of Article 18 TFUE. It is the opinion of the Commission that road charging schemes compliant with the relevant EU legislation do not have an adverse effect on the functioning of the internal market.

([1]) Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area — Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2011_white_paper_en.htm

([2]) OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, p. 42. According to Article 7h of this directive, only distance based tolls (infrastructure charge tolling arrangements) should be notified to the Commission.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003540/14
à la Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Nouvelle catégorie de médicaments

L'Union européenne a mis en place au cours des dernières décennies, et en particulier en 2001, un arsenal législatif complet régissant l'autorisation de mise sur le marché, de fabrication, d'étiquetage, de catégorisation, de distribution et de publicité des médicaments à usage humain. Il s'agit de médicaments très importants pour la santé publique des citoyens européens qui peuvent être constitués de molécules chimiques ou biologiques et revêtir des formes variées. Par exemple, depuis 2003, un nouveau parcours est en place au sein de l'Union pour l'approbation des médicaments biosimilaires, c'est-à-dire des médicaments biologiques développés pour être similaires à des médicaments biologiques existants (le «médicament de référence»).

L'innovation étant régulière dans le secteur pharmaceutique, on a vu apparaître ces dernières années une nouvelle catégorie de médicaments non-biologiques complexes («Non Biological Complex Drugs») pour traiter notamment des maladies chroniques.

La littérature scientifique décrit les «médicaments non biologiques complexes» comme des médicaments ayant des structures synthétiques, non-biologiques, larges et complexes qui ne peuvent pas être isolées, ni entièrement caractérisées ni décrites par les méthodes analytiques physicochimiques actuelles. En raison de ces propriétés, il est difficile d'isoler les éléments de la structure de ces médicaments qui ont un impact sur l'effet thérapeutique de celui-ci, rendant par la même la tâche plus compliquée aux autorités en charge de l'évaluation de la sécurité et de l'efficacité d'une copie du médicament original.

Afin d'évaluer l'efficacité attendue de cette copie et de toujours mieux protéger les patients, certains experts scientifiques suggèrent la mise en place d'une voie réglementaire spécifique pour cette nouvelle catégorie de médicaments non biologiques complexes.

La Commission est-elle au courant de ces discussions au sein du monde scientifique?

Qu'en pense-t-elle? Compte-t-elle encadrer prochainement les médicaments non biologiques complexes?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(30 mai 2014)

Un médicament obtient l'autorisation de mise sur le marché seulement après que sa qualité, sa sécurité et son efficacité ont été évaluées et qu'un bilan positif entre les avantages et les risques liés à son utilisation a abouti à un résultat positif. Les exigences concernant les données qui doivent être jointes à une demande d'autorisation de mise sur le marché sont définies par la législation pharmaceutique ([1]).

La Commission a connaissance du débat concernant le cadre réglementaire des médicaments non-biologiques complexes qui se déroule dans la communauté scientifique et du surcroît de complexité induit par la démonstration de la bioéquivalence pour ces produits. La législation pharmaceutique prévoit déjà la possibilité de répondre à des exigences spécifiques de données pour les produits pour lesquels une étude de biodisponibilité peut être insuffisante afin d'établir la bioéquivalence à un produit de référence ou lorsque les changements apportés à la substance active, par rapport au produit de référence, nécessiteraient de nouveaux essais précliniques et cliniques. L'Agence européenne des médicaments a examiné les exigences spécifiques de données pour ce type de produits dans des documents de réflexion, tels que ceux sur les médicaments intraveineux contenant des substances actives dissoutes dans des systèmes micellaires ([2]), sur les produits nanocolloïdes à base de fer ([3]) et les produits liposomaux ([4]) conçus en référence à un produit innovant et sur les nanomédicaments enrobés ([5]) ainsi que dans un document rédigé conjointement avec l'autorité réglementaire japonaise au sujet de l'élaboration de produits composés de micelles de copolymères à blocs ([6]).

([1]) Règlement (CE) n° 726/2004 établissant des procédures communautaires pour l'autorisation et la surveillance en ce qui concerne les médicaments à usage humain et à usage vétérinaire, et instituant une Agence européenne des médicaments (JO L 136 du 30.4.2004), tel que modifié; directive 2001/83/CE instituant un code communautaire relatif aux médicaments à usage humain (JO L 311 du 28.11.2001) tel que modifiée.

([2]) Document de réflexion sur le développement pharmaceutique des médicaments intraveineux contenant des substances actives dissoutes dans des systèmes micellaires http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2012/03/WC500124410.pdf

([3]) *Draft Reflection paper on the data requirements for intravenous iron-based nano-colloidal products developed with reference to an innovator medicinal product* http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/09/WC500149496.pdf

([4]) *Reflection paper on the data requirements for intravenous liposomal products developed with reference to an innovator liposomal product* http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/03/WC500140351.pdf

([5]) *Reflection paper on surface coatings: general issues for consideration regarding parenteral administration of coated nanomedicine products.* http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/08/WC500147874.pdf .

([6]) *Joint MHLW (Japanese)/EMA reflection paper on the Development of block-copolymer-micelle medicinal products.* http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2014/01/WC500159411.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003540/14
to the Commission
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: New category of medicinal product

Medicinal products are a central component of EU public healthcare. They come in a variety of forms, with either a chemical or a biological molecular make-up. Over recent decades, and in particular in 2001, the EU has built up an extensive set of laws to govern the manufacture, categorisation, labelling, distribution and advertising of and the authorisation to market medicinal products for human use. In 2003, for example, a new authorisation procedure was introduced to cover 'biosimilar' medicinal products, which are biological drugs specifically developed to closely resemble existing 'reference' drugs.

The pharmaceuticals sector is highly innovative, and recent years have seen the development of a new category of medicinal products, known as 'non-biological complex drugs', which are used in the treatment of chronic illnesses in particular.

Scientific literature defines non-biological complex drugs as medicinal products with a broad and complex synthetic non-biological structure which it is impossible to isolate or fully describe using current physicochemical analysis techniques. It is difficult, therefore, to pinpoint the elements in these drugs' make-up that give them their therapeutic effect, a fact that significantly hampers the work of the bodies responsible for assessing the safety and efficacy of copies of original drugs.

To gauge the expected efficacy of copies and safeguard patient welfare even more effectively, some experts have suggested introducing a special regulatory procedure focusing on this new category of non-biological complex drugs.

Is the Commission aware of this debate in the scientific community?

What is its view on the matter?

Does the Commission intend to take steps to regulate non-biological complex drugs in the near future?

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

A marketing authorisation is granted to a medicinal product only after its quality, safety and efficacy have been evaluated and a positive benefit-risk balance related to its use has been concluded. Requirements regarding the data which must be submitted with an application for a marketing authorisation are set by the pharmaceutical legislation ([1]).

The Commission is aware of the debate regarding the regulatory framework for so-called non-biological complex drugs in scientific community and the additional complexity of demonstrating bioequivalence for such products. The existing pharmaceutical legislation already provides for the possibility to address specific data requirements for products for which a bioavailability study may not suffice to establish bioequivalence to a reference product or where changes to the active substance, vis-à-vis the reference product, would require additional pre-clinical and clinical tests. The European Medicines Agency has addressed specific data requirements for this type of products in reflection papers, e.g. on intravenous medicinal products containing active substances solubilised in micellar systems ([2]), on iron-based nano-colloidal ([3]) and liposomal ([4]) products developed with reference to an innovator product, on coated nanomedicines ([5]) as well as in a joint document with the Japanese regulatory authority on development of block-copolymer-micelle products ([6]).

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 laying down Community procedures for the authorisation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use and establishing a European Medicines Agency, OJ L 136, 30.4.2004, as amended, Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use, OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, as amended.

([2]) Reflection paper on the pharmaceutical development of intravenous medicinal products containing active substances solubilised in micellar systems. http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2012/03/WC500124410.pdf

([3]) Draft Reflection paper on the data requirements for intravenous iron-based nano-colloidal products developed with reference to an innovator medicinal product http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/09/WC500149496.pdf

([4]) Reflection paper on the data requirements for intravenous liposomal products developed with reference to an innovator liposomal product http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/03/WC500140351.pdf

([5]) Reflection paper on surface coatings: general issues for consideration regarding parenteral administration of coated nanomedicine products. http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2013/08/WC500147874.pdf

([6]) Joint MHLW 5Japanese)/EMA reflection paper on the Development of block-copolymer-micelle medicinal products. http://www.ema.europa.eu/docs/en_GB/document_library/Scientific_guideline/2014/01/WC500159411.pdf

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003541/14
upućeno Komisiji
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Zakon o prebivalištu u RH

Sloboda kretanja i boravka osoba u Europskoj uniji temelj je građanstva u Uniji utvrđenog Ugovorom iz Maastrichta 1992. godine. Međutim njezino praktično prenošenje u pravo Europske unije nije se dogodilo automatski. Prvo su određene države članice u skladu sa Schengenskim sporazumima postupno ukinule unutarnje granice. Danas je slobodno kretanje osoba uređeno Direktivom 2004/38/EZ o pravu građana EU-a i članova njihovih obitelji na slobodu kretanja i boravka na državnom području država članica, no u provedbi te Direktive, međutim, i dalje se nailazi na mnoge prepreke diljem Unije pa i u Hrvatskoj.

Naime, procesom odjave prebivališta u Hrvatskoj zahtijeva se dodatni dolazak u nadležni ured, predočenje putovnice i dokaza o legalnom boravku u zemlji prebivališta uz informaciju o trenutačnoj adresi te potpisivanje posebne izjave te se sve navedeno i dodatno plaća, a u slučaju da osoba radi iseljenja iz Republike Hrvatske ne odjavi prebivalište ili napušta prebivalište u trajanju duljem od godinu dana radi privremenog odlaska iz države, a o tome ne obavijesti nadležno tijelo, biva kažnjena novčanom kaznom.

Smatra li Komisija da je Zakon o prebivalištu RH i njegov članak 3. u skladu s temeljnim slobodama EU-a, s naglaskom na slobodu kretanja ljudi, te krše li se navedenim zakonom Konvencija o zaštiti ljudskih prava i temeljnih sloboda i Direktiva 2004/38/EZ?

Odgovor g. Hahna u ime Komisije
(22. svibnja 2014.)

Regulacija odjave prebivališta prije iseljenja, o čemu govori članak 3. Zakona o prebivalištu RH, pitanje je pod isključivom nadležnošću država članica.

Međutim, ograničenja nadležnosti država članica mogu proizlaziti iz prava EU-a u slučaju da donesene mjere građanima EU-a, uključujući hrvatske državljane, otežavaju ili ih odvraćaju od uživanja temeljnih sloboda zajamčenih ugovorima. Ipak, te iznimke mogu biti dopuštene ako su predmetne mjere neophodne zbog razloga od javnog interesa te su bile sredstvo za osiguravanje postizanja željenog cilja i podrazumijevaju samo nužno djelovanje u tu svrhu. ([1])

Nekoliko država članica predviđa obvezu odjave prebivališta prije iseljenja, čak i u drugu državu članicu. Ona može biti opravdana na temelju javnog poretka: lokalna tijela uistinu trebaju znati koje osobe borave na njihovu području. U skladu s time, takvu se praksu može smatrati legitimnom.

I dalje vrijedi činjenica da zahtjevi nametnuti građanima EU-a i njihovim članovima obitelji koji namjeravaju odjaviti prebivalište u jednoj državi članici i prijaviti ga u drugoj moraju biti u skladu s načelom proporcionalnosti. Nacionalne odredbe koje dovode do vrlo složenog, dugog ili skupog postupka mogu se smatrati neproporcionalnima.

Komisija će podrobnije proučiti to pitanje u kontekstu trenutačnog cjelovitog ocjenjivanja prijenosa Direktive 2004/38/EZ u hrvatsko pravo.

([1]) Predmet C-19/92, Dieter Kraus protiv Land Baden-Württemberg [1993] ECR I-01663, stavak 32.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003541/14
to the Commission
Dubravka Šuica (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Croatian Residence Act

Freedom of movement and residence for persons in the EU is the cornerstone of Union citizenship, which was established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992. Its practical implementation in EC law, however, was not a straightforward matter; it first involved the gradual abolition, by a limited number of Member States, of internal borders under the Schengen agreements. Freedom of movement is now regulated by Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. Nonetheless, many obstacles to this free movement still exist throughout the EU and in Croatia.

In order to cancel one's residence in Croatia, one must pay an additional visit to the relevant agency, present one's passport and proof of residence in the country of residence, provide information on one's current address and sign a special declaration. All of these steps attract additional charges. If a person fails to cancel their residence when emigrating or abandons their residence for a period of longer than one year without notifying the relevant authorities, a fine will be issued.

Does the Commission feel that the Croatian Residence Act, and in particular Article 3 of that Act, is consistent with EU fundamental freedoms as regards freedom of movement for persons? Is the aforementioned act in breach of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and Directive 2004/38/EC?

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

The regulation of the transfer of one's residence abroad, which is the object of Article 3 of the Croatian Residence Act, is a matter which falls under exclusive competence of the Member States.

Limits to the exercise by Member States of their competences can, however, derive from EC law, in so far as measures enacted are liable to hamper or to render less attractive the exercise by EU citizens, including nationals, of fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the Treaties. These restrictions may, nonetheless, be admissible if the measures at issue were justified by pressing reasons of public interest, and appeared appropriate for ensuring attainment of the objective they pursue, without going beyond what is necessary for that purpose. ([1])

Several Member States foresee the obligation to declare the transfer of one's residence abroad, including to another Member State. This can be justified on grounds of public policy: indeed, local authorities may need to be aware of persons residing in their territory. Accordingly, such practice may be considered as pursuing a legitimate aim.

The fact remains that requirements imposed to EU citizens and their family members willing to transfer their residence from a Member State to another Member State must comply with the proportionality principle. National provisions resulting in a very complex, long or expensive procedure could be regarded as disproportionate.

The Commission will examine the issue more in depth in the context of the on-going global assessment of the transposition of Directive 2004/38/EC into Croatian law.

([1]) Case C-19/92, Dieter Kraus v Land Baden-Württemberg [1993] ECR I-01663, paragraph 32.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003543/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Innovativo sistema di riscaldamento abitativo

L'energia «di scarto» delle reti ferroviarie metropolitane viene sempre più spesso utilizzata come fonte di riciclo energetico. Dopo il caso della metropolitana di Madrid, la cui energia residua è impiegata per alimentare un sistema di rifornimento per auto elettriche, la famosa «tube» di Londra ha adottato un sistema più o meno simile al suo omologo spagnolo, ma a beneficare del calore di scarto generato dai convogli del trasporto pubblico sotterraneo in questo caso sono circa 700 abitazioni nel quartiere di Islington, nel nord della capitale britannica.

L'energia residua di una delle linee metropolitane viene infatti incamerata tramite un pozzo di ventilazione e stoccata in una sottostazione elettrica, dove l'aria calda viene trasformata in riscaldamento domestico, permettendo di inquinare meno ed evitare l'emissione di ben 500 tonnellate di CO_2 all'anno. I risultati appaiono particolarmente incoraggianti, tanto che si sta studiando l'espansione del sistema ad altre cinquecento unità abitative londinesi. Il progetto fa parte di un più ampio progetto di riduzione delle emissioni inquinanti di Londra del 60 % entro il 2025.

In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza del sistema sopra descritto;

2. è a conoscenza di altri progetti di sfruttamento dell'energia residua delle reti metropolitane in fase sperimentale nell'UE o all'estero che possano essere estesi nel medio periodo anche ad altre reti ferroviarie metropolitane delle città europee?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

La direttiva 2012/27/UE sull'efficienza energetica promuove il recupero del calore residuo («di scarto») a fini di riscaldamento o raffreddamento annoverandolo tra le misure di efficienza energetica destinate a concorrere al conseguimento dell'obiettivo UE di riduzione del consumo di energia del 20 % tramite interventi di efficienza energetica, in linea con gli obiettivi di più lungo termine delineati nelle tabelle di marcia dell'UE verso un'economia a basse emissioni di carbonio ([1]) e per l'energia 2050 ([2]). La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che il recupero del calore residuale sta assumendo un ruolo sempre più importante nelle soluzioni tecnologiche che favoriscono un riscaldamento/raffreddamento a basse emissioni di carbonio ed efficiente in termini energetici nelle città e vede con favore le iniziative che interessano le reti ferroviarie metropolitane, iniziative che rappresentano un importante passo avanti verso la realizzazione del concetto di «Città e comunità intelligenti» relativamente all'integrazione tra energia e trasporti ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 112 dell'8.3.2011.
([2]) COM(2011) 885 del 12.12.2011.
([3]) C(2013) 863 del 10.12.2013, SCC1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003543/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Innovative residential heating system

The 'waste' energy produced by metropolitan rail networks is increasingly being used as a source of recycled energy. Following the example of the Madrid metro, whose waste energy is used to supply a recharging system for electric cars, the famous London tube is now using a system similar to the Spanish one, though in this case the waste heat generated by the underground public-transport trains is being used to supply some 700 homes in Islington in north London.

The waste energy produced by the metro lines is collected via a ventilation shaft and stored in an electricity substation, where the hot air is transformed into domestic heating, thus reducing pollution and preventing the emission of as much as 500 tonnes of CO_2 a year. The results seem so encouraging that plans to extend the system to a further 500 London homes are being studied. The scheme is part of a larger one to reduce polluting emissions in London by 60% by 2025.

In connection with the above, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is it aware of the system described above?

2. Is it aware of any other schemes to make use of the waste energy produced by metropolitan rail networks that are being tested in the EU or elsewhere and could be extended in the medium term to other metropolitan rail networks in European cities?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

Directive 2012/27/EU on energy efficiency promotes the recovery of waste heat for the purposes of heating and cooling as one of the energy efficiency measures that can help reaching the EU's 20% target for energy efficiency and making heating and cooling in the EU more efficient in line with the EU's longer term objectives outlined in the EU low carbon economy roadmap ([1]) and the EU 2050 energy roadmap ([2]). The Commission is aware that heat recovery is more and more part of technological solutions for low carbon and energy efficient heating and cooling in cities and welcomes initiatives in metropolitan rail networks, as this is also a step closer to realising the EU's Smart Cities and Communities concept on integrating energy and transport ([3]).

([1]) COM(2011) 112, 8.3.2011.
([2]) COM(2011) 885, 12.12.2011.
([3]) C(2013) 863, 10.12.201, SCC1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003544/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Revisione del lessico e della struttura delle relazioni UE-Africa

Un interessante dibattito che si sta sviluppando nelle ultime settimane, soprattutto alla luce del prossimo vertice UE-Africa del 2-3 aprile 2014, riguarda il cambiamento delle relazioni tra le due sponde del Mediterraneo in una direzione maggiormente paritaria, che non si basi più sul vecchio modello di sviluppo fondato sul binomio «donatore-beneficiario».

Il dibattito si è concentrato anche su vocaboli come «sviluppo» o «aiuto», che continuano a dare un'idea molto sbilanciata e spesso accomunata a una sorta di paternalismo europeo nei confronti dei paesi africani. In questo si rischia anche di limitare la portata della relazione, che invece coinvolge attualmente attori intermedi, attori privati e ONG, e comprende diversi temi centrali quali la crescita economica, la governance democratica, la stabilizzazione macro-politica. Si propone ad esempio di non parlare più di riduzione della povertà, bensì piuttosto di creazione di ricchezza, in cui il settore privato potrebbe giocare un ruolo molto significativo.

In merito a questo dibattito, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Ritiene che il lessico e le strutture che caratterizzano le relazioni con gli Stati africani rischino effettivamente di non tenere in considerazione aspetti importanti del rapporto politico/economico tra UE e Africa?

2. Ritiene che sia opportuna una modifica che dia maggiore spazio ad altri tipi di attori oltre a quelli tipicamente istituzionali?

3. Ritiene che sia giunto il momento di adottare un approccio maggiormente comprensivo delle diverse dimensioni delle relazioni tra UE e Africa, tenendo in debito conto e in stretta correlazione la crescita economica con la governance politica e la crescita sociale?

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

Le relazioni dell'UE con l'Africa sono improntate all'accordo di Cotonou e alla Strategia comune Africa-UE, che delineano un partenariato globale in tutti i settori di interesse comune per i due continenti. Il vertice di Lisbona del 2007 aveva già deciso di mettere le nostre relazioni su un nuovo piano paritetico e strategico, abbandonando l'approccio tradizionale «donatore-beneficiario», e di avviare un dialogo politico sistematico su tutti i temi di interesse comune.

Questo partenariato strategico si basa su un approccio incentrato sulle persone, per cui non si tratta solo di associare fra loro le istituzioni dell'UE e dell'Unione Africana, ma anche altre parti interessate quali i Parlamenti europeo e panafricano, le organizzazioni della società civile, il settore privato e altre ancora.

L'ultimo vertice UE-Africa, tenutosi a Bruxelles il 2-3 aprile, ha confermato la validità della visione articolata nella Strategia comune Africa-UE. Si è infatti verificato un ampio consenso fra i leader africani ed europei sull'esigenza di cogliere tutte le opportunità economiche e di investimento offerte dal partenariato a beneficio dei cittadini. Il tema del vertice, «Investire nelle persone, nella prosperità e nella pace», rispecchiava questo impegno condiviso. Il vertice ha anche adottato una tabella di marcia per articolare la cooperazione continentale nel 2014-2017 intorno a cinque settori prioritari per entrambi i continenti: 1) pace e sicurezza; 2) democrazia, buongoverno e diritti umani; 3) sviluppo umano; 4) sviluppo e crescita sostenibili e inclusivi e integrazione continentale; 5) questioni globali ed emergenti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003544/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Changing the language and structure of EU-Africa relations

The past few weeks have seen the development of an interesting debate, particularly in the light of the forthcoming EU-Africa summit on 2-3 April 2014, around the possibility of changing relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean so they become more equal and are no longer based on the old development model that rests on the 'donor-beneficiary' binary.

The debate has also focused on words such as 'development' and 'aid', which continue to give a very unbalanced impression, often combined with a sort of European paternalism towards African countries. This means there is a risk of limiting the scope of relations, which in fact now involve agencies, private players and NGOs and concern various central issues, such as economic growth, democratic governance and macro-political stabilisation. It is being suggested, for example, that we stop talking about reducing poverty and instead start talking about wealth creation, in which the private sector could play a very significant role.

In connection with this debate, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it think the language and structures that are a feature of relations with African states actually mean there is a risk of ignoring some important aspects of the politico-economic relationship between the EU and Africa?

2. Does it think it would be appropriate to introduce changes that would make more room for players other than the standard institutional ones?

3. Does it think the time has come to take a more comprehensive approach to the various dimensions of relations between the EU and Africa, giving due and mutual consideration to economic growth, political governance and social development?

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

EU-Africa relations are framed by the Cotonou agreement and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) that set out a comprehensive partnership addressing all areas of common interest between the two continents. The Lisbon Summit in 2007 already decided to put our relations on a new, equal and strategic level moving away from the traditional donor-recipient approach and to engage in a systematic political dialogue addressing all matters of common concerns.

This Strategic Partnership is based on a people-centred approach meaning it associates not only the EU and African Union institutions but other key stakeholders such as the European and Pan-African Parliaments, Civil Society Organisations or the private sector to name but a few.

The last EU-Africa summit (Brussels, 2-3 April) confirmed that the vision set out in the JAES remains valid. There was broad consensus among African and EU leaders that more needed to be done to seize all investment and economic opportunities offered by the partnership to the benefit of the people. The summit theme 'investing in people, prosperity and peace' in fact reflected this joint commitment. The summit also adopted a Roadmap framing continental cooperation for the period 2014-2017 around five priority areas that resonate for both continents : 1) peace and security, 2) democracy, good governance and human rights, 3) human development, 4) sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration, 5) global and emerging issues.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003546/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Rallentamento economico cinese — rischi per gli investimenti europei

La crescita dell'economia sta subendo un certo rallentamento negli ultimi anni che, sebbene previsto, potrebbe avere ripercussioni importanti a livello internazionale. Lo stesso premier cinese ha affermato che, nel 2014, l'obiettivo prefissato (+7,5 %) potrebbe non essere raggiunto. Anche gli investimenti, le vendite al dettaglio e la produzione industriale del paese, pur se in crescita, hanno registrato variazioni annue ai minimi storici segnalando un rallentamento generale dell'intero sistema economico. Un altro campanello d'allarme è stato il default, la scorsa settimana, di un'importante azienda cinese che per la prima volta nella storia della Repubblica popolare cinese (RPC) non è stata sostenuta da fondi statali per evitare il fallimento; sebbene in passato il governo di Pechino abbia ampiamente utilizzato tale pratica, essa causato un aumento spropositato dell'indebitamento delle imprese che lo Stato non vuole, e forse non può, sostenere. A risentire di tale situazione è anche il sistema finanziario del gigante asiatico, soprattutto a causa del processo di riforme e di riequilibrio dei fattori di crescita perseguito dalla Banca centrale cinese, che ha concesso licenze nel settore bancario a cinque gruppi privati causando il calo della capitalizzazione degli istituti di credito a controllo statale.

Alla luce della situazione descritta e delle sue possibili evoluzioni future, può la Commissione chiarire se nutre timori riguardo alla sicurezza degli interessi finanziari europei in Cina e degli investimenti reciproci tra UE e RPC?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(20 maggio 2014)

I tassi elevati di crescita economica che la Cina ha fatto registrare negli ultimi anni si sono accompagnati a un rapido aumento del credito, soprattutto nel settore delle imprese e delle amministrazioni locali. Nella misura in cui la qualità degli investimenti sottostanti non corrisponde agli obblighi di servizi del debito, questo può comportare rischi potenziali per la stabilità finanziaria. Tuttavia, con la liberalizzazione in corso del sistema finanziario cinese, questo dovrebbe essere considerato una caratteristica tipica dei mercati finanziari, cosa che assicura inoltre che gli investitori tengano adeguatamente conto dei rischi dei progetti. Inoltre, i rischi potenziali per la stabilità finanziaria in Cina e le ricadute su paesi terzi dovrebbero essere mitigati dalla liberalizzazione ancora limitata del conto capitale, da livelli contenuti di prestiti in valuta estera e dalla capacità del governo cinese di affrontare i rischi legati alla stabilità finanziaria attraverso misure prudenziali e di altro tipo. I servizi della Commissione seguono da vicino gli sviluppi economici e finanziari della Repubblica popolare cinese e non perdono di vista le possibili implicazioni per l'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003546/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Economic downturn in China — risks to European investments

Economic growth in China has undergone a marked downturn in recent years. Although predicted, this could have major repercussions internationally. The Chinese Premier himself has said that the target set (+7.5%) for 2014 might not be achieved. Annual changes in investment, retail sales and industrial production in this country have, although increasing, been minimal in historic terms, signalling a general downturn in the entire economic system. A further alarm bell has been sounded by last week's default of a major Chinese company which, for the first time in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC), has not been supported by State funding to prevent bankruptcy. Although in the past the Beijing Government has made extensive use of this practice, it has given rise to a disproportionate increase in the indebtedness of companies, which the State will not (and perhaps cannot) sustain. This situation has also impacted on the financial system of this Asian colossus, due especially to the strategy of reform and rebalancing of growth factors pursued by the Chinese Central Bank, which has issued licences to five private groups in the banking sector, thereby reducing the capitalisation of credit institutions under State control.

In the light of the situation described above and potential future developments, can the Commission disclose whether it has fears regarding the security of European financial interests in China and reciprocal EU/PRC investments?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

China's high rates of economic growth in recent years have been accompanied by a fast increase in credit, particularly in the corporate sector and by local governments. To the extent that the quality of the underlying investments does not match debt service obligations, this may entail potential risks for financial stability. However, with the ongoing liberalisation of China's financial system, this should be seen as a normal feature of financial markets, which also ensures that investors properly take into account the risks of projects. Moreover, potential risks for financial stability in China and associated spill-overs to third countries are likely to be mitigated by the still very limited capital account liberalisation, a low level of foreign currency borrowing, and the capacity of the Chinese government to address financial stability risks via prudential and other measures. Commission services are following closely economic and financial developments in the People's Republic of China and keeping an eye on any possible implications for the European Union.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003547/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Rischi e opportunità della coltura idroponica

Di fronte al rischio dello scioglimento dei ghiacci e della scomparsa di parte delle terre emerse, alcuni soggetti hanno cominciato a sperimentare nuovi sistemi di produzione alimentare e di sopravvivenza. Si tratta di vere e proprie «fattorie galleggianti», vale a dire chiatte autosufficienti da un punto di vista energetico su cui far crescere piante, alberi e cibo.

Questi esperimenti esistono da diversi anni, ma negli ultimi tempi stanno aumentando molto velocemente: si pensi ad esempio alle piattaforme sull'acqua vicino a Manhattan sulle quali stanno crescendo piante e ortaggi, o al largo di Vancouver, dove vecchie imbarcazioni da pesca sono state trasformate in strutture galleggianti per la coltivazione di piante e ortaggi, o ancora alla Thailandia o agli Emirati Arabi Uniti.

Queste chiatte sfruttano il principio dell'agricoltura idroponica, vale a dire una tecnica di coltivazione fuori suolo in cui la terra è sostituita da un substrato inerte, un metodo in realtà antichissimo. Il problema sorge dal fatto che queste strutture possono avere costi molto elevati, dovuti ad esempio ai sistemi di desalinizzazione dell'acqua.

In merito a queste strutture, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza di esperimenti condotti nell'UE?

2. Ritiene che la coltura idroponica, in mare o in altri ambienti fuori suolo, possa rappresentare una parziale soluzione al raggiungimento dei limiti di capacità produttiva dell'UE?

3. Ritiene che questo tipo di tecnica possa impoverire la qualità della produzione ortofrutticola europea?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione è al corrente del fatto che sono stati effettuati e/o sono attualmente in corso di svolgimento nell'Unione alcuni esperimenti sulla coltivazione idroponica, in mare e in altri ambienti fuori suolo ([1]).

2.-3. Una risposta al secondo e terzo quesito degli onorevoli deputati potrà essere fornita solo dopo che saranno stati effettuati studi completi per testare i diversi aspetti connessi a tale tipo di coltura e riferire in merito, e quando sarà disponibile un'analisi approfondita dei dati riguardanti la produttività, sostenibilità e qualità dei prodotti ottenuti. Allo stato attuale la Commissione non è in possesso di tali dati. Tuttavia, non si può escludere che nell'ambito del programma quadro dell'UE per la ricerca e l'innovazione «Orizzonte 2020» saranno presentati e finanziati progetti sulla coltivazione idroponica. Questo tipo di progetto potrebbe rientrare nel programma di lavoro per il 2014-2015, nell'ambito del tema «SFS-2: produzione sostenibile delle colture» ([2]).

([1]) http://edepot.wur.nl/259992
http://www.wageningenur.nl/upload_mm/1/c/f/26821c36-eb95-4fcb-9dbb-d6c51639a253_Alberto_Pardossi_English_version.pdf
http://www.producemag.com/iceberg-powered-floating-farm-2014.aspx.
http://www.freshplaza.com/article/118859/Italy-Yields-are-bigger-with-hydroponic-cultivation#SlideFrame_1
http://www.actahort.org/books/747/747_76.htm

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/common/1587800-09._food_sc2_wp_2014-2015_en.pdf, pag. 9.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003547/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Risks and opportunities of hydroponics

Faced with the threat of melting glaciers and the disappearance of part of the land, some people have begun to experiment with new food production and survival systems. These are genuine 'floating farms' or barges which are self-sufficient from an energy point of view, on which plants, trees and food are grown.

Such experiments have existed for several years, but have grown very rapidly recently; examples include the floating platforms near Manhattan which are being used to grow plants and vegetables, or offshore Vancouver, where old fishing vessels have been converted into floating structures for growing plants and vegetables, or Thailand or the United Arab Emirates.

These barges exploit the principle of hydroponics, a soilless cultivation technique in which earth is replaced by an inert substrate, in point of fact an extremely ancient method. The problem arises from the fact that these structures may have very high costs, due for example to their desalination systems.

In regard to these structures,

1. Is the Commission aware of any experiments carried out in the EU?

2. Does it consider that hydroponic cultivation, at sea or in any other soilless environment, may offer a partial means of achieving maximum productive capacity within the EU?

3. Does it consider that techniques of this kind may reduce the quality of European fruit and vegetable production?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2014)

1. The Commission is aware that some experiments ([1]) on hydroponic cultivation, at sea and in other soilless environments, have been and/or are currently carried out in the Union.

2 and 3. An answer to the second and third question of the Honourable Member can only be provided after that comprehensive studies have been carried out to test and report on the different facets related to such type of cultivation and a sound analysis of data related to the productivity, sustainability and to the quality of the products is available. These data are not currently owned by the Commission. However, it cannot be excluded that projects on hydroponic cultivation will be presented and funded in the context of the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 'Horizon 2020'. In the Work Programme for 2014-2015, this could be envisaged under the topic 'SFS-2: Sustainable crop production ([2])'.

([1]) http://edepot.wur.nl/259992
http://www.wageningenur.nl/upload_mm/1/c/f/26821c36-eb95-4fcb-9dbb-d6c51639a253_Alberto_Pardossi_English_version.pdf
http://www.producemag.com/iceberg-powered-floating-farm-2014.aspx
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http://www.actahort.org/books/747/747_76.htm

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/common/1587800-09._food_sc2_wp_2014-2015_en.pdf page 9.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003548/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Sviluppo del settore della robotica

La robotica e l'automazione del lavoro sono storicamente viste come fonte di disoccupazione, a causa della sostituzione del lavoro umano con quello meccanico. Un cambiamento di rotta di questa credenza potrebbe però giungere proprio dall'Italia, dove la tre giorni «RomeCup 2014», che si chiuderà oggi, punta sullo sviluppo della robotica come punto di partenza per la ripresa economica e la creazione di lavoro nel paese. Tramite workshop, laboratori, dimostratori, convegni, competizioni ed esibizioni, l'evento intende mostrare le possibilità di slancio che il settore può dare al sistema produttivo e all'occupazione.

Il settore della robotica è in forte crescita e si calcola che, a livello globale, entro il 2016 saranno venduti circa 15 milioni di robot di servizio, pari a un valore superiore a 5 miliardi e mezzo di dollari. La domanda cresce anche nel settore industriale, con 168.000 unità vendute nel 2013, con un incremento del 5 % rispetto al 2012.

1. In merito alla crescita del settore della robotica, può la Commissione chiarire se esistono studi sull'impatto occupazionale dell'aumento della meccanizzazione e della digitalizzazione industriale?

2. Può far sapere se l'UE dispone di una strategia in materia di robotizzazione industriale o se la Commissione intende svilupparla?

3. Può indicare se ritiene che l'aumento della robotizzazione domestica e la penetrazione dell'«internet delle cose» nella vita quotidiana dei cittadini europei rischino di minare il loro diritto alla privacy e alla protezione dei dati personali?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

1. Sono disponibili studi sul contributo della robotica alla crescita occupazionale, tra cui uno studio pubblicato dalla Federazione internazionale della robotica (IFR) secondo il quale entro il 2016 i robot creeranno un milione di posti di lavoro in tutto il mondo ([1]). Inoltre, la Commissione sta conducendo uno studio approfondito, i cui primi risultati saranno pubblicati alla fine del 2014, su come il successo delle imprese e la crescita dell'occupazione siano legati all'uso dei robot.

2. La Commissione ritiene che la robotica avrà profonde conseguenze sull'economia e su tutti i ceti sociali e ha messo in atto una strategia industriale mirata, fondata su un partenariato pubblico-privato nel settore della robotica. Nell'ambito del partenariato la Commissione e rappresentanti del mondo industriale e accademico collaborano all'elaborazione di programmi di lavoro e considerano le barriere di natura non tecnica che ostacolano l'adozione dei robot, quali ad esempio l'accettazione da parte dell'opinione pubblica o le questioni relative alla responsabilità.

3. Per essere realmente intelligente e flessibile, la prossima generazione di robot domestici deve essere in grado di riconoscere l'ambiente circostante mediante sensori intelligenti e di comunicare con altri sistemi. La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che tali sviluppi rappresentano una sfida per la riservatezza e la protezione dei dati e collabora con le parti interessate del mondo industriale e accademico per trovare delle soluzioni. È chiaro che i robot, in particolare quelli domestici, saranno accettati soltanto se la questione della protezione dei dati sarà affrontata adeguatamente. La Commissione sta studiando queste sfide mediante azioni del 7° PQ come ROBOLAW e il programma di lavoro per la robotica di Orizzonte 2020 per il periodo 2014-2015.

([1]) http://www.ifr.org/news/ifr-press-release/robots-to-create-more-than-a-million-jobs-by-2016-295/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003548/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Growth of the robotics sector

Robotics and labour automation have been historically seen as a source of unemployment due to the replacement of human labour with mechanical devices. However, a change in this belief could originate from Italy, where the three-day 'Rome Cup 2014' event, due to end today, is focusing on the development of robotics as a starting point for economic recovery and job creation in our country. Through workshops, laboratories, demonstrators, conferences, competitions and exhibitions, the event aims to demonstrate the potential boost this sector could give to manufacturing and employment.

The robotics sector is in strong growth. It is calculated that, at global level, by 2016 around 15 million working robots will be sold, valued at over 5 and a half billion dollars. Demand is also growing in the industrial sector, in which 168 000 units were sold in 2013, a 5% rise over 2012.

1. In the light of the growth in the robotics sector, can the Commission indicate whether studies have been carried out to assess the impact of increased mechanisation and industrial digitalisation?

2. Can the Commission indicate whether the EU has, or intends to develop, an industrial robotics strategy?

3. Can the Commission indicate whether it considers that the rise in domestic robotics and penetration of the 'Internet of Things' into the everyday lives of European citizens risk undermining their right to privacy and data protection?

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

1. Studies are available on the contribution of robotics to job growth. The International Federation of Robotics has published a study indicating that robots will create one million jobs worldwide by 2016 ([1]). In addition, the Commission is conducting an in-depth study on how business success and job growth in the manufacturing industry are linked to the use of robots. First results from this study will be published at the end of 2014.

2. The Commission considers robotics will have wide-ranging effects on the economy and all walks of life. It has indeed initiated a dedicated industrial strategy, based on a Public-Private Partnership in Robotics. The PPP brings together the Commission with industry and academia to prepare work programmes jointly and to explore non-technical barriers to the adoption of robots, such as public acceptance or questions of liability.

3. If the next generation of domestic robots are to be truly intelligent and flexible, they must understand the environment through smart sensors and communicate with other systems. The Commission is fully aware that these developments pose a challenge to privacy and data protection, and is working on solutions together with industrial and academic stakeholders. It is clear that robots, in particular domestic ones, will only be accepted if data protection is properly addressed. The Commission is currently investigating such challenges through FP7 actions like Robolaw and the Horizon 2020 robotics work programme for 2014-15.

([1]) http://www.ifr.org/news/ifr-press-release/robots-to-create-more-than-a-million-jobs-by-2016-295/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003549/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Attentato in Afghanistan e prossime elezioni presidenziali

Un attentato a Kabul ha provocato la morte di nove persone, tra cui due bambini. L'attentato ha colpito un hotel notoriamente frequentato da stranieri, uno dei più sorvegliati della capitale. Quattro talebani armati hanno fatto irruzione nell'hotel e hanno aperto il fuoco, ma nonostante siano stati tutti neutralizzati sono riusciti a fare diverse vittime. L'atto è probabilmente un'azione di protesta contro le elezioni presidenziali afghane del mese prossimo, le prime che vedranno il passaggio di testimone tra due governi eletti nella storia del paese.

In merito all'attentato, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se cittadini europei siano stati coinvolti nell'azione armata;

2. se intende prestare supporto al fine di garantire la sicurezza e il corretto svolgimento delle elezioni presidenziali del prossimo 5 aprile?

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

L'UE non ha alcuna responsabilità consolare per i cittadini degli Stati membri. A quanto ci risulta, tuttavia, nessun cittadino dell'Unione è stato coinvolto nell'attentato.

La sicurezza degli elettori e degli addetti elettorali era una priorità fondamentale della comunità internazionale in occasione del primo turno del 5 aprile. La comunità internazionale, compresa l'UE, ha organizzato periodicamente riunioni con le autorità afghane competenti e in particolare con il ministero dell'Interno, principale responsabile della sicurezza durante le elezioni. A onore delle autorità afghane, va detto che i livelli di violenza sono stati nettamente inferiori rispetto alle elezioni precedenti. La sicurezza rimarrà una priorità fondamentale anche per un eventuale secondo turno.

L'UE è stata uno dei principali finanziatori delle elezioni, contribuendo al fondo internazionale congiunto gestito dal programma delle Nazioni Unite per lo sviluppo, in particolare per sostenere gli organismi indipendenti addetti alla sorveglianza elettorale. Su invito del governo afghano, inoltre, l'UE ha inviato a Kabul una squadra di osservazione elettorale guidata da Thijs Berman. Avendo già monitorato precedenti elezioni in Afghanistan, l'UE ha formulato una serie di raccomandazioni su come migliorarne l'organizzazione, gran parte delle quali è stata adottata dalle autorità afghane.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003549/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Attack in Afghanistan and forthcoming presidential elections

Nine people, two of them children, have died in an attack in Kabul. The attack took place in one of the best guarded hotels in the capital, well known for being frequented by foreigners. Four armed Taliban burst into the hotel and opened fire. Although they were all killed they succeeding in first killing or injuring several people. The attack was probably a protest against Afghanistan's presidential elections next month, which will be the first in the country's history to see a changeover between two elected governments.

1. Could the Commission confirm whether any EU citizens were caught up in this armed attack?

2. Does it intend to provide support to make sure that the presidential elections on 5 April 2014 are held in safety and run properly?

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

The EU does not hold consular responsibility for the nationals of Member States, but we are not aware of any EU nationals who were caught up in this attack.

The safety and security of voters and election personnel was a key priority for the international community for the first round of elections on 5 April. The international community, including the EU, organised regular meetings with the relevant Afghan authorities, notably the Ministry of Interior which had lead responsibility for election security. It is to the credit of the Afghan authorities that levels of violence were much reduced from previous elections. Security will remain a key priority in any second round.

The EU has been one of the major donors to the elections, providing funding to the international pooled fund managed by United Nations Development Programme, in particular to support the independent electoral oversight bodies. The invitation from the Government of Afghanistan to deploy an EU team to observe the elections was also accepted. The EU has dispatched to Kabul an Electoral Assessment Team led by Chief Observer Thijs Berman. The EU had observed previous elections in Afghanistan and had provided a number of recommendations as to how their conduct could be improved. The majority of these have been adopted by the Afghan authorities.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003552/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Etichettatura dei prodotti in pelle: necessaria trasparenza per gli Stati membri

Dal rapporto annuale della DG Impresa e Industria della Commissione sul Matrix Insight Ltd. emerge una vasta incertezza che domina il mercato: il 67 % dei consumatori è dubbioso sull'autenticità del materiale conciario e il 49 % pagherebbe di più per un prodotto correttamente etichettato.

Dal 2006 a oggi il laboratorio di Conciaricerca R&S è stato coinvolto in numerose analisi su campioni, acquistati da privati e poi fatti analizzare, o provenienti dalle attività di controllo e sequestro dell'Agenzia delle Dogane e dalla Guardia di Finanza. La frode si consuma con la falsificazione delle etichette e/o la contraffazione dei marchi «Vera Pelle»/«Vero Cuoio»/«pelle di animale stilizzata».

L'intento di chi vuole rendere più attraente e/o vendibile a un prezzo maggiore un articolo di valore inferiore si realizza alternativamente con una terminologia ingannevole («ecopelle» «eco cuoio» «cuoio rigenerato») o la contraffazione, tramite falsa etichettatura come «pelle», di materiali che non corrispondono alla sua corretta definizione. L'incidenza della contraffazione del materiale rilevata sul campione di riferimento è pari al 10 % per la calzatura e supera il 30 % per la pelletteria. Con il crescente interesse del consumatore per la sostenibilità il mercato ha assistito a una crescita esponenziale del vocabolo «ecopelle» e similari applicati a un derivato sintetico del petrolio.

Un prodotto non è, infatti, definibile ecologico solo in quanto alternativo alla pelle e un tessuto spalmato di poliuretano non è più ecologico di una pelle naturale, ma la sua definizione in questi termini è senza dubbio più accattivante. L'inganno di un prezzo estremamente sproporzionato rispetto al minor valore di un sintetico abbellito con il composto «ecopelle» si è trasferito alla fascia media o medio-alta capace di sfruttare la notorietà di un brand.

Per la calzatura esiste perfino una direttiva europea che stabilisce norme precise e la differente incidenza corrisponde all'asimmetria normativa tra la calzatura con obbligo di etichettatura comunitaria (direttiva 94/11/CE) e gli altri manufatti privi di imposizioni specifiche, mentre la conoscenza del consumatore medio di materiali, cicli produttivi e normative è scarsa, il che spiega il basso numero di denunce.

Può la Commissione precisare se intende prendere in considerazione i danni provocati dall'assenza di trasparenza nel mercato dei beni di consumo in pelle e quale seguito vuole dare alle proposte di regolamento sul «pacchetto sicurezza»?

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

La Commissione desidera assicurare agli onorevoli deputati che essa terrà conto e valuterà attentamente gli eventuali danni che la situazione attuale riguardante l'etichettatura di prodotti in cuoio può causare a consumatori e imprese. Nel processo di valutazione d'impatto avviato dalla Commissione riguardo a un possibile sistema di etichettatura attestante l'autenticità del cuoio a livello dell'UE si analizzeranno diverse alternative, dal non intraprendere alcuna azione all'imposizione dell'etichettatura obbligatoria, con l'obiettivo di proporre la soluzione più conveniente.

In tale contesto, la Commissione terrà altresì conto dell'avanzamento e dell'esito dei negoziati sul pacchetto sicurezza dei prodotti e vigilanza del mercato ([1]).

In virtù dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 1, della direttiva 2005/29/CE relativa alle pratiche commerciali sleali ([2]), è vietato presentare informazioni false o ingannevoli sulle caratteristiche principali del prodotto, comprese la sua composizione e la sua origine. Inoltre, come si evince dalle circostanze concrete circostanze concrete, pratiche come quelle descritte dagli onorevoli deputati potrebbero essere in violazione del punto 2 dell'allegato I della medesima direttiva, che vieta di esibire un marchio di fiducia, un marchio di qualità o un marchio equivalente senza aver ottenuto la necessaria autorizzazione.

([1]) Proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo e che abroga la direttiva 87/357/CEE del Consiglio e la direttiva 2001/95/CE, COM(2013) 78 def., e proposta di regolamento del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio sulla vigilanza del mercato dei prodotti, COM(2013) 75 def. del 13.2.2013.

([2]) GU L 149 dell'11.6.2005.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003552/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Labelling of leather products — transparency needed for Member States

From the annual report of the Commission DG Enterprise and Industry on a study conducted by Matrix Insight Ltd, it is clear that great uncertainty dominates the market, with 67% of consumers who are doubtful as to the authenticity of the leather material they purchase and 49% who would pay more for a properly labelled product.

Since 2006, the Conciaricerca R & D laboratory has been conducting numerous tests on samples purchased by private individuals and then sent for testing, or on products seized by the inspectors of the Italian Customs Agency and the *Guardia di Finanza* police. Fraud is being perpetrated through the falsification of labels and/or counterfeiting of the 'Real leather'/'Genuine leather'/'Genuine skin' or 'Stylised animal skin' stamps.

Those who want to make it easier to sell items of lower value at a higher price, or make them sound more attractive, also use misleading terminology (such as 'faux leather', 'eco-leather', 'bonded leather') or counterfeit the products through fake labelling, calling 'leather' materials which are not leather at all. The incidence of counterfeiting in the sample material tested was 10% for footwear and over 30% for other leather goods. With the growing consumer interest in sustainability, the market has seen an exponential growth in the use of the words 'eco-leather', 'faux leather', etc. applied to a synthetic petroleum derivative.

A product cannot, in fact, be defined 'ecological' simply because it is an alternative to leather; a polyurethane-coated fabric is no more environmentally friendly than natural leather, but its definition in these terms is undoubtedly more eye-catching. The deception of a price that is totally disproportionate to the lower value of a synthetic product — embellished with the 'faux' designation — has now reached the mid-range or upper-middle product range that is able to take advantage of a brand's reputation.

For shoes, there is even an EU directive that establishes clear rules. The different incidence of the problem corresponds to the regulatory asymmetry between shoes covered by EU labelling requirements (Directive 94/11/EC) and other products which are not covered by specific rules, while the average consumer's knowledge of materials, production processes and regulations is poor, which explains the low number of complaints.

Can the Commission say whether it will take into account the damage caused by the lack of transparency in the market for leather consumer goods and what action it intends to take further to the proposals for a regulation on the 'safety package'?

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

The Commission would like to assure the Honourable Members that it will take into account and carefully assess possible damage that the present situation regarding labelling of leather products cause to consumers and enterprises. In the impact assessment process, that the Commission is currently carrying out on a possible authenticity leather labelling scheme at EU level, different policy options, including 'no action' and compulsory labelling, will be analysed, in view of proposing the most cost-effective option.

In this context, the Commission will also take into account the progress and outcome of the negotiation on the Product Safety and Market Surveillance Package ([1]).

According to Article 6 (1) of Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices ([2]), traders are prevented from displaying false or deceiving information on the main characteristics of the product including its composition and origin. Also, according to the concrete circumstances, practices such as those described by the Honourable Members could be in breach of point 2 of Annex I of this directive, which prohibits displaying a trust mark, quality mark or equivalent without having obtained the necessary authorisation.

([1]) Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on consumer product safety and repealing Council Directive 87/357/EEC and Directive 2001/95/EC, COM(2013) 78 final and Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on market surveillance of products, COM(2013) 75 final, 13.2.2013.

([2]) OJ L 149, 11.6.2005.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003553/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Blocco delle esportazioni di pellame grezzo da parte della Russia — possibili perdite per l'Italia, leader continentale

A fine febbraio il governo russo ha firmato il decreto di modifica della lista di merci la cui esportazione è sospesa o ristretta dalla Federazione (decreto numero 877 che va a integrare la delibera del dicembre 2007), introducendo tra le categorie anche quella relativa alle pelli grezze e semilavorate, bovine ed equine. Per queste ultime il provvedimento avrà una durata pari a sei mesi.

La tendenza a vendere i pellami grezzi e semilavorati all'estero (a un prezzo medio del 20-25 % in meno rispetto al mercato internazionale) continua a causare scompensi alla produzione calzaturiera nazionale, il cui fabbisogno è di 150 000 tonnellate di pelli. Proprio per questo lo scorso ottobre il ministero russo aveva chiesto di aggiungere la categoria all'elenco dei prodotti per i quali sono previste limitazioni alle esportazioni.

La Russia è uno dei principali partner per il settore conciario italiano. Secondo quanto riportato dalle stime, il provvedimento potrebbe comportare un crollo del fatturato di 550 milioni di euro a livello europeo. A risentirne saranno, oltre alle concerie, anche i produttori di sostanze chimiche, macchinari, calzature, borse, divani, imbottiti e interni auto. L'Italia è leader mondiale nel settore e — di conseguenza — è il paese più esposto agli effetti dei blocchi russi. La Russia ha sempre imposto dazi — 500 euro alla tonnellata per le pelli grezze e il 20 % del valore per quelle lavorate — ma una chiusura totale non si era mai verificata.

Considerando che l'UE è il principale partner commerciale della Russia, seguita da Cina e Ucraina; che lo scopo dell'UE è rafforzare i legami economici e commerciali con la Russia tramite la cooperazione in materia di normazione, affari e turismo nonché creare nuove opportunità di business e sbocchi commerciali per le imprese europee; che le importazioni dalla Russia nell'UE rappresentano l'11,9 % delle importazioni totali nel mercato europeo e di conseguenza la Russia è il secondo partner dell'UE per le esportazioni, si chiede alla Commissione:

— se può fornire una valutazione d'impatto sugli effetti di restrizione degli scambi con l'UE per i prodotti menzionati derivanti dall'applicazione della suddetta normativa;

— se intende valutare i dati messi a diposizione dal settore conciario per stimare la perdita di competitività delle piccole e medie imprese (PMI) italiane;

— quali misure intende adottare per limitare l'impatto della normativa sulle PMI italiane del settore;

— se, in virtù degli impegni assunti dall'UE in sede multilaterale, tale normativa risulta in contrasto con gli accordi di libero scambio e rappresenta, attraverso la leva della tariffa doganale comune, una barriera per il mercato interno nell'ambito dell'unione doganale di cui la Russia fa parte insieme a Bielorussia e Kazakistan.

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza del decreto n. 73 adottato dalla Federazione russa il 3 febbraio 2014 che modifica l'elenco delle merci soggette a restrizioni temporanee o a un divieto di esportazione ([1]). Il decreto aggiunge all'elenco di tali merci le pelli grezze e semilavorate di bovini ed equini (codici SA 4101 e 4103).

La legge russa «*Sulla regolamentazione statale del commercio estero*» stabilisce che la Russia può imporre restrizioni o divieti di esportazione in circostanze eccezionali e per una durata massima di sei mesi.

Dopo l'adesione della Russia all'OMC avvenuta il 22 agosto 2012 la Russia è vincolata dall'articolo XI dell'Accordo generale sulle tariffe doganali e sul commercio (GATT) che preclude i divieti o le restrizioni all'esportazione fatte salve alcune circostanze specifiche. La Russia non ha ricevuto nessuna autorizzazione a derogare a tale disposizione dell'OMC.

La Commissione ha posto la questione della restrizione/del divieto di esportazione di pellami grezzi all'ordine del giorno di una riunione con le autorità russe prevista per l'11 e il 12 marzo 2014 per sentire le giustificazioni della Russia in relazione alla restrizione/al divieto di esportazione e per accertare se queste sono in linea con l'articolo XI del GATT. Poiché tale riunione è stata rinviata la Commissione solleverà la questione con la Russia alla prossima occasione.

([1]) Decreto n. 877 del 15 dicembre 2007.

La Commissione è in contatto con l'industria unionale della concia per determinare l'impatto della restrizione/del divieto, in particolare sulle piccole e medie imprese dell'UE.

Oltre ad adoperarsi per assicurare un ambiente commerciale aperto con i nostri partner, la Commissione considera positivo il fatto che si potrebbe avviare un dialogo interno tra i fornitori unionali di pellami grezzi e l'industria unionale della concia al fine di agevolare i contatti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003553/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Ban on exports of raw hides from Russia — possible losses for Italy, a continental leader in the sector

In late February, the Russian Government signed a decree amending the list of goods the export of which has now been suspended or restricted by the Federation (Decree No 877, supplementing the resolution of December 2007). Raw or semi-processed bovine and equine hides have now been included among these goods, for which the measure will last for six months.

The tendency to sell raw and semi-processed hides abroad (at an average price of 20-25% less than on the international market) is continuing to cause imbalances in domestic footwear production, which requires 150 000 tonnes of hides. It is precisely for this reason that last October, the Russian ministry requested that this category be added to the list of products for which export restrictions were in place.

Russia is a major partner for the Italian tanning industry and it is estimated that this measure could result in a EUR 550 million fall in turnover in Europe. In addition to tanneries, producers of chemicals, machinery, footwear, bags, sofas, upholstery and car interiors would also be affected. Italy is a world leader in the field and, as a result, is the country that is the most exposed to the effects of the Russians restrictions. Russia has always imposed duties — EUR 500 per tonne for raw hides and 20% of the value for processed hides, but a total export ban has never before been imposed.

The EU is Russia's main trading partner, followed by China and Ukraine. The aim of the EU is to strengthen economic and trade ties with Russia through cooperation in standardisation, business and tourism, as well as to create new business opportunities and trading outlets for European companies. Imports from Russia into the EU account for 11.9% of total imports into the EU market and, accordingly, Russia is the EU's second largest trading partner for exports.

— Can the Commission therefore provide an impact assessment on the effects of the restriction on trade with the EU in the abovementioned products as a result of the law in question?

— Will it assess the data provided by the tanning industry to estimate the loss of competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Italy?

— What measures will it take to limit the impact of this legislation on Italian SMEs in the sector?

— Under the commitments entered into by the EU at multilateral level, is that legislation not in breach of free trade agreements and is it not, through the leverage of the Common Customs Tariff, a barrier to the internal market in the context of the customs union to which Russia belongs, together with Belarus and Kazakhstan?

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

The Commission is aware of the Decree No 73 adopted by the Russian Federation on 3rd February 2014 amending the list of goods subject to temporary restrictions or export bans ([1]). The Decree adds raw or semi-processed hides and skins of bovine or equine animals (HS codes 4101 and 4103) to the list of goods.

The Russian law '*On State regulation of foreign trade*' states that Russia could impose export restrictions or bans under exceptional circumstances and for duration of up to six months.

Since Russia's WTO accession on 22 August 2012, Russia is bound by Article XI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which forbids export prohibitions or restrictions except under some specific circumstances. No exemptions from this WTO provision have been granted to Russia.

The Commission put the restriction/ban of raw hides and skins on the agenda of a meeting with the Russian authorities planned for 11 and 12 March 2014 in order to inquire what justifications Russia is giving for the export restriction/ban and if they comply with Article XI of the GATT. As this meeting was postponed, the Commission will raise the issue with Russia at the next possible occasion.

The Commission is in contact with the EU tanning industry in order to assess the impact of the restriction/ban, in particular on small and medium-sized enterprises in the EU.

([1]) Decree No 877 of 15 December 2007.

Besides fighting for an open trading environment with our partners, the Commission has taken a positive note of the fact that a domestic dialogue between the EU suppliers of raw hides and skins and the EU tanning industry could be initiated with the objective of facilitating contacts.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003554/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Test del sangue per sostituire amniocentesi e villocentesi

Una novità dai laboratori della città della Scienza di Singapore (Biopolis) potrebbe riguardare gli esami medici per avere la certezza di eventuali malformazioni del feto con un semplice test del sangue.

Da oltre 40 anni i test del sangue provano a sostituire gli invasivi, dolorosi e pericolosi test dell'amniocentesi e della villocentesi, ma senza ottenere mai una certezza scientifica (i falsi positivi si aggiravano sempre tra il 5 e il 10 %). Ora un macchinario, il «Deparray», potrebbe essere la soluzione. Questa tecnologia isola, in modo automatico, singole cellule presenti nel sangue mantenendole intatte, vive e capaci di riprodursi, sfruttando i principi della dielettroforesi.

Con microelettronica e proprietà fisiche, utilizzando elettrodi, silicio, vetro conduttivo e chip, e creando gabbie virtuali in cui si applicano la tensione e mini campi elettrici, si isolano le cellule e, quando segnalate con appositi colori fluorescenti, si testano. Con specifici biomarker, attraverso scansioni diverse e guardando con il microscopio, si possono fare esami ad hoc assolutamente attendibili. La macchina è stata validata ed è già in funzione in 30 laboratori internazionali in America, Europa, Asia e Australia. Si lavora alacremente ai biomarker e alle validazioni cliniche in oncologia, nelle diagnosi fetali (oltre a Singapore, in altri due centri), nella medicina rigenerativa (isolamento delle cellule staminali) e nel cardiovascolare (cellule epiteliali).

Intende la Commissione acquisire e valutare i risultati di tale studio? Inoltre, prevede di investire nello sviluppo delle innovazioni in tale campo?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(16 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza delle ricerche a cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato, che cita il ruolo che il dispositivo DEParray potrebbe avere nella diagnosi prenatale non invasiva. Già ampiamente utilizzate in campo oncologico, questa e altre tecniche di isolamento delle cellule rare in circolazione sono in corso di sviluppo anche per la diagnosi prenatale non invasiva e sono destinate a integrare i test basati sul DNA libero in circolazione o a costituire un'alternativa a tali test.

Mediante il Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7°PQ, 2007-2013) ([1]), l'UE ha inserito la ricerca nel campo della diagnosi prenatale tra le sue priorità. In particolare, grazie ai progetti ANGELAB ([2]) (contributo dell'UE pari a 8,3 milioni di EUR) e NIPD ([3]) (contributo dell'UE pari a 2,5 milioni di EUR) si stanno sviluppando tecniche di diagnosi prenatale non invasiva basate sul DNA fetale in circolazione. Il progetto LAPASO ([4]), della durata di 4 anni (contributo dell'UE pari a 4,3 milioni di EUR), fornirà una formazione di alto livello a ricercatori operanti nel campo della classificazione delle particelle con tecnica microfluidica «label-free» (compresa la classificazione delle cellule mediante dielettroforesi).

Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro di ricerca e innovazione (2014-2020) ([5]), offrirà opportunità per la ricerca e l'innovazione nel campo della diagnosi prenatale non invasiva, anche nell'ambito dell'obiettivo «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere», contenuto nella priorità «Sfide per la società». Le informazioni sulle attuali possibilità di finanziamento possono essere ottenute attraverso il portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([6]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([2]) http://angelab-systems.eu/
([3]) http://www.cing.ac.cy/
([4]) http://nanobio.ftf.lth.se/~lapaso/
([5]) COM(2011) 809 del 30.11.2011.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003554/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Blood test to replace amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling

A new development by laboratories in Singapore's science park (Biopolis) may involve medical examinations to confirm any foetal abnormalities with a simple blood test.

For more than 40 years blood tests have tried to replace invasive, painful and hazardous amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling, but have never achieved scientific certainty (the rate of false positives has always been between 5 and 10%). The 'DEPArray' machine may now be the solution. This technology automatically isolates individual cells present in blood and keeps them intact, alive and able to reproduce, by using the principles of dielectrophoresis.

With microelectronics and physical properties, using electrodes, silicon, conductive glass and microchips, and creating virtual cages in which force and miniature electrical fields are exerted, the cells are isolated, and, after labelling with special fluorescent colours, tested. With specific biomarkers, repeated scanning and examination under a microscope, completely reliable ad hoc examinations can be carried out. The machine has been validated and is already in service in 30 international laboratories in America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Intensive work is being carried out on biomarkers and on clinical validations in oncology, in foetal diagnosis (in two other centres, in addition to Singapore), in regenerative medicine (isolation of stem cells) and in the cardiovascular system (epithelial cells).

Does the Commission intend to obtain and assess the results of this study, and does it intend to invest in the development of innovations in this field?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the research efforts referred to by the Honourable Member mentioning the potential role of the DEParray device in non-invasive prenatal diagnosis. This technique and other circulating rare-cell isolation techniques have been largely used in the oncology field, and are also being developed for non-invasive prenatal diagnosis (NIPD), in complement or as an alternative to tests based on circulating free DNA.

Through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) ([1]), the EU has included research into prenatal diagnosis within its priorities. In particular, the projects Angelab ([2]) (EU contribution EUR 8.3 Million) and NIPD ([3]) (EU contribution EUR 2.5 Million) are developing NIPD techniques based on circulating foetal DNA. The 4-year project Lapaso ([4]) (EU contribution EUR 4.3 Million) will provide high-level training to research fellows in microfluidic label-free particle sorting (including dielectrophoretic cell sorting).

Horizon 2020, the framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([5]), will offer opportunities to address research and innovation on non-invasive prenatal diagnosis through, amongst others, the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' Societal Challenge. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([6]).

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([2]) http://angelab-systems.eu/
([3]) http://www.cing.ac.cy/
([4]) http://nanobio.ftf.lth.se/~lapaso/
([5]) COM(2011) 809, 30.11.2011.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003555/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Carne di balena e avorio, migliaia di prodotti in vendita online

Recentemente l'*Environmental Investigation Agency* (EIA) ha lanciato un appello contro il gigante dell'e-commerce, nonché rivenditore online di prodotti di avorio e di carne di balena.

Secondo quanto riporta un nuovo rapporto stilato dall'EIA — organizzazione impegnata nella protezione del mondo naturale contro criminalità e abusi — il gruppo è direttamente responsabile delle vendite di prodotti derivati da elefanti e cetacei e, sul sito, sono presenti più di 28 000 avvisi pubblicitari per prodotti in avorio, un materiale che non può essere commercializzato.

Secondo l'Agenzia, ogni anno vengono uccisi fino a 50 mila elefanti africani per soddisfare la domanda di avorio proveniente dal mercato cinese e giapponese. Il 90 % dei caratteristici sigilli di avorio, gli «*Hanko*», che i giapponesi usano come firma da apporre in calce ai documenti ufficiali, secondo la HSI, sono realizzati con avorio di provenienza illegale. L'organizzazione denuncia anche come la regolamentazione del commercio dell'avorio adottata dal Giappone non soddisfi i requisiti della Convenzione sul commercio internazionale delle specie minacciate di estinzione (CITES).

Una ricerca condotta online sul sito, nel giugno 2013, ha inoltre portato alla luce 1 200 prodotti in vendita, la maggior parte dei quali fatti con parti di balena, animale in via d'estinzione.

Il gruppo di e-commerce, di base a Tokio, controlla molti siti di shopping online in tutto il mondo, tra cui negli Stati Uniti, in Gran Bretagna e in Francia.

Considerato che: 1) la caccia commerciale di balene è proibita nel cosiddetto *Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary*, disegnato dall'*International Whaling Commission* nel 1994, ma il Giappone continua a catturare questi mammiferi, utilizzando la clausola della «ricerca scientifica» presente nel memorandum; 2) il commercio di avorio è stato bandito nel 1989 con la Convenzione sul commercio internazionale di specie in via d'estinzione, ma il commercio illegale, dal valore stimato di 10 miliardi di dollari, continua a essere fiorente a causa della domanda proveniente dall'Asia e dal Medio Oriente,

può la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. È a conoscenza di questo fenomeno e intende esprimersi in merito a quanto sopraesposto?

2. Intende valutare i risultati di tale studio e formulare raccomandazioni su eventuali revisioni delle linee guida in materia?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza della relazione elaborata dall'Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA). La Commissione osserva che tale documento si concentra su un operatore economico on line, con sede fuori dall'Unione europea, che l'EIA sospetta di vendere illegalmente prodotti di avorio e prodotti ricavati dalle balene. Le raccomandazioni dell'EIA contenute nella relazione sono rivolte esclusivamente a tale operatore economico.

Tuttavia, la Commissione riconosce che il traffico di specie selvatiche costituisce una grave minaccia alla biodiversità in tutto il mondo e si preoccupa particolarmente per l'aumento, osservato negli ultimi anni, della caccia di frodo agli elefanti e del traffico di avorio. Il 7 febbraio la Commissione ha adottato una comunicazione riguardante la strategia dell'UE contro il traffico illegale di specie selvatiche, avviando un'ampia consultazione delle parti interessate sull'adeguatezza dell'attuale politica dell'Unione nel settore. Nell'ambito di tale processo di consultazione, il 10 aprile la Commissione ha organizzato una conferenza cui hanno partecipato oltre 170 rappresentanti degli Stati membri dell'UE, del Parlamento europeo, di Europol e Eurojust, di reti di giudici e di pubblici ministeri, delle principali organizzazioni internazionali, della società civile, di istituti di ricerca e di importanti paesi terzi di origine, di transito e di mercato dei prodotti in questione, al fine di individuare misure e azioni che devono essere intraprese dall'UE, al suo interno e a livello internazionale, per rafforzare la propria strategia contro il traffico illecito di specie selvatiche. La Commissione intende dar seguito alle conclusioni di tale consultazione nei prossimi mesi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003555/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Whale meat and ivory — thousands of products for sale online

Recently, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) has launched an appeal against a leading e-commerce company and online retailer of ivory and whale meat.

According to a new report by the EIA — an organisation that is committed to the protection of the natural world against crime and abuse — the group in question is directly responsible for the sale of products derived from elephants and whales and, on its website, there are more than 28 000 advertisements for ivory products, which are not allowed to be sold.

According to the Agency, each year up to 50 000 African elephants are killed to meet the demand for ivory originating from the Chinese and Japanese markets. According to the HSI, 90% of the typical ivory seals, the 'Hanko', which the Japanese use as a signature to be affixed at the bottom of official documents, are made from ivory of illegal origin. The organisation has also reported that the manner in which Japan has regulated the ivory trade does not meet the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Research conducted online on the website, in June 2013, also brought to light 1200 products for sale, most of which are made from parts of whales, which are an endangered species.

The e-commerce group, based in Tokyo, controls many online shopping sites throughout the world, including the United States, United Kingdom and France.

The commercial hunting of whales is prohibited in the so-called Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary, set up by the International Whaling Commission in 1994, but Japan continues to capture these mammals, using the 'scientific research' clause in the memorandum.

In addition, the ivory trade was banned in 1989 under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, but illegal trading, the estimated value of which is USD 10 billion, continues to thrive due to demand from Asia and the Middle East.

Can the Commission therefore answer the following questions:

1. Is it aware of this issue and will it comment on the abovementioned facts?

2. Will it assess the results of this study and make recommendations on possible revisions to the guidelines in question?

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

The Commission is aware of the report produced by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA). The Commission understands that this document focuses on one online economic operator which is based outside the European Union and is suspected by EIA of selling illegal ivory and whale products. The recommendations of the EIA contained in this report are exclusively addressed to this economic operator.

The Commission, however, recognises that wildlife trafficking poses a very serious threat to biodiversity worldwide and is particularly concerned with the increase observed in recent years in elephant poaching and ivory trafficking. The Commission adopted on 7th February a communication on the EU approach against wildlife trafficking, launching a wide stakeholder consultation on the adequacy of the current EU policy in that area. As part of this consultation process, the Commission organised on 10 April a conference with more than 170 representatives from EU Member States, the European Parliament, Europol, Eurojust, judges and prosecutors networks, key international organisations, civil society, research institutions and important non-EU source, transit and market countries, to identify measures and actions to be undertaken by the EU domestically and internationally to strengthen its approach against wildlife trafficking. The Commission will follow-up on the findings of this consultation in the next months.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003556/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Riconversione ecologica del territorio: gli immobili

Una recente inchiesta del quotidiano «The Guardian» sostiene che in Europa ci sono almeno 11 milioni di case vuote, di cui 2 milioni sono in Italia: un problema continentale di carattere sociale e ambientale. Il nostro Paese ha perso, dal 1971 al 2010, quasi 5 milioni di ettari di superficie agricola utilizzata. Questo è dovuto a due fenomeni: l'abbandono delle terre e la cementificazione. L'Italia è, poi, il terzo paese in Europa e il quinto nel mondo nella classifica del deficit di suolo. Questi dati restituiscono la fotografia di una situazione drammatica che accomuna gran parte dei Paesi dell'eurozona, specialmente Italia, Spagna, Germania, Portogallo, Francia. La «crisi del mattone» rappresenta la crisi di un sistema e di un modello di sviluppo che in troppi e per troppo tempo hanno ostinatamente inseguito nonostante i campanelli d'allarme a preavvisare il disastro, puntualmente arrivato. La crisi strutturale internazionale che stiamo vivendo a causa della situazione economico-politica deve essere affrontata con una consapevolezza e una sensibilità nuove, nel pieno rispetto delle superfici non impermeabilizzate, dei fiumi, delle coste, del paesaggio e dell'ambiente, con grande chiarezza e trasparenza. Gli operatori del comparto edilizio devono avere ancora un futuro nelle costruzioni. Questa volta non per distruggere il territorio, ma per valorizzarne la bellezza e per gratificarne la professionalità e la passione. La riconversione ecologica deve rappresentare una delle sfide che l'Europa deve vincere nei prossimi anni. La tutela del territorio, accompagnata a una riqualificazione energetica degli edifici pubblici e privati, è uno dei grandi volani in grado di attivare occupazione a km zero, ridurre l'impatto antropico e consentire circoli virtuosi di risparmio economico da reinvestire in altri interventi di sostenibilità ambientale. Tutto questo è fondamentale, e non solo per ridurre i consumi energetici e tutelare un bene comune qual è il territorio. Negli ultimi sessant'anni di storia italiana ci sono state oltre 1 000 frane e 700 inondazioni in 563 località diverse, che sono costate la vita a 9 000 persone, con oltre 700 mila sfollati.

Si chiede dunque alla Commissione se intende esprimersi riguardo a un'operazione coordinata a livello europeo di manutenzione straordinaria dei nostri edifici pubblici, dei corsi d'acqua e delle montagne, diffusa e capillare, in grado quindi di generare ricchezza, occupazione e sicurezza.

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(15 maggio 2014)

Per quanto riguarda la sostenibilità degli edifici e della gestione del suolo, i servizi della Commissione hanno pubblicato il documento *Orientamenti in materia di buone pratiche per limitare, mitigare e compensare l'impermeabilizzazione del suolo* ([1]), disponibile in tutte le lingue ufficiali dell'UE. Inoltre, come preannunciato nella tabella di marcia verso un'Europa efficiente nell'impiego delle risorse ([2]), la Commissione sta esaminando la questione dell'uso del suolo, tema che sarà anche al centro della conferenza «Il suolo come risorsa» in programma il prossimo 19 giugno ([3]).

L'obiettivo 2 della strategia dell'UE sulla biodiversità fino al 2020 ([4]) prevede che entro il 2020 gli ecosistemi e i relativi servizi siano preservati e valorizzati attraverso la creazione di infrastrutture verdi e il ripristino di almeno il 15 % degli ecosistemi degradati. Per quanto concerne la creazione di infrastrutture verdi sul territorio dell'UE, la Commissione ne ha delineato la strategia in una comunicazione ad hoc ([5]), mentre in tema di ripristino degli ecosistemi degradati, sta lavorando nell'ambito della strategia sulla biodiversità per mettere a punto un approccio coordinato ([6]).

([1]) SWD(2012) 101/final 2 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing_guidelines.htm)
([2]) COM(2011) 571 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/about/roadmap/index_en.htm)
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/land_use/conference_en.htm
([4]) COM(2011) 244 final. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/policy/index_en.htm
([5]) COM (2013) 249 final. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/2020.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003556/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Ecological land reconversion: buildings

According to a recent investigation by '*The Guardian*' newspaper, at least 11 million homes are standing empty in Europe, of which 2 million are located in Italy. This is a social and environmental problem affecting the whole of Europe. Between 1971 and 2010 Italy has lost almost five million hectares of utilised farmland. This is due to two developments: the rural exodus and overbuilding, leaving Italy in third position in Europe and fifth in the world in terms of land shortfall. As a result, the situation in many of the eurozone countries, in particular Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and France, is clearly giving great cause for concern. The building sector crisis is in fact the result of a defective growth model which too many have been obstinately following for too long, despite warnings of the impending disaster now occurring. The international structural crisis now arising from the economic and political situation must be confronted with greater awareness and sensitivity, greater care being taken to protect permeable surfaces, rivers, coasts, landscapes and the environment, in accordance with the principles of clarity and transparency. While it is also important to ensure the future of those employed in the building sector, this time they should not be allowed to destroy landscapes but must devote their professional skills and enthusiasm to enhancing them. Ecological reconversion is a challenge to which Europe must rise over the next few years. Landscape protection, accompanied by the more efficient use of energy in public and private buildings, is a major employment opportunity, since it is necessary to start from scratch, reducing the environmental impact of human activity and enabling the development of virtuous circles, reinvesting the resulting savings in other environmentally sustainable initiatives. This is essential to reduce energy consumption and protect the land forming our common heritage, bearing in mind also that, over the last 60 years, 1000 landslides and 700 floods in 563 different locations in Italy, have claimed 9000 lives and displaced 700 000 persons.

In view of this:

Does the Commission intend to make its views known regarding the need for a coordinated, widespread and grassroots initiative at European level to maintain our public buildings, water courses and mountain landscapes in such a way as to generate wealth, employment and security?

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

Concerning sustainable land management and buildings, the Commission services have published 'Guidelines on best practice to limit, mitigate and compensate soil sealing' ([1]), which are available in all EU official languages. The Commission is also examining the issue of land use, as indicated in the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe ([2]). A conference on 'Land as a resource' will take place on 19 June 2014 to further explore this theme ([3]).

Target 2 of the EU biodiversity to 2020 ([4]) foresees that by 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems. The Commission communication on Green Infrastructure ([5]) sets out a strategy for the deployment of Green Infrastructure across the EU. In the context of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Commission is also working to develop a coordinated approach to the restoration of degraded ecosystems ([6]).

([1]) SWD(2012) 101/final 2 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/sealing_guidelines.htm).
([2]) COM(2011) 571 (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency/about/roadmap/index_en.htm).
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/land_use/conference_en.htm
([4]) COM(2011) 244 final. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/policy/index_en.htm
([5]) COM(2013) 249 final. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/2020.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003557/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Arsenico nei polli da allevamento

La *Food and Drug Administration* americana ha da poco revocato l'autorizzazione per tre farmaci a base di arsenico usati nell'allevamento dei polli. Si tratta del roxarsone, del carbarsone e dell'acido arsanilico, presenti in 101 alimenti per polli.

La scoperta dell'arsenico nei polli risale a qualche mese fa ed è frutto di uno studio di ricercatori americani della John Hopkins che operano nel *Center for a Livable Future*. La loro scoperta è stata pubblicata su «*Environmental Health Perspectives*». La ricerca è stata condotta su petti di pollo acquistati in dieci cittadine USA. La carne di pollo analizzata è risultata contenere arsenico inorganico, noto cancerogeno associato inoltre a disturbi cardiovascolari, diabete di secondo tipo, deficit cognitivo e pericoli per la gravidanza.

Può la Commissione far sapere se intende acquisire e valutare i risultati di tale studio e prendere in considerazione il ritiro dal commercio di farmaci equivalenti? Può altresì riferire in merito alla situazione attuale in Europa riguardante le normative sanitarie sui mangimi per animali da allevamento?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(10 maggio 2014)

I medicinali veterinari contenenti le sostanze farmaceutiche rossarsone, carbarsone o acido arsanilico non sono autorizzati per le specie destinate alla produzione di alimenti nell'UE. A norma della direttiva 2001/82/CE sui medicinali veterinari ([1]) l'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione per un medicinale per le specie destinate alla produzione di alimenti non può essere concessa se non sono stati stabiliti i limiti massimi di residui (LMR) per le sostanze farmacologicamente attive in esso contenuti.

Dal momento che non sono stabiliti LMR per nessuna delle sostanze in questione, i medicinali veterinari che contengono tali sostanze non possono essere commercializzati nell'UE per le specie destinate alla produzione di alimenti.

Per quanto riguarda la presenza di arsenico nei mangimi dovuta alla contaminazione ambientale, rigidi livelli massimi sono stati stabiliti per l'arsenico nelle materie prime per mangimi, negli additivi per mangimi e nei mangimi composti nel quadro della direttiva 2002/32/CE ([2]).

([1]) GU L 311 del 28.11.2001, pag. 1.
([2]) GU L 140 del 30.5.2002, pag. 10.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003557/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Arsenic in poultry

The US Food and Drug Administration has recently revoked the authorisation of three arsenic-based drugs used in poultry farming. These are roxarsone, carbarsone and arsanilic acid, present in 101 poultry feeds.

Arsenic was discovered in chickens a few months ago as a result of a study by American researchers from John Hopkins University working from the Center for a Livable Future. Their discovery was published in *Environmental Health Perspectives*. The research was carried out on chicken breasts purchased in ten cities around the USA. The chicken meat analysed was found to contain inorganic arsenic, a well-known carcinogen also associated with cardiovascular disorders, Type 2 diabetes, cognitive impairment and risks to pregnancy.

Can the Commission advise whether it intends to obtain and assess the data from this study and give consideration to withdrawing the equivalent drugs from the market? Can it also comment on the current situation in Europe as regards health regulations governing food for livestock?

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

Veterinary medicinal products containing the pharmaceutical substances roxarsone, carbarsone or arsanilic acid are not authorised for food producing species in the EU. According to Directive 2001/82/EC on veterinary medicinal products ([1]) the marketing authorisation for a medicinal product for food producing species cannot be granted unless maximum residue limits (MRLs) for the pharmacological active substances contained into it have been established.

No MRLs are established for any of the concerned substances and as a consequence veterinary medicinal products containing these substances are not allowed to be placed on the market in the EU for food-producing species.

As regards the presence of arsenic in feed as the consequence of environmental contamination, strict maximum levels have been established for arsenic in feed materials, feed additives and compound feed in the framework of Directive 2002/32/EC ([2]).

([1]) OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p. 1.
([2]) OJ L 140, 30.5.2002, p. 10.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003558/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE) e Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Servizio sanitario nazionale italiano: 15 mila medici in meno in 10 anni

Un'indagine condotta dal sindacato italiano Anaao Assomed ha recentemente evidenziato punti di criticità nel sistema formativo italiano. Infatti, a causa di pensionamenti e di un numero sempre più esiguo di specializzandi, tra 10 anni mancheranno oltre 15 000 medici specialisti dal Servizio sanitario nazionale (SSN). Pediatri, psichiatri e chirurghi sono le categorie più a rischio, ma ci sarà carenza anche di oculisti, ortopedici e angiologi. Se è ormai certo che 58 000 medici del Servizio sanitario nazionale, universitari e specialisti ambulatoriali andranno in pensione, il numero dei contratti di formazione specialistica previsti dall'attuale programmazione sarà di 42 mila unità, ben al di sotto della soglia necessaria.

Le problematiche correlate agli squilibri degli organici del personale medico rappresentano una delle maggiori sfide ai sistemi sanitari nazionali, con possibili conseguenze negative quali la minor qualità e produttività dei servizi sanitari, la riduzione di letti ospedalieri, l'aumento dei tempi d'attesa, la saturazione dei dipartimenti di emergenza con deviazione sistematica dei pazienti o la sotto-utilizzazione del personale professionale abilitato.

Gli esperti sono convinti che se il precariato medico è diventato un'emergenza sociale, è necessario anche rivedere la formazione, oggi affidata solo alle università, ripensando gli ospedali italiani come occasione di acquisizione di professionalità per i medici neo-laureati e di sviluppo di *expertise* per i medici a fine specialità.

Considerato che il problema è costituito soprattutto dal percorso formativo, il quale rende sempre più difficile il ricambio fra nuove e vecchie generazioni, è evidente che, con il vigente sistema che impedisce alle nuove generazioni di medici un accesso al SSN, di fatto si vuole costringerle a cambiare Paese, minando lo stesso sistema sanitario.

Si chiede alla Commissione se:

— può riferire in merito alla situazione formativa a livello europeo;

— intende esprimersi su quanto riportato e delineare nuove linee guida per gli Stati membri.

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(19 maggio 2014)

La Commissione europea è consapevole della difficile situazione cui deve far fronte il personale sanitario in varie parti dell'UE, aggravata dalla crisi economica o dalla crescente carenza di tale personale. A norma dell'articolo 168 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea le problematiche inerenti al personale sanitario e alla formazione medica sono di competenza nazionale.

A tale proposito, il piano d'azione per il personale sanitario dell'UE favorisce la cooperazione europea per affrontare la sfida di una crescente carenza di personale sanitario in un periodo di aumento della domanda di assistenza sanitaria. Il piano d'azione incoraggia gli Stati membri a collaborare per meglio prevedere i futuri fabbisogni di competenze dei professionisti della sanità, onde evitare squilibri tra la domanda e l'offerta di competenze e per fornire un'assistenza di qualità.

La Commissione europea cofinanzia la *Joint Action on health workforce forecasting and planning* ([1]) (azione comune dell'UE per prevedere e pianificare il fabbisogno di personale sanitario), che riunisce i rappresentanti di 27 paesi europei, tra cui il ministero della Salute italiano, per condividere le prassi ottimali volte a migliorare la pianificazione del personale sanitario. Si prevede che l'azione congiunta produca entro il 2016 orientamenti sulle prassi ottimali volte a prevedere le future necessità di formazione dei professionisti della sanità.

Il programma sanitario della Commissione europea ([2]) sta cofinanziando uno studio realizzato dall'OCSE, inteso a realizzare una mappatura delle capacità di istruzione e formazione per medici e infermieri nell'UE e una rassegna delle tendenze recenti. I risultati saranno disponibili nel 2016.

([1]) Decisione di esecuzione della Commissione del 2 dicembre 2011, C 353/3 del 3 dicembre 2012.
([2]) Health Programme Work Plan 2013 (Piano di lavoro sul programma sanitario per il 2012) (C/378/2012) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/docs/wp2013_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003558/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE) and Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Italian national health service: 15 thousand doctors less in 10 years

A recent investigation by the 'Anaao Assomed' health services union has recently revealed a number of serious shortcomings in the Italian medical training system. With an increasing number of retirements and dwindling numbers in specialist training, in 10 years there will be over 15 000 fewer specialists in the national health service, with a particularly serious shortage of paediatricians, psychiatrists and surgeons, as well as oculists, orthopaedists and specialists in angiology. It is now certain that 58 000 national health service, university and out-patient doctors and specialists will be retiring, while the number of specialist training contracts is currently estimated at 42 000, well below the necessary minimum.

The problems arising from medical staff imbalances are one of the major challenges facing national health services, possibly undermining the quality and efficiency of health services, with fewer hospital beds, increased waiting times, emergency services rapidly overrun by patients being systematically referred to them and a failure to deploy qualified professional staff effectively.

According to expert opinion, the weaknesses in the medical system now constitute a state of emergency and that it is necessary to review training methods currently the preserve of universities, review the operating methods of Italian hospitals so as to enable newly qualified doctors to obtain professional experience and allow practitioners to improve their expertise in specialist areas.

The problems are arising above all at the training stages, thereby making the transition between the old and new generations more difficult. As a result, the national health service is obviously being undermined by the current system, which is turning away new generations of doctors, effectively forcing them to seek employment in another country.

In view of this:

— Can the Commission say what the situation is regarding medical training in Europe?

— Can it give its views on the above and does it intend to adopt new guidelines for the Member States?

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

The European Commission is aware of the difficult situation facing the health workforce in many parts of the EU, aggravated by the economic crisis or growing shortages. Under Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, health workforce issues and medical training are a national responsibility.

To support Member States in this regard, the action plan for the EU health workforce provides support for European cooperation to address the challenge of growing shortages of health workforces at a time of increased healthcare demands. The action plan encourages Member States to work together to better anticipate future skill needs of health professionals to avoid skills mismatches and provide quality care.

In addition, the European Commission co-funds the Joint Action on health workforce forecasting and planning ([1]) which brings together representatives from 27 European countries, including the Italian Health Ministry, to share best practice to improve health workforce planning. The Joint Action is expected to produce best practice guidance on forecasting scenarios on the future training needs of health professionals by 2016.

The European Commission's Health Programme ([2]) is co-funding a study carried out by the OECD aimed at mapping the education and training capacities for doctors and nurses in the EU and review recent trends. The findings will be available in 2016.

([1]) Commission Implementing Decision of 2December 2011, C 353/3 of 3 December 2012.
([2]) Health Programme Work Plan 2013 (C/378/2012) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/docs/wp2013_en.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003559/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Affidamento in house providing della gestione del servizio idrico integrato al Comune di Colleferro

L'attuale normativa italiana in materia di gestione delle risorse idriche stabilisce la possibilità che l'organizzazione territoriale del servizio idrico integrato avvenga attraverso l'affidamento del servizio a società partecipate esclusivamente e direttamente da comuni o altri enti locali, compresi nell'ATO (Ambito territoriale ottimale), qualora ricorrano determinate condizioni (partecipazione interamente pubblica; controllo diretto della governance societaria mediante «controllo analogo a quello esercitato sui propri servizi»; realizzazione della parte più rilevante dell'attività attraverso l'ente locale medesimo; oggetto sociale definito senza la possibilità di modifica e di apertura del capitale a terzi). Infatti, la categoria dei servizi pubblici locali di rilevanza economica corrisponde tendenzialmente alla categoria comunitaria dei «servizi di interesse economico generale» di cui all'articolo 106, paragrafo 2, del TFUE. Questi ultimi comprendono quell'insieme di servizi che, al di là della titolarità formale pubblicistica o privatistica, sono stati istituiti per la soddisfazione di bisogni della collettività.

Per questi motivi, in presenza di peculiari caratteristiche economiche, sociali, ambientali e geomorfologiche del contesto territoriale di riferimento, tali da non permettere «un efficace e utile ricorso al mercato», risulta indispensabile il ricorso all'affidamento in house. Tali caratteristiche sembrerebbe averle proprio il Comune di Colleferro, che dal 2016 dovrà riassegnare la gestione del servizio idrico integrato (SII), e che dovrebbe pertanto prevedere l'affidamento in house della gestione di tale servizio a tutela degli interessi generali della propria cittadinanza.

Tutto ciò premesso, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. di voler verificare, anche alla luce della giurisprudenza comunitaria consolidata, la necessità di affidare il servizio idrico integrato al Comune di Colleferro attraverso il cosiddetto affidamento in house providing;

2. di fornire un quadro generale della situazione.

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

1. A norma del diritto dell'UE le autorità pubbliche, come il comune di Colleferro, sono libere di scegliere le modalità di assegnazione della gestione del servizio idrico integrato urbano, che si tratti di una procedura di gara o di un cosiddetto affidamento in house. Tutti gli aspetti connessi a questa scelta, come l'efficienza economica, sociale, ambientale e territoriale, sono di competenza nazionale. Pertanto, a norma del diritto dell'UE, il comune di Colleferro ha la facoltà, ma non l'obbligo, di ricorrere all'affidamento in house per tale servizio.

2. La giurisprudenza consolidata della Corte di giustizia ha stabilito che l'affidamento in house non rientra né nel campo di applicazione delle vigenti direttive sugli appalti pubblici, né nei principi di trasparenza e di non discriminazione sanciti dal trattato a condizione che siano soddisfatti determinati criteri. Se tali criteri non sono rispettati, l'assegnazione della gestione del servizio idrico integrato è disciplinata dalle direttive 2004/17/CE e 2004/18/CE nel caso di contratti di servizio pubblico, oppure è coperta solo dai principi generali del trattato in caso di concessioni di servizi pubblici.

Le tre nuove direttive in materia di appalti pubblici e concessioni, 2014/23/UE, 2014/24/UE e 2014/25/UE, adottate nel marzo 2014 e che prevedono un periodo di recepimento di due anni, hanno codificato la giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia relativa ai criteri dell'affidamento in house. Inoltre, la nuova direttiva 2014/23/UE sulle concessioni non si applica alle concessioni di lavori e di servizi per la messa a disposizione o la gestione di reti fisse destinate alla fornitura di un servizio al pubblico in connessione con la produzione, il trasporto o la distribuzione di acqua potabile o l'alimentazione di tali reti con acqua potabile. Tuttavia, tali concessioni saranno ancora soggette ai principi generali del trattato e, pertanto, anche ai criteri per affidamento in house.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003559/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: In-house award of management of the integrated water service to the Municipality of Colleferro

Current Italian legislation relating to the management of water resources provides for the possibility that the local organisation of the integrated water service may be carried out by outsourcing the service to undertakings directly and fully owned by municipalities or other local authorities, included in the ATO (local authority water board), where certain conditions are met (fully publicly owned; direct control of corporate governance by means of 'control similar to that of its own services'; provision of the majority of the activity through the local authority itself; defined corporate objects which cannot be amended to enable third parties to acquire share capital). Indeed, the category of local public services of economic importance is generally in line with the Community category of 'services of general economic interest' referred to in Article 106(2) TFEU. These include the group of services which, regardless of their formal public or private ownership, have been set up to meet the needs of the community.

For these reasons, in the presence of specific economic, social, environmental and geomorphological characteristics of the local context in question which do not allow 'an efficient and useful recourse to the market', it is essential to rely on in-house award. Precisely these characteristics seem to apply to the Municipality of Colleferro, which has to retender the management of the integrated water service from 2016 onwards, and should therefore envisage the in-house award of the management of the service in the general interests of the population.

In view of all the foregoing,

1. Can the Commission confirm, in the light of settled Community case-law, the need to contract out the integrated water service to the Municipality of Colleferro by means of the so-called in-house award?

2. Can it give an overview of the situation?

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

1. Under EC law, public authorities such as the municipality of Colleferro are free to choose how to award their integrated urban water management services, whether through a competitive tendering procedure or in-house. All issues related to this choice, such as economic efficiency, social, environmental and territorial considerations, are a matter of national competence. Therefore, under EC law, the municipality of Colleferro is free to but does not have an obligation to award this service in-house.

2. The settled case-law of the Court of Justice has established that in-house arrangements are not covered by the current Directives on public procurement nor by the Treaty principles of transparency and non-discrimination, but only when certain criteria are met. If those criteria are not met, the award of the integrated urban water management is covered by Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC in case of public service contracts, or only by the general principles of the Treaty in case of public service concessions.

The three new Directives on public procurement and concessions 2014/23/EU, 2014/24/EU and 2014/25/EU, adopted in March 2014 and providing for a transposition period of two years, have codified the Court of Justice case-law on in-house criteria. Furthermore, the new Concessions Directive 2014/23/EU does not apply to concessions awarded to provide or operate fixed networks intended to provide a service to the public in connection with the production, transport or distribution of drinking water, or to supply drinking water to such networks. However, these concessions will be still subject to the general principles of the Treaty and therefore also subject to the criteria for in-house award.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003560/14
aan de Raad
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(24 maart 2014)

Betreft: Aanleiding van het speciale verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer over de betrouwbaarheid van de resultaten van de verificaties van de landbouwuitgaven door de lidstaten

Op 17 maart 2014 publiceerde de Europese Rekenkamer een uiterst kritisch rapport dat concludeert dat de door de lidstaten verrichte verificaties van de EU-landbouwuitgaven niet betrouwbaar zijn. De Commissie gebruikt die informatie om restfoutenpercentages te ramen die aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad worden gepresenteerd in het kader van de kwijtingsprocedure. De controleverslagen van de lidstaten zijn daarom slechts gedeeltelijk relevant of zijn onvolledig en onjuist, en daarom ongeschikt om als zodanig te kunnen worden gebruikt in het jaarlijks activiteitenverslag van de Commissie en in de kwijtingsprocedure.

1. Wat is het oordeel van de Raad over de fouten die gemaakt worden bij de Europese landbouwuitgaven? Vindt de Raad het acceptabel dat er geen goed oordeel te vellen is over de legitimiteit van de landbouwuitgaven?

2. Deelt de Raad de mening dat de geconstateerde gebreken in het rapport van de Europese Rekenkamer aanleiding zijn om deze met spoed te agenderen op de eerstvolgende vergadering van de Raad Economische en Financiële Zaken?

3. Zo nee, waarom niet?

4. Is de Raad ook van mening dat de maatregelen van de Europese Commissie dit probleem niet snel genoeg oplossen en dat ogenblikkelijke actie vereist is?

5. Zo nee, waarom niet?

Antwoord
(4 juni 2014)

De Raad heeft het door het geachte Parlementslid vermelde speciaal verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer in maart 2014 ontvangen.

Overeenkomstig de conclusies van de Raad over de verbetering van de behandeling van de speciale verslagen van de Rekenkamer in het kader van de kwijtingsprocedure ([1]) hebben de voorbereidende instanties van de Raad drie maanden de tijd om speciale verslagen te behandelen en vervolgens ontwerpconclusies op te stellen.

De behandeling van het speciaal verslag van de Europese Rekenkamer over de betrouwbaarheid van de resultaten van de verificaties van de landbouwuitgaven door de lidstaten is nog aan de gang. De conclusies van de Raad zullen na aanneming op de website van de Raad beschikbaar zijn.

([1]) 7515/2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003560/14
to the Council
Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Follow-up to the European Court of Auditors Special Report on the reliability of the results of the Member States' checks of the agricultural expenditure

On 17 March 2014 the European Court of Auditors published a highly critical report which concludes that the checks carried out by the Member States on EU agricultural expenditure are not reliable. The Commission uses this information to estimate residual error rates which are presented to the European Parliament and the Council in the context of the discharge procedure. The Member States' reports on the checks made are not fully relevant or incomplete and inaccurate, and are thus unsuitable for the purpose of being used as such in the Commission's annual activity report and in the discharge procedure

1. What is the Council's opinion of the errors that have been made in connection with European agricultural expenditure? Does the Council consider it acceptable that it is not possible to issue a favourable opinion on the legitimacy of the agricultural expenditure?

2. Does the Council agree that the shortcomings noted in the report by the European Court of Auditors are such that they should be placed without delay on the agenda of the next Ecofin Council meeting?

3. If not, why not?

4. Does the Council consider that the measures taken by the Commission are not resolving this problem quickly enough and that immediate action is required?

5. If not, why not?

Reply
(4 June 2014)

The Council received the special report of the European Court of Auditors mentioned by the Honourable Member in March 2014.

In accordance with the Council conclusions on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors in the context of the discharge procedure ([1]), the Council's preparatory bodies have three months to examine special reports and subsequently to draw up draft conclusions.

The examination of the European Court of Auditors' Special Report on the reliability of the results of the Member States' checks of the agricultural expenditure is still on-going. The Council conclusions, once adopted, will be available on the Council's website.

([1]) 7515/2000.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003561/14
to the Commission
Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: 'Equity investment' from the Central Fund in Irish Water

Is the Commission aware that in its estimates for 2014 the Irish Government has included a EUR 240 million 'equity investment' from the Central Fund in Irish Water, a company which is already 100% state owned?

Can the Commission clarify how Eurostat views such a procedure in accounting terms and when Eurostat will examine the issue to determine if the transaction is a capital transfer rather than an equity injection?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(24 April 2014)

The Commission is aware that such an operation is being planned for 2014 by the Irish government.

It should be noted that the first reporting of Excessive Deficit Procedure data for Ireland for 2014 will take place at end-March 2015, and will be based on the rules of the European System of Accounts 2010 (ESA 10).

The application of the statistical rules for a government capital injection into a public corporation is set out in the Manual on Government Deficit and Debt (implementation of ESA 10), in Chapter III.2 ([1]). Once full details of the operation are available, the Irish statistical authorities would analyse them against the applicable statistical rules, and may request the view of Eurostat.

([1]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-GQ-13-006/EN/KS-GQ-13-006-EN.PDF

(Dansk udgave)

Forespørgsel til skriftlig besvarelse E-003563/14
til Kommissionen
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(24. marts 2014)

Om: EU-fødselsattest

Jeg er blevet gjort opmærksom på, at danske statsborgere, som er bosiddende i et andet EU-land, har oplevet problemer med at få udstedt et sygesikringskort, da dette kræver en fødselsattest, som skal oversættes til det pågældende lands sprog. Formularen til fødselsattesten laves af de danske myndigheder og er derfor på dansk.

Det virker som en hindring for EU-borgernes frie bevægelighed, at de ikke uden besvær kan få udstedt et sygesikringskort i det land, de bosætter sig i.

Mit spørgsmål til Kommissionen er derfor:

Hvordan forholder Kommissionen sig til en fælles europæisk fødselsattestformular, som skal respekteres i alle EU-lande?

Kan det lade sig gøre at lave en formular på originalsproget, som skal respekteres på tværs af landegrænser, så EU-borgerne slipper for dyr oversættelse?

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

Kommissionen er enig med det ærede medlem i, at manglende anerkendelse mellem medlemsstaterne af civilstandsdokumenter, såsom en fødselsattest, kan virke som en hindring for EU-borgernes frie bevægelighed. Kommissionen har allerede overvejet dette spørgsmål i grønbogen: »Færre administrative henvendelser for borgerne: Fremme af fri cirkulation af offentlige dokumenter og anerkendelse af virkningerne af civilstandsattester« ([1]).

Som et første konkret og opfølgende skridt fremlagde Kommissionen den 24. april 2013 et forslag til forordning om fremme af den frie bevægelighed for borgere og virksomheder gennem en forenkling af accepten af visse offentlige dokumenter i Den Europæiske Union og om ændring af forordning ([2]). Dette forslag har til formål at afskaffe eller forenkle de formaliteter, såsom apostille-påtegning og bekræftede oversættelser og kopier, som på nuværende tidspunkt er nødvendige for, at offentlige dokumenter kan anvendes og accepteres uden for den stat, hvor de er blevet udstedt. Forslaget omfatter forenklingsforanstaltninger for anerkendelsen af fødselsattester, navnlig med henblik på at reducere udgifterne til oversættelse og som et alternativ til de nationale officielle dokumenter, foreslås det at indføre flersprogede EU-standardformularer på alle officielle sprog, som borgere og virksomheder valgfrit kan anmode om. En af de foreslåede formularer vedrører fødsel. Europa-Parlamentet vedtog allerede den 4. februar 2014 at støtte Kommissionens forslag. Rådet er stadig i gang med at drøfte forslaget til forordningen.

Det skal dog bemærkes, at anerkendelse af retsvirkningerne af offentlige dokumenter ikke er omfattet af forslaget, som fokuserer på anerkendelsen af de formelle aspekter af offentlige dokumenter.

([1]) KOM(2010)747 endelig.
([2]) EU nr. 1024/2012 , COM(2013) 228.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003563/14
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: EU birth certificate

It has been drawn to my attention that Danish nationals resident in another EU Member State have experienced problems in having a health insurance card issued, as this requires a birth certificate which needs to be translated into the language of the country in question. The birth certificate form is produced by the Danish authorities and is therefore in Danish.

If EU citizens cannot have a health insurance card issued without difficulties in the country where they are living, this would appear to be an obstacle to their freedom of movement.

I should therefore like to ask the Commission:

What does the Commission think of the idea of a common European birth certificate form that would be recognised in all EU Member States?

Would it be possible to create a form in the original language that would be recognised across national borders, so that EU citizens can avoid the expense of translation?

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

The Commission agrees with the Honourable Member that the lack of recognition of civil status documents such as birth certificates between Member States could represent an obstacle to the freedom of movement of EU citizens. The Commission has already considered that matter in the framework of the Green paper 'Less bureaucracy for citizens: promoting free movement of public documents and recognition of the effects of civil status records' ([1]).

As a concrete first follow-up step, the Commission presented on 24 April 2013 a proposal for a regulation on promoting the free movement of citizens and businesses by simplifying the acceptance of certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation ([2]). This proposal aims at abolishing or simplifying formalities such as the Apostille, certified translations and copies which are currently required to authenticate public documents for their use and acceptance in another Member State than the one where they were issued. The proposal's scope includes simplification measures for the acceptance of birth certificates. In particular, to reduce translation costs, the proposal establishes certain Union multilingual standard forms available in all official Union languages as an alternative to the national public documents, which can be optionally requested by citizens and businesses. One of the proposed forms relates to birth. The European Parliament already adopted on 4 February 2014 its position supporting the Commission's proposal. Discussions on the proposed Regulation are on-going in the Council.

It should be noted, however, that the recognition of the effects of public documents is not covered by that proposal which focuses on the acceptance of the formal elements of public documents.

([1]) COM(2010) 747 final.
([2]) EU No 1024/2012, COM(2013) 228.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003564/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ελληνικό πρόγραμμα ιδιωτικοποιήσεων

Στην κοινή δήλωση των εκπροσώπων της Τρόικα στην Ελλάδα (Επιτροπή, ΔΝΤ, ΕΚΤ) στις 19.3.2014, αναφέρεται ότι «οι αρχές συμφώνησαν να δώσουν νέα ώθηση στην ιδιωτικοποίηση άλλων εταιρικών και ακίνητων στοιχείων που θα εξασφαλίσουν αναγκαία χρηματοδότηση για το κράτος».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Έχουν συμφωνήσει οι ελληνικές αρχές να προχωρήσουν στην ιδιωτικοποίηση εταιρειών και ακίνητων στοιχείων του δημοσίου, που δεν περιλαμβάνονται ήδη στον κατάλογο των ιδιωτικοποιήσεων του δεύτερου προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής της Ελλάδας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Η απόφαση όσον αφορά τα περιουσιακά στοιχεία του ελληνικού Δημοσίου ή τις δημόσιες επιχειρήσεις που θα ιδιωτικοποιηθούν, καθώς και τον βαθμό και τη σειρά με την οποία θα διεξαχθούν οι εν λόγω ιδιωτικοποιήσεις, λαμβάνεται αποκλειστικά από τις ελληνικές αρχές, αφού ληφθούν υπόψη οι περιορισμοί που αντιμετωπίζουν και οι στόχοι που έχουν θέσει. Το επικαιροποιημένο σχέδιο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων περιλαμβάνεται στην τελευταία έκθεση που καταρτίστηκε μετά την 4η αναθεώρηση του προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα ([1]).

([1]) Βλέπε πίνακα 6. Το σχέδιο ιδιωτικοποιήσεων είναι διαθέσιμο στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2014/pdf/ocp192_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003564/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: The Greek privatisation programme

A joint statement of 19.3.2014 by representatives of the Troika in Greece (the Commission, the IMF and the ECB) stated that: 'The authorities also agreed to revitalise the privatisation of other corporate and real estate assets, which would provide needed financing to the state'.

In view of the above, will the Commission state:

Have the Greek authorities agreed to proceed with the privatisation of state-owned corporate and real estate assets which are not already included in the list of privatisations contained in the second fiscal adjustment programme for Greece?

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

The choice of what, how far and in which sequence public assets or companies should be privatised in Greece is the exclusive result of the Greek authorities' decision, taking into account the various constraints they face and objectives they set for themselves. The updated privatisation plan is included in the latest report following the 4th review of the economic adjustment programme for Greece. ([1])

([1]) See Table 6. Privatisation Plan available at: http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/occasional_paper/2014/pdf/ocp192_en.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003565/14
an die Kommission
Fiona Hall (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) und Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)
(24. März 2014)

Betrifft: Bevorstehende Wahlen in der Türkei

Im Laufe des vergangenen Jahres waren allerlei besorgniserregende Entwicklungen in der Türkei im Zusammenhang mit Rechtsstaatlichkeit, Gewaltenteilung, freier Meinungsäußerung und Achtung der Menschenrechte festzustellen.

Die bevorstehenden Kommunalwahlen in der Türkei, die für den 30. März 2014 geplant sind, bieten eine Gelegenheit, einige dieser negativen Entwicklungen umzukehren, aber nur, wenn sie unter Beachtung der internationalen Standards durchgeführt werden und dabei eine echte Pressefreiheit herrscht, alle politischen Parteien antreten dürfen und sich die Wahlen in einem demokratischen und legitimen Umfeld abspielen.

Kann der Europäische Auswärtige Dienst (EAD) darlegen, wie die Durchführung dieser Kommunalwahlen zu beobachten gedenkt, etwa indem Partner wie beispielsweise die Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa/das Büro für demokratische Institutionen und Menschenrechte hierfür herangezogen werden?

Plant der EAD Maßnahmen im Zusammenhang mit den bevorstehenden Präsidentschaftswahlen in der Türkei? Falls nicht, weshalb nicht?

Wurde der EAD von der türkischen Regierung, sei es formal oder inoffiziell, ersucht, entweder die Kommunalwahlen oder die Präsidentschaftswahlen 2014 auf irgendeine Art und Weise zu unterstützen oder zu beobachten?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2014)

Gemäß der EU-Beobachtungsmethodik betreffen die Wahlbeobachtungsaktivitäten der EU hauptsächlich Parlaments- und Präsidentschaftswahlen. Die EU beobachtet Kommunalwahlen und Volksabstimmungen nur in Ausnahmefällen. Die Entsendung einer Wahlbeobachtungsmission setzt stets eine Einladung durch staatliche Behörden und/oder Wahlbehörden voraus.

Darüber hinaus gehört die Türkei zu den Teilnehmerstaaten der Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa (OSZE). In der Praxis werden Wahlen im Gebiet der OSZE üblicherweise vom OSZE-Büro für demokratische Institutionen und Menschenrechte (BDIMR) beobachtet. Da die Methoden der EU und des BDIMR vergleichbar sind, entsendet die EU keine Wahlbeobachtungsmissionen in Teilnehmerstaaten der OSZE.

Aus diesen Gründen hat die EU keine Mission zur Beobachtung der Kommunalwahlen in der Türkei am 30. März entsandt und beabsichtigt auch nicht, eine Mission zur Beobachtung der Präsidentschaftswahlen im August zu entsenden. Ein entsprechendes Ersuchen der türkischen Regierung ist jedenfalls nicht eingegangen.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003565/14
aan de Commissie
Fiona Hall (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) en Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)
(24 maart 2014)

Betreft: Aanstaande verkiezingen in Turkije

Het afgelopen jaar zijn wij getuige geweest van een aantal zeer zorgwekkende ontwikkelingen in Turkije op het gebied van de rechtsstaat, de scheiding der machten, de vrijheid van meningsuiting en de eerbiediging van de mensenrechten.

De aanstaande gemeenteraadsverkiezingen, die op 30 maart 2014 in Turkije moeten plaatsvinden, bieden een gelegenheid om enkele van deze negatieve ontwikkelingen om te buigen, maar alleen als de verkiezingen volgens internationale normen verlopen, met echte persvrijheid, met voldoende politieke vertegenwoordiging en binnen een democratisch en legitiem kader.

Kan de Europese Dienst voor extern optreden (EDEO) aangeven of er maatregelen worden genomen, ook via partnerorganisaties als de Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa/het Bureau voor Democratische Instellingen en Mensenrechten, om toezicht te houden op deze gemeenteraadsverkiezingen?

Overweegt de EDEO enigerlei activiteiten met het oog op de aanstaande presidentsverkiezingen in Turkije? Zo niet, waarom niet?

Heeft de EDEO van de Turkse regering — formeel dan wel informeel — verzoeken ontvangen met betrekking tot enigerlei vorm van ondersteuning of monitoring ten aanzien van de in 2014 te houden gemeenteraads- of presidentsverkiezingen?

Antwoord van hoge vertegenwoordiger/vicevoorzitter Ashton namens de Commissie
(5 juni 2014)

Overeenkomstig de methodologie van de EU inzake waarnemingsmissies richten de EU-verkiezingswaarnemingsactiviteiten zich vooral op parlements- en presidentsverkiezingen. Enkel in geval van buitengewone omstandigheden komen gemeenteraadsverkiezingen en referenda in aanmerking voor waarnemingsmissies. Het opzetten van verkiezingswaarnemingsactiviteiten vereist steeds een uitnodiging van de ontvangende staat en/of de betrokken verkiezingsorganen.

Bovendien is Turkije lid van de Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OVSE). Het is een gevestigde praktijk dat waarnemingsmissies voor verkiezingen in OVSE-lidstaten worden uitgevoerd door het Bureau voor Democratische Instellingen en Mensenrechten (OVSE/ODIHR). Aangezien de EU en de OVSE/ODIHR een vergelijkbare methodologie hanteren, stuurt de de EU geen verkiezingswaarnemingsmissies naar OVSE-lidstaten.

Omwille van de bovengenoemde redenen stuurde de EU geen waarnemingsmissie naar de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen in Turkije op 30 maart en bestaan er geen plannen om een dergelijke missie naar de presidentsverkiezingen van augustus te sturen. In elk geval is hiertoe geen verzoek van de Turkse regering ontvangen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003565/14
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE), Marietje Schaake (ALDE) and Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Upcoming elections in Turkey

Over the last year, we have witnessed a number of deeply worrying developments in Turkey relating to the rule of law, the separation of powers, freedom of expression and respect for human rights.

The upcoming Turkish municipal elections, scheduled for 30 March 2014, offer an opportunity to reverse some of these negative developments, but only if they are carried out in accordance with international norms, with genuine press freedom, sufficient political representation and in a democratic and legitimate environment.

Can the European External Action Service (EEAS) outline any action it is taking, including through partners such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, to monitor the conduct of these local elections?

Is the EEAS considering undertaking any action for the upcoming presidential elections in Turkey? If not, why not?

Has the EEAS received any requests from the Turkish Government, whether formal or informal, for any form of support or monitoring of either the municipal or presidential elections being held in 2014?

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

In accordance with the EU's observation methodology, the EU's election observation activities are mainly targeted at parliamentary and presidential elections. The EU monitors municipal elections and referenda only in exceptional circumstances. The deployment of an election observation activity always requires an invitation by state and/or electoral authorities.

Furthermore, Turkey is a participating state in the Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE). As an established practice, election observation within the area of the OSCE is undertaken by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR). As the EU and the OSCE/ODIHR use a comparable methodology, the EU does not deploy missions to observe elections in states participating in the OSCE.

For the abovementioned reasons, the EU did not deploy a mission to monitor the conduct of municipal elections in Turkey on 30 March and does not intend to deploy such a mission to monitor the presidential elections in August. In any event, no request has been received by the Turkish government.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003567/14
à la Commission (Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante)
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Situation humanitaire alarmante dans les camps de Tindouf

De plus en plus d'exactions sont commises par des responsables du Front Polisario, en toute impunité, à l'encontre des populations des camps de Tindouf.

Pour preuve, la chaîne télévisée Laâyoune-Tv a obtenu le témoignage d'une femme sahraouie qui révèle à visage couvert qu'elle a été violée par l'ex-ministre de la justice du Polisario dans un camp de réfugiés.

Face à ces dérives intolérables, quelles mesures concrètes la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante compte-t-elle prendre pour mettre un terme définitif à ces pratiques?

De même, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante ne devrait-elle pas envisager que l'aide humanitaire soit distribuée directement aux familles sahraouies nécessiteuses et non plus aux autorités corrompues du Front Polisario qui en disposent à leur guise?

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

Selon les informations dont nous disposons, les allégations reprises par l'Honorable Parlementaire ont été transmises au HCR (Haut Commissariat des Nations unies pour les réfugiés). Cette agence, ainsi que deux associations locales, sont présentes dans les camps pour venir en aide aux victimes de violences, en particulier de violences à caractère sexuel et sexiste. Selon le HCR, aucun cas n'a été signalé ces dernières années dans les camps de Tindouf. Des mécanismes d'orientation existent pour garantir une prise en charge adaptée des victimes.

À la connaissance de la haute représentante/vice-présidente, le secrétaire général du Front Polisario a inauguré la commission nationale des Droits de l'homme le 23 mars 2014 dans les camps de réfugiés. Sa mission consistera à surveiller la situation en matière de Droits de l'homme, tant dans les camps qu'au Sahara occidental.

La Commission européenne, par l'intermédiaire de la DG ECHO, octroie une aide financière à des partenaires humanitaires qui interviennent dans les camps de Tindouf conjointement avec les partenaires de mise en œuvre. La DG ECHO ne finance pas le Front Polisario, contrairement à ce que laisse entendre l'Honorable Parlementaire dans sa question. Elle ne fait qu'apporter une aide humanitaire dans le cadre d'accords conclus avec des organisations internationales non gouvernementales et des organisations internationales. De plus, le contenu de la ration mensuelle d'aide alimentaire par personne est annoncé localement avant distribution afin de s'assurer que tous les réfugiés savent à l'avance ce à quoi ils auront droit. Des systèmes de contrôle sont en place pendant et après les distributions auprès des familles bénéficiaires.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003567/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Gilles Pargneaux (S&D)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Alarming humanitarian situation in the Tindouf camps

Polisario Front leaders are perpetrating increasingly serious acts of violence against people in the Tindouf camps, and are doing so with complete impunity.

The television channel Laayoune TV has obtained evidence in the form of the testimony of a Sahrawi woman, who kept her face hidden as she told of how she had been raped in a refugee camp by a former Polisario Minister of Justice.

What specific measures is the High Representative planning to take to put a stop to these appalling crimes once and for all?

Moreover, does the High Representative not think that humanitarian aid should be given directly to the Sahrawi families who need it, rather than to the corrupt representatives of the Polisario Front, who are free to spend it however they like?

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

According to information at our disposal, the allegations quoted to by the Honourable Member have been referred to the UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency). The UNHCR and two local associations are present in the camps to help victims of violence, in particular Sex and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). According to the UNHCR, no cases of SGBV have been reported to them over the last years in the Tindouf camps. Referral mechanisms are in place to ensure that victims are taken care of in an appropriate manner.

The HR/VP understands that the Secretary General of the Polisario Front inaugurated the National Human Rights Committee on 23 March 2014 in the refugee camps, which will monitor human rights both in the camps and in Western Sahara.

The European Commission, through DG ECHO, is funding humanitarian partners, who provide humanitarian assistance in the Tindouf camps together with implementing partners. DG ECHO is not funding the Polisario Front, as suggested in the EP-question. DG ECHO solely provides humanitarian aid to beneficiaries through Agreements with International Non-Governmental Organisations and International Organisations. Moreover, the content of the monthly food aid ration per person is locally broadcasted before distribution to make sure that all refugees know their entitlement in advance. Monitoring systems are in place during and after distributions at the level of receiving families.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003568/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Mise à disposition d'informations sur le marché unique

Lorsque je m'entretiens avec certains de mes concitoyens, je me rends compte de l'insuffisance des informations dont nous disposons sur le budget européen et le marché unique. La France est contributeur net au budget européen. Il y a cependant un énorme avantage économique à faire partie de l'Union: celui-ci réside dans le marché unique. Il nous manque néanmoins une base de comparaison des avantages et des coûts du marché unique pour chaque État membre, qui pourrait être accessible aux citoyens.

La Commission est-elle en mesure de mettre une telle étude à la disposition des citoyens européens de chaque État membre?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(14 mai 2014)

Des renseignements généraux relatifs aux principaux effets et avantages économiques du marché unique sont accessibles au public dans la brochure sur les «20 ans du marché unique européen» ainsi que dans d'autres publications ([1]) et dans l'étude récente intitulée «*Mapping the Cost of Non-Europe, 2014 — 19*» ([2]) (évaluer le coût de la non-Europe 2014 — 19); en outre, des informations par pays sur les indicateurs clés, la perception des avantages que procure le marché unique et l'importance de celui-ci figurent dans une série de rapports par pays, publiés en 2012, relatifs à la gouvernance du marché unique ([3]). Enfin, dans sa contribution au Conseil européen de mars 2014 ([4]), la Commission présente des informations comparatives sur le potentiel économique de l'intégration du marché des services.

Ces documents contiennent des données chiffrées, par exemple sur la part totale des exportations et des importations intra-UE (pour la France: 61 % et 68 %, respectivement), sur l'origine et la destination des investissements directs étrangers (pour la France: 70 % et 74 % en provenance/vers d'autres États membres de l'UE, respectivement) et sur l'impact de la mise en œuvre de la directive «services» 2006/123/CE sur le PIB (pour la France, cet impact était de près de 1 % en 2011; la mise en œuvre complète de ce texte s'est traduite par un impact supplémentaire de 1,5 %).

La Commission s'emploie à enrichir encore les données et informations disponibles relatives aux incidences, aux coûts et aux avantages des politiques du marché unique dans tous les pays de l'UE, notamment en assurant un suivi fondé sur des indicateurs et en menant des études approfondies.

En ce qui concerne les informations sur le budget de l'UE, la publication la plus détaillée intéressant son exécution annuelle est le rapport financier ([5]). La Commission a également créé un site web interactif sur lequel les citoyens peuvent s'informer sur leur pays et/ou les domaines qui les intéressent ([6]). Une collection de publications sur chaque État membre, appelée «Le budget de l'UE dans mon pays», vient également d'être mise en ligne ([7]).

([1]) Voir: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publications/index_fr.htm
([2]) Service de recherche du Parlement européen: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-secretary-general/resource/static/files/files/mapping-the-cost-of-non-europe--march-2014-.pdf
([3]) Pour la France, voir: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/strategy/docs/governance/sm-country-report_fr_fr.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2014/03/pdf/services_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/financialreport/pdf/financialreport-2012_fr.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_fr.cfm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mycountry/FR/index_fr.cfm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003568/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Availability of information on the single market

When I talk to some of my fellow citizens, I become aware of the lack of information we have on the EU budget and the single market. France is a net contributor to the EU budget. And yet there is one huge economic benefit in being part of the Union — that is, the single market. However, we have no basis for comparing the benefits and costs of the single market for each Member State, which could be made accessible to citizens.

Could the Commission make such a study available to the EU citizens in each Member State?

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

General information regarding the main economic benefits and impact of the Single Market is publicly available in the brochure on '20 Years of the European Single Market', in other publications ([1]) and in the recent study ([2]) 'Mapping the Cost of Non-Europe, 2014 — 19'; Information on key indicators and on perceptions of benefits and significance of the Single Market per country, can be found in a series of Single Market Country Reports ([3]) in 2012. Comparative information on the economic potential of services market integration is described in the contribution ([4]) to the European Council of March 2014.

These documents contain information e.g. on the total share of intra-EU exports and imports (for France: 61% and 68%, respectively); on the origin and destination of foreign direct investment (for France: 70% and 74% from/to other EU member states, respectively); and on the impact of the implementation of the 'Services' Directive 2006/123/EC on GDP (for France at almost 1% in 2011, with an additional impact of full implementation of 1.5%).

The Commission is working towards further improving the evidence base and information on the impacts and costs and benefits of Single Market policies across EU countries, including through indicator based monitoring and in-depth studies.

As for information on the EU budget, the most comprehensive publication about its annual execution is the Financial Report ([5]). The Commission has also developed its interactive website where citizens can find information relevant to their country or area of interest ([6]). A series of publications on each Member State called 'EU budget in my country' has also just been made available ([7]).

([1]) See: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publications/index_en.htm
([2]) European Parliamentary Research Service: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/the-secretary-general/resource/static/files/files/mapping-the-cost-of-non-europe--march-2014-.pdf
([3]) For France see: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/strategy/docs/governance/sm-country-report_fr_en.pdf
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/archives/2014/03/pdf/services_en.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/financialreport/pdf/financialreport-2012_fr.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/interactive/index_en.cfm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mycountry/FR/index_fr.cfm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003569/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Mise en commun des législations européennes sur les PME

L'Union européenne a mis au point des réglementations spécifiques en faveur des PME dans plusieurs secteurs économiques et dans sa structure législative. Ce processus est d'ailleurs toujours en cours afin de permettre aux PME d'être compétitives au sein de l'Union européenne et à l'extérieur. Une bureaucratie souvent trop lourde, des législations peu adaptées et un manque d'information sont très néfastes aux PME et à leur potentiel de compétitivité. L'Union l'a bien compris et fait son maximum pour trouver des solutions. Pourtant, les législations européennes allant dans ce sens sont multiples et disparates et ne forment pas un corps législatif unique.

La Commission n'estime-t-elle pas qu'il serait plus opportun de rassembler ces législations dans un seul «paquet» afin non seulement de garantir aux PME leurs droits, mais également de mieux les informer?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

La Commission déploie des efforts d'envergure pour alléger la charge administrative et simplifier le corps de la législation européenne (dans le cadre du programme «REFIT»). En outre, la Commission applique le principe du «Think Small First» à la fois lorsqu'elle arrête ses politiques et lorsqu'elle élabore sa législation, afin de prendre en compte les intérêts des PME dès les premières phases des processus décisionnels. L'objectif est de rendre la législation plus favorable aux PME, plus simple et plus facile à comprendre.

Dans les cas où des exigences moins contraignantes ou des exemptions sont accordées à des PME, elles sont étroitement associées aux règles générales sur lesquelles elles prévalent. Les règles générales comme les règles particulières sont présentées ensemble pour faciliter la référence et par souci de clarté, pour toutes les parties intéressées, quel que soit leur type (entreprises ou consommateurs) ou leur taille (petite ou grande). Chaque partie prenante intéressée par la législation d'un domaine donné peut bénéficier d'un ensemble unique, global et complet de règles applicables dans ce domaine.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003569/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Consolidating EU legislation on SMEs

The EU has introduced SME-specific rules in a number of economic sectors. This ongoing process is designed to make SMEs competitive both inside and outside the EU. The EU is well aware of the fact that excessive red tape, unsuitable laws and the non-availability of information are all extremely damaging to SMEs and their competitiveness, and is doing everything in its power to remedy these problems. However, it has no single body of law on SME-related matters.

Does the Commission not think that it would make more sense to bring all these laws together in a single 'package', so that the rights of SMEs can be safeguarded effectively and they can obtain information more easily?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

The Commission is making significant efforts to reduce administrative burden and to simplify the body of European law (the REFIT programme). Moreover the Commission applies the 'Think Small First' principle both in policy- and law-making activities in order to take SMEs' interests into account at the very early stages of policy making. The objective is to make legislation more SME friendly, simpler and easy to understand.

In cases where lighter requirements or exemptions are granted to SMEs, they are closely related to general rules over which they take precedence. Both general and specific rules are presented together for ease of reference and clarity for all interested parties, irrespective of their type (businesses or consumers) or size (small or large). Each stakeholder interested in the legislation from a given area can benefit from a single, comprehensive and complete set of rules applicable in that area.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003570/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: «Buy European Act»

En ces temps de crise, les entreprises européennes ont des difficultés à survivre face à la concurrence trop souvent déloyale provenant des pays tiers. Il me paraît primordial de protéger nos entreprises, notamment nos PME, face à cette concurrence grandissante venant notamment des pays émergents. Les États-Unis ont instauré depuis déjà de nombreuses années le «Buy American Act», qui mentionne l'obligation aux autorités publiques de donner priorité aux marchandises américaines lors de l'ouverture d'un marché public. Dans cette perspective:

1. La Commission envisage-t-elle de proposer une loi instituant un «Buy European Act»?

2. La Commission a-t-elle pris conscience de la nécessité de favoriser les entreprises européennes dans certains types de marchés?

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

Pour répondre à la première question de l'Honorable Parlementaire, la Commission n'envisage pas de proposer une législation «Buy European» («Acheter européen»).

S'agissant de la seconde question de l'Honorable Parlementaire, la Commission estime que les marchés publics doivent être libres, équitables et ouverts. Dans le cadre de négociations internationales, elle a plaidé pour une ouverture ambitieuse des marchés publics internationaux et pour des conditions de concurrence plus équitables au niveau mondial.

Toutefois, si le secteur des marchés publics est traditionnellement très ouvert dans l'UE, nos partenaires commerciaux ne font pas toujours preuve du même degré d'ouverture. Les entreprises européennes rencontrent de ce fait des difficultés à soutenir la concurrence mondiale. C'est pourquoi, en mars 2012, la Commission a présenté une proposition de règlement sur l'accès aux marchés publics internationaux, qui est actuellement examinée par le Parlement européen et le Conseil.
Voir http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/accessing-markets/public-procurement/. Ce règlement est à l'étude avec le colégislateur.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003570/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: 'Buy European' act

In these times of crisis, European companies are finding it hard to survive in the face of what is far too often unfair competition from countries outside the EU. I believe it is absolutely vital that we protect our companies, especially SMEs, against the increasing degree of competition stemming from emerging countries in particular. Several years back, the US brought in the 'Buy American' Act, which obliges public authorities to give priority to American products in public procurement procedures. With this in mind:

1. Is the Commission intending to propose a 'Buy European' act?

2. Is the Commission aware of the need to support European companies in certain types of procurement procedures?

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

As to the first question of the Honourable Member, the Commission does not intend to propose a 'Buy European' act.

As to the second question of the Honourable Member, the Commission believes in free, fair and open procurement markets. Within international negotiations the Commission advocated for an ambitious opening of international public procurement markets and insisted on a fairer global level playing field.

However, while the EU's public procurement market is traditionally very open, this is not always matched by a similar degree of openness by our trading partners. This makes it difficult for European companies to compete in global markets. The Commission has therefore proposed in March 2012 a Proposal for a regulation on access to international public procurement markets, currently under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council.
See: http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/accessing-markets/public-procurement/ This regulation is under discussion with the Co-Legislator.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003571/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: CARS 2020

En ces temps de crise, de nombreux secteurs de l'industrie européenne ont besoin d'aide pour survivre face à la concurrence de plus en plus féroce des pays tiers. Trop souvent, l'Union européenne impose à ses entreprises des normes environnementales, industrielles ou encore sociales qui réduisent leur potentiel de compétitivité face au reste du monde. Sans remettre en cause le bien-fondé de ces évolutions législatives, je pense qu'il faut d'abord laisser nos entreprises souffler pour sortir indemnes de cette crise. Le secteur européen de l'automobile fait partie de ces secteurs en difficulté. Dans cette perspective, la Commission européenne avait proposé un moratoire concernant les normes susceptibles d'avoir des répercussions néfastes sur ce secteur. Le Parlement européen a appuyé cette proposition.

La Commission peut-elle nous renseigner quant à l'application de ce moratoire par rapport aux normes à la fois industrielles et environnementales?

Réponse donnée par M. Tajani au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

Les efforts destinés à contribuer à la réalisation d'une compétitivité à long terme et à la fourniture de réponses adéquates aux défis environnementaux, comme le relève la résolution du Parlement européen sur la communication «CARS 2020», constituent une responsabilité partagée.

En premier lieu, le secteur automobile doit faire tout son possible pour exploiter son puissant potentiel d'innovation, pour accompagner pleinement la nouvelle dynamique de réponse à une demande jusqu'à présent latente et pour embrasser l'idée d'une transformation radicale de la chaîne de valorisation. En d'autres termes, ce secteur rester à la pointe de la concurrence mondiale en termes de sécurité, d'émissions et de normes TIC. Les opérateurs de l'UE prennent ce défi au sérieux et investissent massivement en vue d'instaurer des normes de qualité élevée.

Pour ce qui est des politiques publiques, elles devraient notamment avoir pour objectif de faciliter les restructurations et les investissements nécessaires dans ce secteur. Le plan d'action CARS 2020 fournit des recommandations politiques concrètes destinées à répondre aux défis structurels d'envergure mondiale auxquels sont confrontées les entreprises. Il recommande en particulier l'application pleine et entière des principes d'une réglementation intelligente, comprenant une évaluation approfondie de l'impact sur les acteurs concernés ou sur leur compétitivité. Il est donc possible de lisser dans une large mesure les répercussions négatives de la réglementation sur le secteur en question.

En matière d'harmonisation internationale (CEE-NU), l'Union européenne a toujours exporté efficacement ses réglementations nationales avancées, lesquelles tendent à être reprises par de nombreux pays tiers, ce qui représente des économies considérables pour l'industrie manufacturière et les exportateurs de l'UE. L'amélioration continue de la balance commerciale de l'UE va dans le sens de ce postulat.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003571/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: CARS 2020

The current crisis has left a number of EU industries in need of help to survive in the face of increasingly stiff competition from countries outside the Union. All too often, the EU requires its firms to meet environmental, industrial or labour standards which undermine their ability to compete with the rest of the world. Although this approach is undoubtedly well-intentioned, I think EU firms should first be given a chance to escape from the crisis unscathed. The EU automotive sector is among those facing difficulties. With that in mind, the Commission has proposed a moratorium — backed by Parliament — on the introduction of standards that could have an adverse effect on that industry.

Could the Commission provide further details on how the moratorium on the imposition of new industrial and environmental standards would apply in practice?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

Contributing to the achievement of long-term competitiveness and providing adequate responses to environmental challenges as recognised by the European Parliament resolution on CARS 2020 is a shared responsibility.

Primarily, the automotive sector should do its utmost to use its strong innovation potential and embrace the changing momentum of released pent-up demand and revolutionary transformation of the value chain. That implies staying at the forefront of global competition in terms of safety, emissions and ICT standards. EU competitors are taking this challenge seriously and invest heavily with a view to set high quality standards.

As for public policy, this should have an objective of facilitating the necessary restructuring and investment by industry. The CARS 2020 Action Plan provides concrete policy recommendations with a view to respond to global and structural challenges faced by industry. Comprehensive application of principles of smart regulation integrating an in-depth assessment or competitiveness proofing of the impact on the sector's stakeholders is one of them. Adverse effects of regulation on the industry can thus be to a large extent mitigated.

So far, in the context of international harmonisation (UNECE), the EU has been an effective exporter of its advanced domestic regulations that tend to be replicated by numerous third countries, representing huge savings for EU manufacturing and exporters. Continuously improving the EU's trade balance supports this very premise.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003573/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Élargissement ou approfondissement?

Au-delà de la crise économique et financière, l'Union européenne connaît en ce moment une crise identitaire. La plupart des citoyens européens ont perdu confiance dans les institutions et ne se reconnaissent plus dans le projet européen. Alors que la situation actuelle nous demande plus de rapidité d'exécution, nous nous retrouvons enlisés dans un processus décisionnel trop complexe. L'Union doit corriger les failles de son système avant de s'élargir à de nouveaux pays. Nous devons redéfinir précisément nos frontières. Personnellement, je préconise un moratoire de dix à quinze ans sur l'adhésion de tout nouvel État. Ce temps sera nécessaire à l'Union pour améliorer sa structure et approfondir son intégration. Dans cette perspective, je demande à la Commission:

1. Qu'en est-il de la politique d'élargissement à l'heure actuelle?

2. Compte-t-elle mettre un frein à cette politique d'élargissement afin de se concentrer sur les problèmes que rencontre l'Union en son sein?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(19 mai 2014)

Le programme actuel d'élargissement de l'UE concerne les Balkans occidentaux et la Turquie. Le processus d'élargissement repose sur des conditions strictes mais justes et aborde d'abord les fondamentaux, y compris la gouvernance économique. Pour plus de détails, la Commission invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à son document annuel sur la stratégie d'élargissement ([1]).

L'Europe a besoin d'une Union européenne forte. À l'heure où cette dernière est confrontée à une grande incertitude au niveau international et où l'élan en faveur de l'intégration économique, financière et politique connaît un nouveau souffle, la politique d'élargissement continue de contribuer à la paix, à la sécurité et à la prospérité de notre continent. Les élargissements précédents de l'UE ont apporté des avantages économiques tant aux pays adhérents qu'à l'UE dans son ensemble. Par conséquent, la politique d'élargissement reste valable pour les années à venir.

([1]) COM(2013) 700 du 16.10.2013, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_fr.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003573/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Broadening or deepening?

In addition to the economic and financial crisis, the EU is also going through an identity crisis at the moment. Most ordinary Europeans have lost faith in the EU's institutions and no longer identify with the European project. In circumstances which call for swifter action, we are getting bogged down in overly complex decision-making processes. The EU needs to iron out the flaws in its system before embarking on any further enlargements, and we need to reconsider exactly where the EU's natural borders lie. My personal recommendation would be a moratorium on any further accessions for the next 10 to 15 years. The EU would then be able to use that time to rationalise its structure and deepen integration. With that in mind, I would like to ask the following questions:

1. Could the Commission provide further details on current enlargement policy?

2. Is the Commission planning to call a halt to further enlargements with a view to focusing on the Union's internal problems?

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

The current EU enlargement agenda covers Western Balkans and Turkey. The EU enlargement process is built on strict but fair conditionality and addresses the fundamentals first, including the economic governance. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its annual Enlargement Strategy ([1]) for further details.

Europe needs a strong EU. At a time when the EU faces major global uncertainty and gains new momentum for economic, financial and political integration, the enlargement policy continues to contribute to peace, security and prosperity on our continent. Previous enlargements of the EU have brought economic benefits to both the acceding countries and the EU as a whole. Therefore, enlargement policy continues to be valid for the future.

([1]) COM(2013) 700 of 16.10.2013 http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003574/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Initiative citoyenne européenne

L'initiative citoyenne européenne, établie par le Traité de Lisbonne, permet aux citoyens européens de participer activement au processus législatif européen en suggérant à la Commission de légiférer sur le sujet de leur choix à partir du moment où il constitue une compétence de l'Union. Bien entendu, le nombre de citoyens proposant un thème via une pétition doit être conséquent, à raison d'un million avec un quota précis pour chaque État membre. Cette initiative existe depuis deux ans déjà.

1. La Commission est-elle en mesure de dresser le bilan du fonctionnement de l'initiative citoyenne européenne?

2. Y a-t-il des corrections à apporter à l'initiative citoyenne européenne tant au niveau législatif qu'informatif et administratif?

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(12 mai 2014)

Ce nouvel instrument de démocratie participative en est encore à la première phase de son développement. Depuis le 1er avril 2012, date à laquelle le règlement sur l'initiative citoyenne européenne ([1]) a commencé à s'appliquer, la Commission a reçu quarante-deux demandes d'enregistrement. Vingt-quatre des initiatives proposées ont été enregistrées, et neuf d'entre elles en sont actuellement au stade de la collecte des déclarations de soutien auprès des signataires.

Pour trois initiatives, le nombre requis de déclarations de soutien a été atteint. La Commission a déjà répondu de manière positive à la première d'entre elles, «Right 2 Water», le 19 mars 2014. Elle adoptera une réponse à la seconde initiative, «One of us», le 28 mai ([2]). La troisième initiative, «Stop vivisection», est toujours en cours de vérification par les autorités des États membres.

D'une manière générale, la Commission est satisfaite du degré d'intérêt manifesté par les citoyens. Même les initiatives qui n'ont pas obtenu le soutien nécessaire ont toutes réussi à créer des liens entre des citoyens partageant les mêmes idées à travers tout le continent, suscitant de véritables débats paneuropéens.

La Commission estime toutefois qu'il est encore trop tôt pour procéder à une évaluation complète du fonctionnement de l'initiative citoyenne européenne (ICE) et d'en tirer de quelconques conclusions sur la nécessité de modifier les dispositions législatives, informationnelles ou administratives. Comme le prévoit le règlement, la Commission soumettra un rapport sur l'application du règlement et évaluera l'expérience acquise au terme de trois années d'application du règlement, soit le 1er avril 2015 au plus tard.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 211/2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome?lg=fr

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003574/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: European Citizens' Initiative

The European Citizens' Initiative established under the Treaty of Lisbon enables European citizens to participate actively in European legislative procedures by inviting the Commission to propose legislation on matters of interest to them and falling within the EU's terms of reference. Such an initiative must be backed by a substantial number of citizens, that is to say one million, with a minimum number of signatories from each Member State. The system has already been in place for two years.

1. What is the Commission's assessment regarding the effectiveness of the European Citizens' Initiative?

2. Does the Commission consider it necessary to modify the relevant legislative, informational or administrative arrangements?

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

This new instrument of participatory democracy is still in its early stages of development. Since 1st April 2012, when the regulation on the European Citizens' Initiative ([1]) started to apply, the Commission has received 42 requests for registration. 24 proposed initiatives have been registered, out of which nine are currently collecting statements of support from signatories.

Three initiatives have announced that they have successfully reached the required number of statements of support. The Commission has already positively replied to the first initiative, 'Right 2 Water', on 19 March 2014. It will adopt its reply to the second one, 'One of us', on 28 May ([2]). The third one, 'Stop vivisection', is still under verification by Member States' authorities.

The Commission is generally satisfied with the level of interest demonstrated by citizens. Even the initiatives that did not manage to gather the required support, have all succeeded in forging links with like-minded people across the continent, sparking genuine pan-European debates.

However, the Commission considers that it is still too early to make a full assessment of the functioning of the ECI and draw any conclusions on the need to modify legislative, informational or administrative arrangements. As required by the regulation, the Commission will report on the application of the regulation, examining experience gained in three years of implementing the regulation, by 1 April 2015.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 211/2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003575/14
à la Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 mars 2014)

Objet: Frontières extérieures de l'Union européenne

Les frontières extérieures de l'Union européenne sont de plus en plus poreuses. Nous avons besoin de réformer le système de contrôle de l'immigration. Des programmes tels que Frontex et Eurosur doivent être mis en avant afin de permettre à l'Union de mieux surveiller ses frontières.

Le cas échéant, la Commission pourrait-elle faire le bilan de la législation européenne en matière de frontières extérieures, notamment pour ce qui est des programmes Frontex et Eurosur?

La surveillance de nos frontières extérieures repose en grande partie sur la confiance. Existe-t-il des moyens de contrôler et de sanctionner les États qui ne surveillent pas assez les frontières extérieures présentes sur leur territoire?

Réponse donnée par M[me] Malmström au nom de la Commission
(13 mai 2014)

La Commission a effectué une évaluation des activités de l'agence Frontex en 2008. Sur cette base, le cadre juridique de Frontex a été amélioré par les colégislateurs en octobre 2011 ([1]). Une période de consultation est donc nécessaire avant d'envisager toute nouvelle révision, le cas échéant.

EUROSUR est actuellement en cours de mise en place, par étapes. Il donne à Frontex et aux États membres les moyens de surveiller plus efficacement les frontières extérieures de l'Espace Schengen, grâce au partage, au niveau national et européen, des informations sur les incidents et les ressources ainsi que des analyses des risques. Il permet d'ores et déjà de recenser des «points chauds» en vue d'apporter un soutien ciblé.

À partir de fin 2014, le nouveau mécanisme d'évaluation de Schengen ([2]) sera applicable. La Commission sera alors en mesure de vérifier, avec les États membres, si les règles de l'acquis de Schengen sont correctement appliquées aux frontières extérieures de l'UE, de recommander des améliorations le cas échéant, et de surveiller étroitement la mise en œuvre de ces recommandations.

En tout dernier ressort, dans des circonstances exceptionnelles où le fonctionnement global de la zone Schengen est menacé du fait d'insuffisances graves et persistantes en relation avec le contrôle des frontières extérieures, et pour autant que ces circonstances constituent une menace sérieuse pour l'ordre public ou la sécurité intérieure au sein de la zone Schengen, les contrôles pourraient être réintroduits aux frontières intérieures.

([1]) Règlement (UE) n° 1168/2011 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 25 octobre 2011 modifiant le règlement (CE) n° 2007/2004 du Conseil portant création d'une Agence européenne pour la gestion de la coopération opérationnelle aux frontières extérieures des États membres de l'Union européenne JO L 304 du 22.11.2013, p. 1.

([2]) Règlement (EU) n° 1053/2013 du Conseil du 7 octobre 2013 portant création d'un mécanisme d'évaluation et de contrôle destiné à vérifier l'application de l'acquis de Schengen et abrogeant la décision du comité exécutif du 16 septembre 1998 concernant la création d'une commission permanente d'évaluation et d'application de Schengen JO L 295 du 6.11.2013, p. 27.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003575/14
to the Commission
Franck Proust (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: European Union's external borders

The European Union's external borders are becoming increasingly porous. We need to reform the system of immigration control. More emphasis should be placed on programmes such as Frontex and Eurosur so that the EU can monitor its borders more effectively.

Could the Commission provide an assessment of European legislation on external borders, in particular as regards the Frontex and Eurosur programmes?

Monitoring our external borders rests largely on trust. Are there any means of carrying out controls and applying sanctions to any countries found not to be adequately monitoring external borders located on their territory?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(13 May 2014)

The Commission carried out an evaluation of the activities of the Frontex Agency in 2008. On that basis the Frontex legal framework was further improved by the co-legislators in October 2011 ([1]). In the light of this, a period of consolidation is necessary before any further revisions are considered, if needed.

Eurosur is currently being established step by step. It enables Frontex and the Member States to monitor the Schengen external borders more efficiently by sharing at national and European level information on incidents and assets as well as risk analysis products. Already today it allows identification of 'hot spots' with a view to providing targeted support.

From end 2014 onwards the new Schengen evaluation mechanism ([2]) will become applicable. This will enable the Commission to check, together with the Member States, if the rules of the Schengen *acquis* are correctly applied at the EU's external border, to recommend improvements, where necessary, and to monitor closely the implementation of the recommendations.

As a very last resort measure, in exceptional circumstances where the overall functioning of the Schengen area is put at risk as a result of persistent serious deficiencies related to external border control, and insofar as these circumstances constitute a serious threat to public policy or internal security within the Schengen area, border control could be reintroduced at internal borders.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1168/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union; OJ L 304, 22.11.2011, p. 1-17.

([2]) Council Regulation (EU) No 1053/2013 of 7 October 2013 establishing an evaluation and monitoring mechanism to verify the application of the Schengen *acquis* and repealing the decision of the Executive Committee of 16 September 1998 setting up a Standing Committee on the evaluation and implementation of Schengen; OJ L 295, 6.11.2013, p. 27-37.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003576/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Pristup građana RH privatnim posjedima u njihovu vlasništvu na lijevoj obali Dunava

Od osamostaljenja do danas Republika Hrvatska nije uspjela riješiti granični spor s Republikom Srbijom na Dunavu. Naime, više od 10 000 hektara teritorija Republike Hrvatske, mahom poljoprivrednog i šumskog zemljišta, nalazi se na lijevoj obali Dunava pod kontrolom srbijanske policije.

Vlasnici zemljišta i građani RH koji žive s desne strane Dunava onemogućeni su u pristupu svom privatnom vlasništvu, a oni koji žive na lijevoj obali ne mogu kao strani državljani svoje poljoprivredne proizvode prodavati u Srbiji, dok im je plasman u Hrvatsku također znatno otežan jer s robom moraju prijeći dvije carine. S obzirom na to da nijedna od dvije države na tom području ne provodi svoje zakone, protuzakonite radnje, uglavnom krivolov i bespravna gradnja, prolaze nekažnjeno.

Bez ikakvog prejudiciranja sudskog ili arbitražnog rješenja graničnog spora između Republike Hrvatske i Republike Srbije, može li Komisija preporučiti potencijalno rješenje kojim bi se vlasnicima zemljišta omogućio pristup njihovu privatnom vlasništvu i prije rješenja međudržavnog spora?

Također, u duhu zaštite privatnog vlasništva, smatra li Komisija da bi kooperativnost Republike Srbije u ovom slučaju trebala biti jedan od uvjeta u pristupnim pregovorima te države s Europskom unijom?

Odgovor g. Fülea u ime Komisije
(16. lipnja 2014.)

Komisija je upoznata s činjenicom da je utvrđivanje granice između Hrvatske i Srbije u pojedinim područjima duž Dunava predmet spora. Komisija smatra da je to prvenstveno bilateralno pitanje koje bi Hrvatska i Srbija trebale riješiti u duhu dobrosusjedskih odnosa.

Zbog toga Komisija preporučuje da Hrvatska i Srbija daju prioritet rješavanju tih teritorijalnih sporova. U posljednjem dokumentu strategije proširenja od 16. listopada 2013. Komisija poziva na ponovne napore kako bi se prebrodili bilateralni sporovi. Države bi neriješena bilateralna pitanja, kao što su granični sporovi, trebale rješavati bez odlaganja i u duhu dobrosusjedskih odnosa. Komisija je primila na znanje nanovo iskazanu spremnost Srbije i Hrvatske da zajedno rade na rješavanju takvih pitanja te se nada da će bilateralne radne skupine osnovane 2013. postići napredak u bliskoj budućnosti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003576/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Access for Croatian citizens to property owned by them on the left bank of the Danube

Since it gained its independence until now, Croatia has been unable to resolve its dispute with Serbia over the Danube River. This dispute centres on more than 10 000 hectares of mainly agricultural and forest land on the left bank of the Danube. This land is controlled by the Serbian police.

Owners of plots who are citizens of Croatia and who live on the right bank of the Danube are prevented from accessing their own private property. Meanwhile, those living on the left bank may not — as foreign citizens — sell their agricultural produce in Serbia. Their position within Croatia is also made much more difficult by the fact that they have to go through two sets of customs. Given that neither country is implementing its laws in this area, illegal activities — mainly poaching and illegal construction — are carried out with impunity.

Without prejudice to a potential resolution of the border dispute between Croatia and Serbia by way of court or arbitration, could the Commission recommend a potential solution that would give owners of land access to their private property before the resolution of this dispute?

Furthermore, in the context of protecting private property rights, does the Commission feel that Serbia's cooperation in this matter should be made a condition in the country's accession negotiations with the European Union?

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

The Commission is aware of the fact that the demarcation of the border between Croatia and Serbia regarding certain territories along the Danube River is subject to claims. The Commission considers this in the first place to be a bilateral issue to be settled between Croatia and Serbia in the spirit of good neighbourhood relations.

This is why the Commission recommends that Croatia and Serbia address these bilateral territorial disputes as a matter of priority. In its last Enlargement Strategy Paper of 16 October 2013, the Commission encouraged a renewed effort to overcome bilateral disputes. In the spirit of good neighbourly relations, open bilateral issues, such as border disputes, need to be addressed by the parties concerned as early as possible. The Commission took good note of the renewed mutual desire of Serbia and Croatia to work together to address such issues and is hopeful that the bilateral working groups set up in 2013 will bring about progress in the near future.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003577/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Diferencijalni pristup u borbi protiv prostitucije

U svojoj rezoluciji od 26. veljače 2014. o seksualnom iskorištavanju i prostituciji te njezinu utjecaju na jednakost spolova Parlament je podržao primjenu tzv. skandinavskog modela u zakonodavstvu EU-a, odnosno mjere koje imaju za cilj kriminalizaciju kupaca seksualnih usluga i dekriminalizaciju prostitutki.

Takav model nažalost ne pravi razliku između različitih oblika prostitucije koji shodno tome pretpostavljaju i različit status pružatelja seksualnih usluga. Veliki dio njih nalazi se doslovno u robovskom položaju i bave se prostitucijom pod prisilom i u nehumanim uvjetima, dok s druge strane mnogi pružatelji takvih usluga samoinicijativno organiziraju svoje aktivnosti i bave se tim zanatom svojom slobodnom voljom i bez prisile u svrhu ostvarivanja natprosječne zarade. Prvu skupinu većinom čine žrtve trgovine ljudima koje zaslužuju najveću razinu zaštite, ali u toj drugoj skupini mahom su oni koji se bave elitnom prostitucijom i njih teško možemo ubrajati u žrtve jer doprinose razvoju prostitucije i profitiraju od nje.

Hoće li Komisija ipak zauzeti diferencijalni pristup u borbi protiv prostitucije u EU-u i napraviti razliku između žrtava trgovine ljudima koje često žive u paklu droge i nasilja i kojima mora biti pružena pomoć te onih koji se svojom voljom bave prostitucijom i od nje dobro zarađuju?

Odgovor gđe Malmström u ime Komisije
(19. svibnja 2014.)

Ugovorima Europske unije EU-u nije dodijeljena izričita nadležnost za reguliranje prostitucije. Države članice imaju različite politike u pogledu prostitucije. Pristup Komisije utemeljen je na nadležnostima koje su dodijeljene ugovorima EU-a. Člankom 83. (UFEU) dodjeljuje se nadležnost u području seksualnog iskorištavanja žena i djece te trgovine ljudima. EU stoga ima ovlasti za rješavanje problema prostitucije u mjeri u kojoj se on odnosi na seksualno iskorištavanje i trgovinu ljudima.

Europska komisija uviđa da postoje veze između prostitucije, organiziranog kriminala i trgovine ljudima. Prema radnom dokumentu Eurostata iz 2013. godine ([1]), oblik nezakonite trgovine koji se najviše prijavljuje je trgovina radi seksualnog iskorištavanja (66 % 2010.), a velika većina osoba pogođenih tim oblikom nezakonite trgovine su žene i djevojčice (96 % 2010.). Komisija je iznimno zabrinuta zbog rastućeg broja prijavljenih slučajeva trgovine ljudima.

Člankom 18. Direktive 2011/36/EU ([2]) države članice se poziva da razmotre mjere za kriminalizaciju korištenja usluga uz saznanje da je dotična osoba žrtva trgovine ljudima. U skladu s uvjetima iz članka 23. Direktive, Komisija će do 2016. podnijeti izvješće o procjeni utjecaja postojećih nacionalnih zakona, uz koje će prema potrebi priložiti odgovarajuće prijedloge o kriminalizaciji korisnika takvih usluga.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat.
([2]) Direktiva 2011/36/EU Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća od 5. travnja 2011. o sprečavanju i suzbijanju trgovanja ljudima i zaštiti njezinih žrtava te o zamjeni Okvirne odluke Vijeća 2002/629/PUP, SL 15.4.2011., L 101.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003577/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Differentiated approach to combating prostitution

In its resolution of 26 February 2014 on sexual exploitation and prostitution and its impact on gender equality, Parliament supported implementing the so-called 'Scandinavian' model in EC law. This model comprises measures aimed at criminalising those who buy sex and decriminalising prostitutes.

This model does not distinguish between the different forms of prostitution. Different forms confer a different status to the provider of sexual services. Many prostitutes are literally working in slave-like conditions. These women are forced to engage in prostitution by force and to endure inhuman conditions. However, many providers of sexual services engage in sexual activities of their own free will, practicing their profession without force in order to earn higher-than-average incomes. The first group mostly comprises victims of people-trafficking, who deserve the highest degree of protection. However, the second group is chiefly made up of 'elite prostitutes' who cannot reasonably be considered victims, as they contribute to advances in prostitution and profit from their profession.

Does the Commission plan to adopt a differentiated approach to combating prostitution in the EU by distinguishing between victims of people-trafficking — who often live in a hell of drugs and violence and who must be offered help — and those who work as prostitutes of their own free will and earn good money from doing so?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 May 2014)

The EU Treaties do not confer to the EU explicit competence to regulate prostitution. Member States have diverse policies on prostitution. The Commission's approach reflects the competences conferred by the EU treaties. Article 83 (TFEU) confers competence on sexual exploitation of women and children, and on trafficking in human beings. The EU thus has a mandate to address prostitution in so far as this relates to sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings.

The European Commission recognises the links among prostitution, organised crime and trafficking in human beings. According to the 2013 Eurostat Working Paper ([1]), the most reported form of trafficking is for sexual exploitation (66% in 2010) and the overwhelming majority of people affected by this form are women and girls (96% in 2010). The Commission is very concerned about the increasingly reported number of trafficked human beings.

Article 18 of the directive 2011/36/EU ([2]) urges Member States to consider measures for criminalising the use of services with the knowledge that the person concerned is a victim of human trafficking. As required by Article 23 of the directive, the Commission will submit a report by 2016 assessing the impact of existing national laws accompanied, if necessary, by appropriate proposals on the criminalisation of users of such services.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/EU+Policy/Report_DGHome_Eurostat
([2]) Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA, OJ 15.4.2011, L 101.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003579/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Neizvršenje europskog istražnog naloga

U svojem stajalištu o zakonodavnoj rezoluciji Europskog parlamenta o nacrtu Direktive Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o europskom istražnom nalogu u kaznenim stvarima (P7_TA(2014)0165 — 2010/0817(COD)), Parlament je podržao odredbu prema kojoj se priznavanje ili izvršenje europskog istražnog naloga može odbiti u državi izvršiteljici u slučaju da njegovo izvršenje šteti bitnim interesima nacionalne sigurnosti, dovodi u opasnost izvor informacija ili znači korištenje povjerljivih informacija koje se odnose na određenu obavještajnu djelatnost.

Slažem se da okvir koji uređuje europski istražni nalog mora propisati zaštitne mehanizme koji će omogućiti državama članicama zaštitu njihove nacionalne sigurnosti i povjerljivosti osjetljivih podataka.

Međutim nije li Komisija zabrinuta da će takva odredba, široko definirana i podložna subjektivnim tumačenjima, u okviru procesa koji u određenoj mjeri sadrže političku dimenziju, biti predmet zloporabe, odnosno da će omogućiti pojedincima i skupinama bliskima vlasti da se sakriju iza zaštite nacionalne sigurnosti?

Kako bi se izbjegle takve situacije i zajamčila pravna sigurnost, može li Komisija detaljnije pojasniti koje bi okolnosti trebale predstavljati valjan razlog za nepriznavanje ili neizvršenje istražnog naloga u ime zaštite nacionalne sigurnosti, izvora informacija ili povjerljivih informacija?

Odgovor g. Hahna u ime Komisije
(6. svibnja 2014.)

Komisija podsjeća da je Direktiva o Europskom istražnom nalogu u kaznenim stvarima, koja je rezultat inicijative skupine država članica, donesena te će biti objavljena u Službenom listu Europske unije. U članku 11. te direktive navodi se popis razloga za odbijanje priznavanja naloga, uključujući „ako bi, u pojedinačnom slučaju, njegovo izvršenje štetilo bitnim interesima nacionalne sigurnosti, dovelo u opasnost izvor informacija ili značilo korištenje tajnih informacija koje se odnose na određenu obavještajnu djelatnost”. Jednaki razlog odbijanja naveden je i u Okvirnoj odluci 2008/978/PUP o dokaznom nalogu.

Razloge za odbijanje predviđene Direktivom o europskom istražnom nalogu morat će se tumačiti restriktivno kako bi se osigurala učinkovitost direktive. Na državama članicama ostaje da pri provedbi poštuju to načelo. Komisija će prema potrebi iskoristiti svoja prava kako bi osigurala da su države članice u predviđenom roku od tri godine na zadovoljavajući način provele tu direktivu.

Komisija na kraju podsjeća da će nacionalni sudovi na temelju navedene definicije tumačiti taj pojam pod nadzorom Europskog suda.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003579/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Failure to execute European Investigation Orders

In its opinion on its legislative resolution on the draft directive of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding the European Investigation Order in criminal matters (P7_TA(2014)0165 — 2010/0817(COD)), Parliament supported a provision which would allow the executing state to refuse to recognise or execute a European Investigation Order (EIO) in the event that its execution would harm essential national security interests, jeopardise the source of the information or involve the use of classified information relating to specific intelligence activities.

I agree that the framework governing the EIO must provide for protective mechanisms to enable Member States to protect their national security and the confidentiality of sensitive information.

Is the Commission not, however, concerned that such a provision — being broadly defined and open to subjective interpretations, as well as being part of a process with a certain political dimension — will result in abuse, i.e. that it will enable individuals and groups close to power to hide behind the screen of 'protecting national security'?

In order to prevent such situations from arising and to guarantee legal certainty, could the Commission explain in greater detail what precise circumstances would constitute a valid reason for not recognising or not executing an EIO for reasons of protecting national security, the source of the information or the confidentiality of the information?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Hahn au nom de la Commission
(6 mai 2014)

La Commission rappelle que la Directive concernant la décision d'enquête européenne en matière pénale et qui résulte d'une initiative présentée par un groupe d'États membres, a été adoptée et [va être] publiée au Journal Officiel de l'Union européenne. L'article 11 de cette directive prévoit une liste de motifs de refus de reconnaissance dont un concernant le « risque de nuire à des intérêts nationaux essentiels en matière de sécurité, de mettre en danger la source d'information ou de comporter l'utilisation d'informations classifiées se rapportant à des activités de renseignement particulières ». Un motif de refus identique était prévu dans la décision-cadre 2008//978/JAI relative au mandat d'obtention de preuves.

Les motifs de refus prévus par la Directive concernant la décision d'enquête européenne devront être interprétés de manière restrictive afin de garantir l'effet utile de la directive. Il appartiendra aux États membres de respecter ce principe lors de la transposition. La Commission mettra en œuvre, le cas échéant, ses prérogatives pour s'assurer que les États membres ont transposé de manière satisfaisante cette directive dans le délai de trois ans prévu.

La Commission rappelle enfin qu'il appartiendra aux juridictions nationales d'interpréter, à partir de la définition donnée, cette notion sous le contrôle de la Cour de Justice.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-003580/14
upućeno Komisiji
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24. ožujka 2014.)

Predmet: Ostanak studenata i istraživača iz trećih zemalja u EU-u nakon završetka studija ili istraživanja

U svom stajalištu o prijedlogu Direktive Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o uvjetima za ulazak i boravak državljana trećih zemalja u svrhu istraživanja, studiranja, razmjene učenika, plaćenog i neplaćenog usavršavanja, volontiranja i obavljanja posla za stan i hranu, Parlament navodi da državljani trećih zemalja, po završetku istraživanja ili studija, imaju pravo ostati na teritoriju navedene države članice u razdoblju od 18 mjeseci kako bi tražili posao ili pokrenuli poslovanje.

Međutim, prema istom tekstu, od državljana trećih zemalja moći će se, nakon razdoblja od 9 mjeseci, zatražiti da dostave dokaz o tome da imaju istinsku šansu za zaposlenje ili pokretanje poslovanja.

Smatram da takva odredba može biti predmetom subjektivnih tumačenja i zloporaba, bilo u svrhu manipulacije sustavom zemlje domaćina, bilo diskriminacije nad studentima i istraživačima iz trećih zemalja. Stoga bih željela pitati Komisiju kako ona tumači „realnu šansu za zaposlenje ili pokretanje posla" te koje kriterije može preporučiti državama članicama kao najobjektivnije za donošenje takvih ocjena.

Odgovor gđe Malmström u ime Komisije
(12. svibnja 2014.)

Komisijinim prijedlogom Direktive Europskog parlamenta i Vijeća o uvjetima ulaska i boravka državljana trećih zemalja u svrhu istraživanja, studiranja, razmjene učenika, plaćenog i neplaćenog osposobljavanja, volontiranja te obavljanja posla za stan i hranu ([1]) već je predviđena mogućnost da države članice od studenata državljana trećih zemalja koji su završili studij ili istraživača koji su završili istraživanje zatraže dokaz o stvarnim izgledima za zaposlenje ili pokretanje poslovanja. Prema prijedlogu Komisije takvu bi provjeru bilo moguće provesti nakon razdoblja od šest mjeseci te bi studentima i istraživačima bilo dopušteno tražiti posao ili pokrenuti poslovanje u razdoblju od 12 mjeseci nakon završetka istraživanja ili studija.

Određivanje posebnih kriterija koje treba zadovoljiti radi ispunjavanja navedenih uvjeta bit će prepušteno državama članicama. Primjeri vrsta dokaza koje bi države članice mogle tražiti uključuju: dokaze o podnošenju molbi za zaposlenje potencijalnim poslodavcima, pozive na razgovore za posao (čak i ako kandidat na kraju nije dobio posao) te dokaze da je postupak pokretanja poslovanja u tijeku.

([1]) COM(2013)81 od 25.3.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003580/14
to the Commission
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Residence in the EU for students and researchers from third countries after the end of studies or research

In its opinion on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing, Parliament states that third-country nationals are entitled to stay on the territory of the Member State for a period of 18 months in order to look for work or set up a business.

However, the text also states that: 'after a period of nine months, third-country nationals may additionally be requested to provide evidence that they have a genuine chance of being engaged or of launching a business'.

I feel that such a provision could be interpreted subjectively and abused, either in order to manipulate the system of the host country, or to discriminate against students and researchers from third countries. How does the Commission interpret the phrase 'genuine chance of being engaged or of launching a business'? What would the Commission recommend as the most objective criteria for the Member States to apply when carrying out such assessments?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The Commission proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing ([1]) already provides for the possibility for Member States to ask for evidence that-third-country national students who finished their studies, or researchers who finished their research, have a genuine chance of being engaged or of launching a business. The Commission proposal would allow such a check to take place after a period of six months, the student or researcher being allowed to seek a job or set up a business for a period of 12 months after finalisation of their research or studies.

Setting the specific criteria that need to be met to fulfil the above condition will be up to Member States. Examples of the type of evidence that Member States could ask for might include: proof of submission of applications to potential employers, invitations to job interviews (even if the applicant in the end did not get the job), or proof of an on-going procedure to set up a business.

([1]) COM(2013) 81, of 25.3.2013.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003581/14
aan de Commissie
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(24 maart 2014)

Betreft: Vrij verkeer van kapitaal

De huidige Italiaanse wetgeving belemmert het vrij verkeer van kapitaal op de volgende twee manieren:

1. Ingevolge het eind december 2013 goedgekeurde art. 4 comma 2 DL n.167/90 modificato dalla legge 97/2013, zijn Italiaanse banken sinds 1 februari verplicht om standaard een voorheffing van 20 % in te houden op iedere buitenlandse overschrijving ten gunste van een rekening van een natuurlijke persoon bij een Italiaanse bank. Deze voorheffing kan pas na meer dan een jaar worden teruggevorderd via een omslachtige procedure waarbij de begunstigde aantoont niet of slechts tegen een lager tarief belastingplichtig te zijn voor deze geldsom. Het is evident dat door deze nieuwe verplichting geen enkele kleine zelfstandige/ambachtsman, die geen vennnootschapsvorm hanteert, nog een overschrijving vanuit het buitenland zal accepteren. Hierdoor worden overschrijvingen vanaf een buitenlandse rekening, en dus het aanhouden van een dergelijke rekening, de facto benadeeld ten opzichte van transacties uitgevoerd vanaf een Italiaanse rekening.

2. Voor alle betalingen aan de overheid — belastingen en accijnzen bijvoorbeeld — worden in Italië gevestigde personen de facto verplicht een Italiaanse rekening te hebben omdat enkel met hun systeem de betalingen via het „F24”-formulier kunnen worden uitgevoerd.

Is de Commissie op de hoogte van deze belemmerende wetgeving en wat denkt zij daartegen te ondernemen?

Antwoord van de heer Šemeta namens de Commissie
(28 april 2014)

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar het gezamenlijke antwoord op de schriftelijke vragen E-001705/2014, E-001839/2014, E-001845/2014 en P-002043/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003581/14
to the Commission
Marianne Thyssen (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Free movement of capital

The free movement of capital is currently being restricted in two ways under Italian legislation:

1. Under Article 4(2) of Decree Law 167/90 as amended by Law 97/2013 adopted at the end of December 2013, Italian banks have, since 1 February, been required to impose on all foreign transfers to Italian bank accounts held by natural persons a standard 20% withholding tax that can only be claimed back after more than one year, the procedures involved being extremely complex, requiring those concerned to show that no tax is payable on the amount in question or that any tax due is at a lower rate. As a result, unincorporated small businesses or craftsmen will obviously refuse to accept transfers from abroad, effectively placing transactions by foreign account holders at a disadvantage compared with those carried out from Italian accounts.

2. Persons resident in Italy wishing to use F24 forms for payments such as taxes or duties to the state are unable to do so unless they hold an Italian account, effectively making it a necessity.

Is the Commission aware of these restrictive provisions and what action does it intend to take against them?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(28 April 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the joint reply to written questions E-001705/2014, E-001839/2014, E-001845/2014 and P-002043/2014.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003582/14
adresată Consiliului
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 martie 2014)

Subiect: Directiva 92/85/CEE

Care sunt progresele înregistrate în Consiliu referitor la lucrările asupra propunerii de directivă a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului de modificare a Directivei 92/85/CEE a Consiliului privind introducerea de măsuri pentru promovarea îmbunătățirii securității și a sănătății la locul de muncă în cazul lucrătoarelor gravide, care au născut de curând sau care alăptează?

Răspuns
(28 mai 2014)

De la 20 octombrie 2010, data la care Parlamentul European și-a adoptat poziția în primă lectură ([1]), nu a fost posibil să se obțină majoritatea calificată necesară pentru adoptarea unei poziții în primă lectură de către Consiliu.

Consiliul nu este în măsură să anticipeze rezultatul sau durata negocierilor.

Șansele de a debloca situația ar depinde, de asemenea, de gradul de flexibilitate de care Parlamentul European este dispus să dea dovadă.

([1]) JO C 70E, 8.3.2012, p. 162.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003582/14
to the Council
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Directive 92/85/EEC

What stage has been reached in the Council on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 92/85/EEC concerning the implementation of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of pregnant workers, workers who have recently given birth and women who are breastfeeding?

Reply
(28 May 2014)

Since the European Parliament adopted its position at first reading on 20 October 2010 ([1]), it has not been possible to reach the requisite qualified majority for the adoption of a position in first reading by the Council.

The Council is not in a position to anticipate the outcome or duration of the negotiations.

The chances of breaking the deadlock would also depend on the degree of flexibility that the European Parliament is prepared to show.

([1]) OJ C 70E, 8.3.2012, p. 162.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003583/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 martie 2014)

Subiect: Finanțarea Autorității Europene pentru Valori Mobiliare și Piețe

Autoritatea Europeană pentru Valori Mobiliare și Piețe — autoritate independentă de reglementare a valorilor mobiliare și piețelor din Uniunea Europeană — contribuie la menținerea stabilității sistemului financiar al Uniunii Europene prin asigurarea integrității, a transparenței, a eficienței și a bunei funcționări a piețelor de valori mobiliare, precum și prin îmbunătățirea protecției investitorilor.

În prezent, Autoritatea Europeană pentru Valori Mobiliare și Piețe beneficiază de un regim de finanțare mixtă (bazat pe contribuții din partea autorităților naționale de supraveghere, din bugetul Uniunii Europene, dar și din partea unor țări membre ale Spațiului Economic European)

Acest regim de finanțare mixtă este inflexibil, creează sarcini administrative suplimentare și, cel mai important, poate reprezenta o amenințare la adresa independenței Autorității Europene pentru Valori Mobiliare și Piețe.

Cum poate garanta Comisia independența acestei autorități? Are în vedere Comisia modificarea actualului regim de finanțare mixtă?

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003706/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Finanțarea Autorității Europene pentru Asigurări și Pensii Ocupaționale

Autoritatea Europeană pentru Asigurări și Pensii Ocupaționale — autoritate independentă — are, printre responsabilitățile sale de bază, rolul de a sprijini stabilitatea sistemului financiar, transparența piețelor și produselor financiare, precum și de a proteja consumatorii de asigurări și membrii și beneficiarii schemelor de pensii private.

În prezent, Autoritatea Europeană pentru Asigurări și Pensii Ocupaționale beneficiază de un regim de finanțare mixtă (bazat pe contribuții din partea autorităților naționale de supraveghere, din bugetul Uniunii Europene, dar și din partea unor țări membre ale Spațiului Economic European)

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Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003708/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 martie 2014)

Subiect: Finanțarea Autorității Bancare Europene

Autoritatea bancară europeană — autoritate independentă a UE — are ca obiective asigurarea unui nivel eficient și consecvent de reglementare și supraveghere prudențială în întregul sector bancar din UE, precum și menținerea stabilității financiare în UE și asigurarea integrității, eficienței și bunei funcționări a sectorului bancar.

În prezent, Autoritatea bancară europeană beneficiază de un regim de finanțare mixtă (bazat pe contribuții din partea autorităților naționale de supraveghere, din bugetul Uniunii Europene, dar și din partea unor țări membre ale Spațiului Economic European)

Acest regim de finanțare mixtă este inflexibil, creează sarcini administrative suplimentare și, cel mai important, poate reprezenta o amenințare la adresa independenței Autorității bancare europene.

Cum poate garanta Comisia independența acestei autorități? Si are în vedere Comisia modificarea actualului regim de finanțare mixtă?

Răspuns comun dat de dl Barnier în numele Comisiei
(14 mai 2014)

Ca răspuns la cele trei întrebări privind finanțarea celor trei autorități europene de supraveghere (AES), și anume Autoritatea Bancară Europeană (ABE), Autoritatea Europeană pentru Valori mobiliare și Piețe (ESMA) și Autoritatea Europeană de Asigurări și Pensii Ocupaționale (EIOPA), regulamentele lor de finanțare prevăd faptul că bugetele respective sunt alcătuite din contribuții obligatorii din partea autorităților naționale competente (ANC), dintr-o subvenție din partea Uniunii și, în cazurile specificate în legislația UE, din orice taxe plătite către autoritatea relevantă.

Comisia va publica în curând un raport privind revizuirea celor trei AES, realizată în cursul anului 2013, care va acoperi chestiunea privind finanțarea acestora. În acest raport, Comisia va examina pertinența și sustenabilitatea actualelor mecanisme de finanțare.

Nu există dovezi clare că aceste mecanisme compromit independența AES. Cu toate acestea, Comisia este deschisă ideii de a vedea cum ar putea fi modificată finanțarea AES pentru a îmbunătăți în continuare eficacitatea activității AES.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003583/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Financing the European Securities and Markets Authority

The European Securities and Markets Authority — an independent authority set up to regulate securities and markets in the European Union — helps to safeguard the stability of the European Union's financial system by ensuring the integrity, transparency, efficiency and smooth functioning of the securities markets, and by improving protection for investors.

The European Securities and Markets Authority currently has a mixed financing system (based on contributions from the national supervisory authorities, the EU budget and some member countries of the European Economic Area).

This mixed financing system is inflexible, creates additional administrative burdens and, most importantly, might jeopardise the European Securities and Markets Authority's independence.

How can the Commission guarantee this authority's independence? Is the Commission planning to modify the current mixed financing system?

Question for written answer E-003706/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Financing the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority

The chief responsibilities of the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority — an independent authority — include its role in safeguarding the stability of the financial system, the transparency of markets and financial products, and protection for policyholders and private pension scheme members and beneficiaries.

The European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority currently has a mixed financing system (based on contributions from the national supervisory authorities, the EU budget and some member countries of the European Economic Area).

This mixed financing system is inflexible, creates additional administrative burdens and, most importantly, might jeopardise the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority's independence. How can the Commission guarantee this authority's independence? Is the Commission planning to modify the current mixed financing system?

Question for written answer E-003708/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(26 March 2014)

Subject: Financing the European Banking Authority

The European Banking Authority — an independent EU authority — aims to ensure an effective and consistent level of prudential regulation and supervision across the European banking sector, and to maintain financial stability in the EU and safeguard the integrity, efficiency and orderly functioning of the banking sector.

The European Banking Authority currently has a mixed financing system (based on contributions from the national supervisory authorities, the EU budget and some member countries of the European Economic Area).

This mixed financing system is inflexible, creates additional administrative burdens and, most importantly, might jeopardise the European Banking Authority's independence.

How can the Commission guarantee this authority's independence? Is the Commission planning to modify the current mixed financing system?

Joint answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(14 May 2014)

In response to the three questions on the financing of the three European Supervisory Authorities (ESAs), namely the European Banking Authority (EBA), the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) and the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA), their funding regulations provide that the respective budgets shall consist of obligatory contributions from the national competent authorities (NCA), of a subsidy from the Union and, where specified in EC law, of any fees paid to the relevant Authority.

The Commission will soon publish its report on the review of the three ESAs which was undertaken in the course of 2013, and which will cover the issue of their financing. In this report the Commission will look at the appropriateness and sustainability of the present financing arrangements.

There is no clear evidence that these arrangements compromise the independence of the ESAs. However the Commission is open to see how the financing of the ESAs could be modified to further improve the effectiveness of the ESAs' work.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003584/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 martie 2014)

Subiect: Directiva 2006/54/CE

Egalitatea între bărbați și femei este un principiu fundamental al dreptului european, iar în conformitate cu tratatele, constituie o „misiune" dar și un „obiectiv" al Uniunii Europene, aceasta având obligația pozitivă de a o promova în toate acțiunile sale. Directiva 2006/54/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului joacă un rol crucial în acest sens însă, în forma sa actuală, nu este suficient de eficace pentru a soluționa discrepanțele salariale între femei și bărbați și pentru a realiza obiectivul egalității de gen la angajare și la locul de muncă.

Are în vedere Comisia revizuirea acestei directive în scopul de a defini, detaliat, diversele concepte-cheie în domeniu, de a facilita dialogul social, precum și pentru a consolida prevederile referitoare la prevenirea și combaterea discriminării?

Ce demersuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a promova cooperarea strânsă în rândul statelor membre în ceea ce privește cercetarea, analizarea și valorificarea la maximum a schimbului de bune practici în acest domeniu?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(6 mai 2014)

Diferența de remunerare dintre femei și bărbați este cauzată de o multitudine de motive, unele dintre acestea referindu-se la discriminarea de remunerare pentru aceeași muncă sau pentru o muncă de valoare egală, interzisă prin Directiva 2006/54/CE, în timp ce altele își au originea în probleme societale de mai mare amploare, precum segregarea *de facto* a piețelor forței de muncă. Prin urmare, reducerea diferenței de remunerare necesită o abordare multidimensională, care să abordeze toate variabilele legate de acest fenomen.

Aplicarea eficace a cadrului legislativ existent al UE privind egalitatea de remunerare este indispensabilă pentru eliminarea diferenței de remunerare dintre femei și bărbați. Prin urmare, Comisia se axează mai degrabă pe monitorizarea punerii în aplicare corecte la nivel național a dispozițiilor privind egalitatea de remunerare din Directiva 2006/54/CE și pe sprijinirea statelor membre și a altor părți interesate în ceea ce privește asigurarea respectării și aplicarea corespunzătoare a normelor existente decât pe revizuirea directivei.

Comisia a adoptat un Raport privind aplicarea Directivei 2006/54/CE ([1]) și o Recomandare a Comisiei referitoare la consolidarea principiului egalității de remunerare între bărbați și femei prin transparență ([2]). Pentru mai multe detalii, Comisia ar dori să aducă în atenția distinsei doamne deputat răspunsurile sale la întrebările E-003585/2014 și E-003082/2014.

Comisia colaborează constant cu statele membre în vederea atingerii obiectivului comun de a combate diferența de remunerare dintre femei și bărbați. Printre acțiunile UE se numără inițiativa *Equality Pays Off* (Egalitatea este rentabilă) ([3]) (care include organizarea de evenimente de formare pentru întreprinderi în 34 de țări europene), elaborarea de studii și de analize privind aspectele legate de gen, inclusiv privind diferența de remunerare dintre femei și bărbați, acțiuni de sensibilizare, cum ar fi Ziua europeană a egalității salariale, precum și schimburi de bune practici între statele membre. Comisia abordează, de asemenea, diferența de remunerare și cauzele acesteia în cadrul semestrului european ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013) 861 final; document disponibil la adresa: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0861:FIN:RO:PDF
([2]) JO L 69, 8.3.2014; document disponibil la adresa: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:069:0112:0116:RO:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_ro.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003584/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Directive 2006/54/EC

Equality between men and women is a fundamental principle of European law, and under the Treaties it is a 'task' and an 'aim' of the European Union, which has a positive obligation to promote it in all its activities. Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council plays a crucial role in this connection, but in its current form it is not sufficiently effective to resolve the gender pay gap and achieve the objective of gender equality in matters of employment and occupation.

Is the Commission planning to revise this directive with a view to providing a detailed definition of the various key concepts in this area, facilitating the social dialogue and consolidating the provisions on preventing and combating discrimination?

What steps will the Commission take to promote close cooperation among the Member States as regards research, analysis and deriving maximum benefit from the exchange of best practices in this field?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(6 May 2014)

The gender pay gap is caused by a multiplicity of reasons, some of which are related to discrimination in pay for equal work or work of equal value as prohibited by Directive 2006/54/EC while others are rooted in wider societal problems like the de facto segregation of labour markets. Therefore, reducing the pay gap needs a multifaceted approach addressing all the multiple variables linked to this phenomenon.

The effective application of the existing EU legal framework on equal pay is indispensable for tackling the gender pay gap. The Commission's focus is therefore to monitor the correct implementation of the equal pay provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC at national level and to support Member States and other stakeholders with the proper enforcement and application of the existing rules, rather than the revision of the directive.

The Commission has adopted a Report on the application of Directive 2006/54/EC ([1]) and a Commission Recommendation on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency ([2]). The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its replies to questions E-003585/2014 and E-003082/2014 for further details.

The Commission constantly collaborates with the Member States in the common objective of tackling the gender pay gap. EU actions include the Equality Pays Off Initiative ([3]) (which includes the organisation of training events for companies in 34 European countries), the production of studies and analyses on gender-related issues, including on gender pay gap, awareness-raising actions, such as the European Equal Pay Day, and the exchange of good practices between Member States. The Commission also addresses the pay gap and its causes in the framework of the European Semester ([4]).

([1]) COM(2013) 861 final, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2013:0861:FIN:EN:PDF
([2]) OJ L 69, 8.3.2014, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:069:0112:0116:EN:PDF
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/equality-pays-off/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003585/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 martie 2014)

Subiect: Aplicarea principiului egalității de remunerare între bărbați și femei

În data de 6.12.2013, Comisia Europeană a publicat Raportul privind punerea în aplicare a Directivei 2006/54/CE a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului din 5 iulie 2006 privind punerea în aplicare a principiului egalității de șanse și egalitatea de tratament între bărbați și femei în materie de angajare și de muncă.

În acest Raport, Comisia menționează faptul că are în vedere, pentru anul 2014, o inițiativă non-legislativă care va avea scopul de a promova și facilita aplicarea eficientă a principiului egalității de remunerare în practică și de a sprijini statele membre în găsirea unor soluții pentru a reduce diferențele de remunerare care persistă încă între femei și bărbați.

Când preconizează Comisia că va publica această inițiativă? În afara acestei inițiative și a legislației europene deja existente în materie, care sunt opțiunile de care dispune Comisia pentru a acționa la nivel european pentru a îmbunătăți transparența privind salariile?

Cum pot fi stimulate statele membre să identifice soluții la diferențele salariale între bărbați și femei, contribuind astfel practic și eficient la punerea în aplicare a principiului egalității de remunerare?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(13 mai 2014)

Comisia monitorizează în permanență aplicarea corectă și punerea în aplicare a dispozițiilor Directivei 2006/54/CE ([1]) referitoare la egalitatea de remunerare la nivel național și sprijină statele membre și alte părți interesate în aplicarea corespunzătoare și în asigurarea respectării normelor existente.

La 7 martie 2014, Comisia a adoptat o recomandare cu privire la consolidarea principiului egalității de remunerare între bărbați și femei prin transparență ([2]). Recomandarea își propune să promoveze și să faciliteze aplicarea efectivă a principiului egalității de remunerare și să sprijine statele membre și alte părți interesate în găsirea unor metode potrivite de reducere a diferenței persistente de remunerare între femei și bărbați. Recomandarea vizează transparența remunerării, care este esențială pentru aplicarea efectivă a principiului remunerării egale.

Recomandarea prezintă un set de măsuri concrete menite să asiste statele membre în adoptarea unei abordări personalizate pentru îmbunătățirea transparenței salariale, lăsându-le statelor membre flexibilitatea de a decide care sunt măsurile cele mai adecvate în funcție de contextul național. Recomandarea sugerează patru măsuri care vizează în mod specific transparența remunerației: dreptul angajaților de a solicita informații privind nivelurile de remunerare, prezentarea de către întreprinderi a unor rapoarte, efectuarea de audituri salariale și includerea egalității de remunerare în negocierile colective. Statele membre sunt încurajate să pună în aplicare cel puțin una dintre aceste măsuri de îmbunătățire a transparenței.

Statele membre sunt invitate să informeze Comisia cu privire la toate măsurile luate în conformitate cu această recomandare până la sfârșitul anului 2015. Acest lucru va permite Comisiei să monitorizeze îndeaproape situația, să elaboreze un raport privind progresele înregistrate în procesul de punere în aplicare a recomandării și să evalueze dacă sunt necesare măsuri suplimentare.

([1]) JO L 204, 26.7.2006.
([2]) JO L 69, 8.3.2014, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:069:0112:0116:RO:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003585/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Application of the principle of equal pay for men and women

On 6 December 2013, the Commission published its report on the application of Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.

In that report, the Commission states that is planning to adopt a non-legislative initiative in 2014 aiming to promote and facilitate effective application of the principle of equal pay in practice and assist Member States in finding the right approaches to reduce the persisting gender pay gap.

When is the Commission intending to publish this initiative? Apart from this initiative and existing European legislation on the subject, what options does the Commission have in terms of acting at European level to improve wage transparency?

How can the Member States be encouraged to find solutions to the gender pay gap, thus making an effective practical contribution to implementing the principle of equal pay?

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

The Commission is constantly monitoring the correct application and enforcement of the equal pay provisions of Directive 2006/54/EC ([1]) at national level and supports Member States and other stakeholders with the proper enforcement and application of the existing rules.

On 7 March 2014 the Commission adopted a recommendation on strengthening the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency ([2]). The recommendation aims to promote and facilitate the effective application of the principle of equal pay in practice and assist Member States and other stakeholders in finding the right approaches to reducing the persisting gender pay gap. The recommendation focuses on pay transparency, which is essential for the effective application of the equal pay principle.

The recommendation presents a tool box of concrete measures designed to assist Member States in taking a tailor-made approach to improving pay transparency, leaving Member States flexibility to decide which of the measures are most appropriate in their domestic circumstances. The recommendation suggests four measures specifically addressing pay transparency: entitlement of employees to request information on pay levels, regular company reporting, pay audits and the inclusion of equal pay issues in collective bargaining. Member States are encouraged to put in place at least one of these transparency enhancing measures.

Member States are asked to notify the Commission of all measures taken in accordance with the recommendation by the end of 2015. This will enable the Commission to closely monitor the situation, to draw up a report on the progress achieved while implementing the recommendation and assess the potential need for further measures.

([1]) OJ L 204, 26.7.2006.
([2]) OJ L 69, 8.3.2014, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:069:0112:0116:EN:PDF

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003586/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 martie 2014)

Subiect: Organizațiile de producători din sectorul fructelor și legumelor

În data de 4 martie 2014 Comisia Europeană a publicat Raportul privind punerea în aplicare a dispozițiilor referitoare la organizațiile de producători, la fondurile operaționale și la programele operaționale din sectorul fructelor și legumelor de la reforma din 2007 până în prezent. Acest raport constată, printre altele, faptul că sistemul de ajutoare european pentru fructe și legume bazat pe organizațiile de producători are și o serie neajunsuri, în special din cauza particularităților regimului juridic al cooperativelor din diferite state membre.

În acest sector, sprijinul din partea UE se acordă în continuare organizațiilor de producători numai prin intermediul programelor operaționale (cu cele două excepții: posibilitatea ca asociațiile de organizații de producători să poată înființa un fond operațional cu contribuțiile financiare ale organizațiilor de producători asociate și cu asistența financiară din partea UE și extinderea setului de instrumente pentru prevenirea și gestionarea crizelor).

Având în vedere acest fapt, dar și nevoia de a consolida activitățile benefice desfășurate de organizațiile de producători (OP) pentru producători, are în vedere Comisia să formuleze, în cadrul revizuirii sale privind regimul UE în materie de fructe și legume, norme clare și practice privind înființarea OP-urilor, dar și modul de funcționare a acestora?

Ce măsuri suplimentare poate lua Comisia pentru ca OP-urile să își îndeplinească rolul prevăzut și cultivatorii să fie încurajați și stimulați să se afilieze la acestea?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(5 mai 2014)

Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1308/2013 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului de instituire a unei organizări comune a piețelor produselor agricole ([1]) menține sprijinul UE acordat organizațiilor de producători din sectorul fructelor și legumelor prin intermediul programelor operaționale. În prezent, în cadrul elaborării actelor delegate și de punere în aplicare corespunzătoare, serviciile Comisiei încearcă să clarifice normele privind recunoașterea organizațiilor de producători, pentru a simplifica aceste norme și a reduce sarcina administrativă în scopul de a spori și mai mult atractivitatea organizațiilor de producători.

([1]) JO L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003586/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Producer organisations in the fruit and vegetable sector

On 4 March 2014 the Commission published the report on the implementation of the provisions concerning producer organisations, operational funds and operational programmes in the fruit and vegetables sector since the 2007 reform. Among other things, this report points to a series of weaknesses in the system of European aid for fruit and vegetables based on producer organisations, owing in particular to the specific features of legislation governing cooperatives in the various Member States.

EU support in this sector continues to be granted to producer organisations only through operational programmes (with two exceptions: the possibility for associations of producer organisations to set up an operational fund with the financial contributions from the associated producer organisations and the EU financial assistance, and the extension of the set of crisis prevention and management instruments).

Given this situation, and in the light of the need to consolidate the useful activities carried out by producer organisations (POs) for the benefit of producers, is the Commission planning to draw up clear practical rules on the setting-up of POs and their operation as part of its review of the EU fruit and vegetable regime?

What additional steps can the Commission take to ensure that POs carry out the role assigned to them and growers are encouraged to join POs?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(5 May 2014)

Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products ([1]) maintains the EU support in the fruit and vegetables sector to producer organisations through operational programmes. In the framework of the preparation of the corresponding Delegated and Implementing Acts, the Commission services are currently striving to clarify the rules for the recognition of Producer Organisations, to simplify the rules and decrease the administrative burden, in order to further increase the attractiveness of Producer Organisations.

([1]) OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 671.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003587/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(24 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Informazioni distorte sulla macellazione rituale per la produzione di carne

Nello scorso mese di febbraio alcuni media italiani hanno riportato la notizia relativa alla decisione del governo danese di vietare la macellazione rituale per la produzione di carne Halal e Kosher, su pressione delle associazioni animaliste, riferendo che il ministro dell'agricoltura danese Dan Jørgensen avrebbe sostenuto in proposito che i diritti degli animali vengono prima della religione. Tali mezzi d'informazione, dopo aver dato grande spazio ai commenti esultanti delle associazioni animaliste italiane, da sempre contrarie a qualsiasi forma di macellazione rituale, che definiscono «incompatibile con il diritto internazionale dei diritti degli animali», hanno riferito anche che alcuni rappresentanti delle comunità ebraiche e islamiche avrebbero reagito al provvedimento definendolo «puro antisemitismo», una «chiara interferenza nella libertà di credo» e una «violazione dei diritti di una minoranza che non ha il potere politico per difendersi». La LA.I.FF. (Federazione sindacale italiana di lavoratori immigrati), aderente a FederFauna, ha chiesto di intervenire per verificare se i fatti e le posizioni riportate dai media italiani siano corrispondenti al vero e per capire fino a che punto uno Stato membro possa, spinto da lobby potenti come quella animalista, legiferare in contrasto con le norme dell'Unione che garantiscono i diritti di tutti i cittadini europei. Sembrerebbe, però, che la notizia riportata dai media italiani sia l'ennesimo travisamento della realtà, perché tratta da fonti inattendibili e di parte. Infatti, in seguito a una verifica effettuata nei giorni scorsi attraverso Internet, emergerebbe che la Danimarca non abbia affatto vietato la macellazione rituale, ma abbia imposto unicamente che il bestiame venga stordito prima di essere sgozzato o subito dopo, al fine di conciliare i diritti religiosi delle persone con le esigenze di benessere degli animali. La macellazione rituale, infatti, prescriverebbe che gli animali, prima di essere uccisi con un solo taglio alla gola eseguito con un coltello affilatissimo, in modo da provocarne l'immediata morte e il completo dissanguamento, debbano essere in salute, senza segni di malattia, non feriti né danneggiati fisicamente in alcun modo, che siano cioè integri quando se ne versa il sangue.

Alla luce dei fatti esposti, può la Commissione:

— accertare se la Danimarca, o qualsiasi altro Stato membro dell'UE, abbia posto in essere un divieto di macellazione rituale della carne che appare in contrasto con i principi fondanti dell'Unione europea, oppure abbia agito nel rispetto degli stessi;

— illustrare quali provvedimenti intende adottare per evitare che un certo tipo di informazione manipolata e volutamente distorta inciti all'odio tra cittadini;

— far sapere se è in grado di affermare in maniera inequivocabile che non esiste un «diritto internazionale dei diritti degli animali», sussistendo unicamente «esigenze» degli animali e non «diritti», in quanto questi ultimi sono riservati ai soli esseri umani?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(11 giugno 2014)

1. L'abbattimento senza stordimento è consentito dalla normativa dell'UE ([1]) nel caso di macellazione rituale in deroga alla regola generale, ma spetta agli Stati membri decidere a quali condizioni può essere concessa tale deroga. Secondo fonti della Commissione, la Danimarca, la Finlandia, la Lituania, la Polonia, la Slovenia e la Svezia hanno vietato l'abbattimento senza stordimento. La conformità di tali divieti con la libertà di religione può essere valutata soltanto caso per caso poiché il contesto e le modalità di tali divieti sono diversi. Non vi è una correlazione rigorosa tra l'abbattimento senza stordimento e la macellazione rituale.

2. La Commissione lotta contro i discorsi razzisti e xenofobi facendo leva sulla decisione quadro 2008/913/GAI che fa obbligo agli Stati membri di penalizzare l'incitamento pubblico intenzionale alla violenza o all'odio contro gruppi o persone definiti in riferimento a razza, colore, religione, ascendenza o origine nazionale o etnica. Nei casi concreti di presunta incitazione all'odio che si verificano negli Stati membri spetta ai tribunali nazionali intervenire. La Commissione non può sostituirsi all'operato dei giudici nazionali.

3. L'articolo 13 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea ([2]) prescrive che si tenga pienamente conto delle esigenze in materia di benessere degli animali nel contesto di certe politiche unionali, rispettando nel contempo le disposizioni legislative o amministrative e le consuetudini degli Stati membri per quanto riguarda, in particolare, i riti religiosi, le tradizioni culturali e il patrimonio regionale. Tale disposizione si applica all'UE e agli Stati membri, ma di per sé non conferisce diritti specifici agli animali.

([1]) Articolo 4, paragrafo 4, del regolamento (CE) n. 1099/2009 relativo alla protezione degli animali durante l'abbattimento (GU L 303 del 18.11.2009, pag. 1).
([2]) GU C 326 del 26.10.2012, pagg. 47-390.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003587/14
to the Commission
Sergio Berlato (PPE)
(24 March 2014)

Subject: Disinformation regarding ritual slaughter for meat production

Last February, a number of Italian media reports appeared in connection with an alleged decision by the Danish Government to ban the practice of ritual slaughter for the production of halal and kosher meat in response to pressure from animal rights associations. The Danish Agriculture Minister, Dan Jørgensen, was quoted as saying that animal rights came before religion. Having devoted ample space to the triumphal reactions of animal rights associations, that have always been opposed to any form of ritual slaughter they consider 'incompatible with international animal rights law', the articles went on to quote the reactions of a number of representatives of the Jewish and Islamic communities concerned, who described the measure as nothing short of 'anti-Semitism', 'blatant interference in freedom of religious belief' and 'an infringement of the rights of a minority that does not have the political power to defend itself'. The LA.I.FF (Italian Union of Migrant Workers), affiliated to the Association of Animal Breeders and Traders ('FederFauna'), has called for an investigation into the accuracy of the Italian media reports so as to establish to what extent Member States are, in response to pressure by the powerful bodies such as the animal rights lobby, able to adopt legislation at odds with Union rules guaranteeing the rights of all European citizens. It would appear, however, that the reports in question are yet again based on unreliable and biased sources and are hence inaccurate. Over the last few days, online sources have revealed that, far from banning ritual slaughter, the Danish authorities simply stipulated that animals must be stunned before or immediately after having their throats cut, so as to reconcile freedom of religious belief with animal rights. For the purposes of ritual slaughter, animals must in fact be in good health, with no signs of illness, injury or any form of physical damage, i.e. in perfect condition, before being killed instantly with single cut to the throat, using an extremely sharp knife that causes massive loss of blood.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission ascertain whether Denmark or any other EU Member State has in fact banned ritual slaughter, a measure that would appear to be at odds with the founding principles of the European Union, or whether these principles have, on the contrary, been respected?

2. Can it outline the measures it intends to take to avoid incitement to hate resulting from intentional manipulation and distortion of the facts?

3. Can the Commission state unequivocally that no international animal rights legislation has been adopted and that animals, as opposed to human beings, have only 'needs' as opposed to 'rights'?

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

1. Slaughter without stunning is permitted under EC law ([1]) in case of ritual slaughter as a derogation from the general rule but it is for the Member States to decide under which conditions such a derogation may be granted. According to Commission' sources, Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia and Sweden have banned slaughter without stunning. The compliance of such bans with freedom of religion can only be assessed on a case by case basis since the context and modalities of such bans vary. There is no strict correlation between slaughter without stunning and ritual slaughter.

2. The Commission combats racist and xenophobic hate speech through Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, which obliges the Member States to penalise the intentional public incitement to violence or hatred against groups or individuals defined by reference to their race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin. When it comes to concrete cases of alleged hate speech in the Member States, it is for the national courts to act. The Commission cannot replace the assessment of judges at national level.

3. Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU ([2]) requires paying full regard to the welfare requirements of animals in the context of certain EU policies, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage. This provision applies to the EU and the Member States. This provision does not confer to animals specific rights per se.

([1]) Article 4(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing (OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1).
([2]) OJ C 326, 26.10.2012, p. 47-390.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-003588/14
до Комисията
Slavi Binev (EFD)
(25 март 2014 г.)

Относно: Груби нарушения на европейско право от Изборния кодекс в България

Новият Изборен кодекс в България е приет само два месеца преди изборите за Европейски парламент. Този кодекс е в дълбок разрез с европейското законодателство и препоръки.

Той е приет след фиктивно обществено обсъждане, до което най-голямата извънпарламентарна сила — патриотичният съюз около Политическа партия „Национален фронт за спасение на България“ (ПП НФСБ), не бе допусната. В него участваше само назначената и удобна опозиция.

Някои нарушения са:

— Договорът от Лисабон дава правомощия на ЕП да определи правила за европейските избори. В тези правила ЕП изрично забранява да има праг над 5 % за допускане на партия в разпределението на мандатите за ЕП. В България според новия Изборен кодекс тази граница е 5,9 %!

— Нарушена е препоръката на Венецианската комисия, според която минималният срок трябва да бъде поне една година преди изборите, а в България приеха кодекса два месеца преди изборите.

— Беше приета поправка в закона, според която опозицията не може да има свой член във всички избирателни комисии — Централната избирателна комисия, районните избирателни комисии, секционните избирателни комисии. Говоря най-вече за нашия патриотичен фронт, тъй като има изричен текст в закона, който се отнася единствено и само за НФСБ. Това е нарушение на принципа на политически плурализъм, който е конституционно гарантиран.

Моите въпроси са:

1. Наясно ли е уважаемата Комисия с тези факти?

2. Какво смята да предприеме Комисията във връзка с неспазването на европейското законодателство от страна на управляващите в България?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Рединг от името на Комисията
(12 юни 2014 г.)

Свободните избори са основен израз на демокрацията и е ясно, че изборите в Европейския съюз трябва да отговарят на най-високите демократични стандарти. Европейската комисия набляга на значението на ангажимента на държавите членки за гарантиране на спазването на тези демократични стандарти. Наред с това Комисията отбеляза препоръката на Европейската комисия за демокрация чрез право („Венецианска комисия“), в която се посочва, че изборното законодателство не следва да се променя по-малко от една година преди провеждането на избори.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003588/14
to the Commission
Slavi Binev (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Flagrant violations of EC law in the Bulgarian electoral code

The new Bulgarian electoral code has been adopted just two months before the elections to the European Parliament. That code is seriously at odds with EC law and recommendations.

It was adopted after a sham public consultation in which the largest extra-parliamentary movement — the patriotic union centring on the 'National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria' (NFSB) — was not allowed to participate. The only participants were 'convenient' nominated opposition parties.

The violations include the following:

— the Treaty of Lisbon empowers the EP to establish the rules applicable to European elections. Under those rules, the EP explicitly prohibits a threshold of over 5% of the votes for a party to be allocated seats in the EP. In Bulgaria, that threshold will, under the new electoral code, be 5.9%!

— failure to comply with the recommendation of the Venice Commission that electoral codes should be adopted at least one year before elections; in Bulgaria, the code was adopted two months before the elections.

— amendment of the electoral law to the effect that opposition movements cannot have members on all the electoral commissions — the central electoral commission, the regional electoral commissions and the district electoral commissions. I am referring in particular to the Patriotic Front, as there is an explicit clause in the law which relates exclusively to the NFSB. This violates the principle of political pluralism, which is guaranteed under the constitution.

My questions are as follows:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

2. What action is it considering taking in connection with the violation of EU legislation by those in power in Bulgaria?

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

Free elections are a basic expression of democracy and it is self-evident that elections in the European Union must follow the highest democratic standards. The European Commission stresses the importance of the engagement of the Member States in guarantying these democratic standards. In addition, the Commission has noted the recommendation of the European Commission for democracy through law ('Venice Commission') which provides that the electoral law should not be changed less than one year before an election.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-003589/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. március 25.)

Tárgy: Friss gyümölcsök bevonata

Az eper, de a legtöbb alma és más gyümölcsök is természetellenesen csillognak. Valamiféle konzerváló bevonattal vonják be a friss gyümölcsöket.

Ugyanakkor a szállításukhoz használt csomagoláson, a ládákon, kartonokon egyáltalán nincs feltüntetve, hogy nem csak természetes gyümölcsöt tartalmaznak.

Az interneten keringő információk szerint ez a bevonat valamilyen műviasz, amely akár gabonafehérjét, azaz glutént is tartalmazhat.

A glutén nagyon veszélyes allergén, mely enzimhiányos fejlődési rendellenességgel született kisbabáknál allergiás sokkot és hirtelen halált is okozhat.

Hogyan lehetséges, hogy az adott élelmiszerek csomagolásán nem tüntetik fel az idegen összetevőt?

Valóban lehet-e glutén a bevonatokban?

Tonio Borg válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 13.)

Az élelmiszer-adalékanyagokra vonatkozó uniós jogszabályok ([1]) lehetővé teszik meghatározott viaszok használatát bizonyos friss egész gyümölcsök felületkezelésére. E viaszok a következők: méhviasz (E 901), kandelillaviasz (E 902), karnaubaviasz (E 903), sellak (E 904) és mikrokristályos viasz (E 905).

Az Európai Élelmiszerbiztonsági Hatóság újraértékelte ([2]) a méhviaszt, a kandelillaviaszt, a karnaubaviaszt és a mikrokristályos viaszt, és arra a következtetésre jutott, hogy a friss gyümölcsökön fényezőanyagként való alkalmazásuk nem jelent biztonsági kockázatot. Ezenkívül e viaszok egyikét sem nyerik gluténtartalmú anyagokból.

A tagállamok felelősek az élelmiszerekkel kapcsolatos EU-jogszabályok végrehajtásáért, valamint kötelesek ellenőrizni, hogy az élelmiszerek címkézése az alkalmazandó jogszabályoknak megfelelően történt-e.

([1]) Az Európai Parlament és a Tanács 2008. december 16-i 1333/2008/EK rendelete az élelmiszer-adalékanyagokról (HL L 354., 2008.12.31., 16. o.).
([2]) EFSA Journal (2007) 615., 1–28. o., EFSA Journal 2012;10(11):2946, EFSA Journal 2012; 10(10):2880, EFSA Journal 2013; 11(4):3146.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003589/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Protective coating on fresh fruit

There is an unnatural sheen on strawberries, as well as most kinds of apples and other fruit. Fresh fruit is being covered with some kind of preservative coating, yet there is no indication on the packaging, trays and boxes used to transport it that their content is anything but natural fruit.

According to information circulating on the Internet, the coating is some sort of artificial wax which might contain grain protein (gluten).

Gluten is a very dangerous allergen which can cause an allergic shock and even sudden death in babies born with an enzyme-deficient development disorder.

How is it possible that the packaging for these foodstuffs does not indicate the presence of this foreign constituent?

Might there really be gluten in the coatings used?

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

The EU legislation on food additives ([1]) allows the use of waxes on certain entire fresh fruits: Beeswax (E 901), Candelilla wax (E 902), Carnauba wax (E 903), Shellac (E 904) and Microcrystalline wax (E 905).

Beeswax, Candelilla wax, Carnauba wax and Microcrystalline have been re-evaluated ([2]) by the European Food Safety Authority who concluded that their use as glazing agent on fresh fruits is not of safety concern. In addition, none of these waxes are obtained from sources that contain gluten.

Member States are responsible to enforce the EU food law and verify whether the labelling of foodstuffs is in conformity with the applicable legislation.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on food additives, (OJ L 354, 31.12.2008, p. 16).
([2]) The EFSA Journal (2007) 615, 1-28, EFSA Journal 2012;10(11):2946, EFSA Journal 2012;10(10):2880, EFSA Journal 2013;11(4):3146.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-003590/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. március 25.)

Tárgy: Veszélyhelyzet az izzólámpák betiltása miatt

Az EU betiltotta a hagyományos erős fényű izzólámpák gyártását és forgalmazását. Helyettük a kompakt fénycsöveket terjesztette el.

Minden munkavédelmi előírás évtizedek óta tiltja a fénycsövek és hasonló vibráló fényforrások használatát forgó gépek közelében. Ennek oka a stroboszkóphatás.

Rengeteg veszélyes barkácsgép van az európai polgárok birtokában, körfűrészek, gyaluk, egyebek, melyek használata kompakt izzókkal megvilágítva nagyon súlyos csonkolásos baleseteket okozhat. Ezeket a gépeket nem lehet rendeltetésszerűen használni az erős fényű hagyományos izzók hiányában.

Hogyan sértheti meg ilyen durván az EU az emberek testi épséghez és egészséges környezethez való jogát?

Hogyan korlátozhatja az EU az embereket a jogszerűen megszerzett tulajdonuk használatában?

Günther Oettinger válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 15.)

Ami a munkavédelmi szempontokat, illetve a közvetlenül a gépek belsejében vagy azok közelében használt fényforrásokat illeti, a Bizottság hangsúlyozza, hogy a korszerű kompakt fénycsövek fénye olyan magas frekvencián (20 kHz fölött) vibrál, amely minimálisra csökkenti a szerszámgépek esetében esetleg előforduló sztroboszkóphatást. Emellett a piacon továbbra is beszerezhetők a hagyományos izzókkal azonos foglalatokban használható, egyáltalán nem vibráló fényű lámpatípusok is – például halogénizzók. A fogyasztó ugyanakkor az általa megvásárolt, bármilyen típusú fényforrást élettartama végéig szabadon használhatja. Következésképpen a fényforrások minősége semmilyen módon nem korlátozza a fogyasztókat a szerszámgépek használatában.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003590/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Critical situation caused by ban on incandescent light bulbs

The EU has banned the manufacture and distribution of traditional bright incandescent light bulbs, which are being replaced by compact fluorescent lamps.

For decades, safety at work provisions have uniformly banned the use of fluorescent lamps and similar vibrating light sources near rotating machinery because of the stroboscopic effect.

European homes contain a huge amount of do-it-yourself machinery (circular saws, lathes, etc.) which can cause serious physical injury if used in an area lit by compact fluorescent lamps. Such machines cannot be properly used without traditional bright light bulbs.

What entitles the EU to trample on people's right to physical integrity and a healthy environment in this way?

What gives it the right to restrict people's use of their legally-obtained property?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(15 May 2014)

Regarding safety at work and the use of lamps directly in or with machinery, the Commission would like to point out that modern compact fluorescent lamps flicker at such a high frequency (over 20 kHz) that stroboscopic effect with machine tools is minimised. There also remain on the market lamp types that do not flicker at all, such as halogen bulbs that can be used in the same fittings as incandescent bulbs. Moreover, the consumer has every right to use any purchased lamp until the end of its lifetime. As a result, there are no restrictions on the use of machine tools caused by inappropriate light sources.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003591/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Conclusiones sobre la competencia lingüística

En respuesta a la pregunta E-011480/2013 sobre la protección de las lenguas amenazadas en Europa, el Consejo manifestó que tiene vocación de fortalecer la diversidad lingüística, si bien las competencias en materia de política lingüística recaen en los Estados miembros. En este sentido hace referencia a sus conclusiones de noviembre 2011 sobre la competencia lingüística para mejorar la movilidad, en las cuales afirmaba que es necesario animar a los Estados miembros a que ofrezcan una amplia elección de lenguas en cada nivel de educación ([1]).

En dichas conclusiones, el Consejo señala la importancia de las competencias interculturales y del aprendizaje de las lenguas para reducir los obstáculos a la movilidad transfronteriza.

En el caso de la movilidad transfronteriza del País Vasco, esta podría mejorarse con un estatus adecuado de la lengua vasca, que se habla a ambos lados de la frontera. La lengua vasca goza de un estatus de cooficialidad en el País Vasco peninsular, mientras que en el País Vasco continental no goza de dicho estatus.

Las relaciones laborales y sociales entre las empresas, los trabajadores y las administraciones públicas se ven dificultadas por el hecho de la lengua vasca no sea oficial en el País Vasco continental, aunque sea la lengua materna de todos los interlocutores. Esta situación es un obstáculo importante a la libre circulación de los trabajadores, las empresas y los servicios en esta zona. Muchos problemas técnicos se derivan también de esta situación de desigualdad.

¿Cree la Comisión que el hecho de que lenguas regionales transfronterizas no gocen del mismo grado de oficialidad en todos los territorios donde se hablan puede ser un obstáculo para la movilidad transfronteriza?

¿Considera la Comisión que sería interesante eliminar ese obstáculo?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2014)

En el ámbito de sus competencias, la Comisión promueve el aprendizaje de idiomas y la diversidad lingüística. Los programas de la UE han financiado muchos proyectos y redes para promover las lenguas minoritarias.

Sin embargo, la Comisión no tiene autoridad para interferir en las decisiones de los Estados miembros sobre la situación de las lenguas habladas dentro de sus fronteras. Es responsabilidad exclusiva de los Estados miembros.

([1]) DO C 372 de 20.12.2011, p. 27.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003591/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Conclusions on language competences

In its answer to Question E-011480/2013 on protection for endangered European languages, the Council stated that it is committed to promoting linguistic diversity, even though matters relating to language policy come under Member States' competence. In this context it referred to its conclusions of November 2011 on language competences to enhance mobility, which noted that the Member States should be encouraged to offer a broad choice of languages at all levels of education ([1]).

In those conclusions, the Council highlights the importance of intercultural competences and language learning in order to reduce barriers to cross-border mobility.

Cross-border mobility in the Basque Country could be improved by granting appropriate status to the Basque language, which is spoken on both sides of the border. Basque has the status of co-official language in the peninsular Basque Country but has no such status in the continental Basque Country.

Labour and social relations between companies, workers and public authorities are hindered by the fact that Basque is not an official language in the continental Basque Country, even when it is the mother tongue of all those involved. This represents a significant barrier to the free movement of workers, businesses and services in this area. Many technical problems are also caused by this inequality.

Does the Commission believe that the fact that cross-border regional languages do not enjoy the same degree of official status in all the areas where they are spoken might pose a barrier to cross-border mobility?

Does the Commission take the view that this barrier should be removed?

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

Within the scope of its competences, the Commission promotes language learning and linguistic diversity. EU programmes have funded many projects and networks promoting minority languages.

However, the Commission has no authority to interfere in Member States' decisions on the status of the languages spoken within their borders. This is the sole responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 27.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003592/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Μη εφαρμογή προτάσεων που περιέχονται στο ψήφισμα του Κοινοβουλίου της 6ης Ιουλίου 2011 σχετικά με την οικονομική και κοινωνική κρίση

Στη διερευνητική έκθεση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινοβουλίου για τον ρόλο και τις εργασίες της Τρόικας στις χώρες του ευρώ που έχουν υπαχθεί σε πρόγραμμα προσαρμογής (2013/2277(INI)), το Κοινοβούλιο, «εκφράζει τη λύπη του για το γεγονός ότι οι προτάσεις που περιέχει το ψήφισμά του της 6ης Ιουλίου 2011 σχετικά με την χρηματοπιστωτική, οικονομική και κοινωνική κρίση δεν ελήφθησαν επαρκώς υπόψη από το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο· υπογραμμίζει ότι η εφαρμογή τους θα είχε συμβάλει θετικά στην οικονομική και κοινωνική σύγκλιση εντός της Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Ένωσης, εξασφαλίζοντας παράλληλα πλήρη δημοκρατική νομιμοποίηση στα μέτρα συντονισμού των οικονομικών και δημοσιονομικών πολιτικών·».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Συμφωνεί το Συμβούλιο με τις πιο πάνω εκτιμήσεις του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Ασπάζεται την άποψη ότι η εφαρμογή των εισηγήσεων του Κοινοβουλίου «θα είχε συμβάλει θετικά στην οικονομική και κοινωνική σύγκλιση εντός της Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Ένωσης»;

3. Γιατί, σχεδόν τρία χρόνια μετά το ψήφισμα του Κοινοβουλίου του Ιουλίου 2011, οι εισηγήσεις του Κοινοβουλίου εξακολουθούν να μη εφαρμόζονται από το Συμβούλιο;

Απάντηση
(16 Ιουνίου 2014)

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

Ο Πρόεδρος της Ευρωομάδας απάντησε στο αίτημα για διευκρινίσεις της Προέδρου της Επιτροπής Οικονομικής και Νομισματικής Πολιτικής τον Ιανουάριο του 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003592/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Failure to implement proposals contained in the European Parliament's resolution of 6 July 2011 on the economic and social crisis

In the European Parliament report on the enquiry on the role and operations of the Troika (ECB, Commission and IMF) with regard to the euro area programme countries (2013/2277(INI)), Parliament: 'Deplores the fact that the European Council did not sufficiently take into account the proposals contained in its resolution of 6 July 2011 on the financial, economic and social crisis; emphasises that implementing them would have fostered economic and social convergence in the Economic and Monetary Union and would have afforded measures to coordinate economic and budgetary policy full democratic legitimacy.'

In view of the above, will the Council say:

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

2. Does it share the view expressed in Parliament's report that implementing its recommendations 'would have fostered economic and social convergence in the Economic and Monetary Union'?

3. Why, almost three years after Parliament's resolution of July 2011, are Parliament's recommendations still not being implemented by the Council?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

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

The Eurogroup President responded to the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee Chairwoman's request for input in January 2014.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003595/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Stħarriġ tal-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali

Skont studju li sar mill-Aġenzija tal-Unjoni Ewropea għad-Drittijiet Fundamentali, terz min-nisa kollha fl-UE esperjenzaw vjolenza fiżika jew sesswali mill-età ta' 15-il sena. Dan jikkorrispondi ma' ċifra allarmanti ta' 62 miljun mara.

Dan l-istħarriġ, li huwa l-ikbar wieħed li qatt twettaq dwar is-suġġett, huwa bbażat fuq intervisti ma' 42 000 mara.

Ir-rapport jitlob lill-pajjiżi tal-UE jittrattaw il-vjolenza domestika bħala kwistjoni pubblika, mhux waħda privata, u li l-liġijiet u l-politiki relatati mal-fastidju sesswali jiġu rieżaminati.

1. Liema huma l-passi li se tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex tikkunsidra l-politiki msemmija fl-istħarriġ?

2. Il-Kummissjoni għandha estimi dwar il-vjolenza kontra n-nisa mhux irrappurtata?

3. X'qed tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tgħin lin-nisa minn età żgħira billi tedukahom dwar is-suġġett tal-vjolenza domestika?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Hahn f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Mejju 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni bħalissa qed tanalizza r-riżultati tal-istħarriġ. Sadanittant, il-prijoritajiet ewlenin jibqgħu t-titjib tal-għarfien u l-ġbir tad-dejta, il-ġlieda kontra d-diskriminazzjoni u t-tisħiħ tar-rwol tan-nisa, l-adozzjoni ta' miżuri leġiżlattivi fil-kompetenzi tal-UE, l-organizzazzjoni ta' skambji ta' prattiki tajbin u l-għoti ta' fondi biex jgħinu f'ħidmiethom lil organizzazzjonijiet f'livell lokali u lill-awtoritajiet pubbliċi fil-ġlieda kontra l-vjolenza kontra n-nisa.

Sa mis-sena 2000, il-programmi Daphne taw kontribut għall-prevenzjoni u l-ġlieda kontra l-forom kollha ta' vjolenza kontra n-nisa, it-tfal u ż-żgħażagħ, flimkien ma' attivitajiet ta' sensibilizzazzjoni. Dawn l-attivitajiet issa se jiġu ffinanzjati bil-programm Drittijiet, Ugwaljanza u Ċittadinanza. Fl-2013, il-Kummissjoni pprovdiet finanzjament lil 13-il Stat Membru biex jiżviluppaw attivitajiet ta' informazzjoni u komunikazzjoni dwar il-vjolenza ta' kontra n-nisa permezz tal-programm PROGRESS ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2012_prog_ag_vaw_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003595/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights survey

According to a study by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, a third of all women in the EU have experienced either physical or sexual violence since the age of 15. This corresponds to an alarming figure of 62 million women.

This survey, which is the largest ever conducted on the subject, is based on interviews with 42 000 women.

The report calls on EU countries to treat domestic violence as a public issue, not a private one, and for laws and policies relating to sexual harassment to be reviewed.

1. What steps will the Commission take to consider the policies outlined in the survey?

2. Does the Commission have estimates on unreported violence against women?

3. What is the Commission doing to help women from a young age by educating them on the topic of domestic violence?

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

The Commission is currently analysing the findings of the survey. In the meantime, the key priorities remain improving knowledge and data collection, combating discrimination and empowering women, adopting legislative measures within EU competences, organising exchanges of good practices and providing funding to support the work of grass-root organisations and public authorities in combating violence against women.

Since 2000, the Daphne programs have contributed to the prevention of, and the fight against all forms of violence against women, children and young people, including awareness-raising activities. Such activities will now be financed under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship program. In 2013, the Commission provided funding to 13 Member States to develop information and communication activities on violence against women through the Progress programme ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/just_2012_prog_ag_vaw_en.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003596/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Studju dwar is-servizzi soċjali

Fl-2011, id-DĠ Impjiegi, Affarijiet Soċjali u Inklużjoni tal-Kummissjoni ikkummissjonat l-istudju dwar servizzi soċjali ta' interess ġenerali ("Study on social services of general interest"), li analizza data minn 22 pajjiż tal-UE/ŻEE biex jiddeskrivi l-istatus quo ta' erba' tipi ta' servizzi soċjali (il-kura fit-tul, il-kura tat-tfal, l-akkomodazzjoni soċjali u s-servizzi tal-impjiegi) fir-rigward ta' tliet aspetti ewlenin: il-qafas regolatorju applikabbli għall-għoti tas-servizzi u l-finanzjament tagħhom, it-tipi ta' forniturі ta' servizzi, u l-għodod u l-oqsfa ta' kwalità ewlenin. Eżamina wkoll kif dawn l-erba' tipi ta' servizzi soċjali intlaqtu mill-kriżi ekonomika dinjija attwali.

1. Il-Kummissjoni biħsiebha taġġorna dan ir-rapport biex tevalwa s-sinjali inizjali ta' rkupru gradwali mill-kriżi ekonomika dinjija?

2. Pajjiżi bħal Malta ma ġewx inklużi fir-rapport imsemmi hawn fuq. Il-Kummissjoni tħoss li r-rapport jista' jagħti stampa ġenerali tas-sitwazzjoni fl-Ewropa jekk ma jinkludix l-Istati Membri kollha?

3. Il-Kummissjoni qegħda tippjana li tinkludi lill-Istati Membri kollha fil-pubblikazzjoni li jmiss ta' riċerka ta' dan it-tip?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(22 ta' Mejju 2014)

F'dan l-istadju mhuwiex fost il-prijoritajiet tal-Kummissjoni li taġġorna l-Istudju dwar is-servizzi soċjali ta' interess ġenerali li qed jirreferi għalihom l-Onorevoli Membru tal-Parlament. Madankollu, f'Diċembru 2012, id-DĠ Impjiegi, Affarijiet Soċjali u Inklużjoni ppubblika Mira Settorjali (Sectoral Focus) dwar "Is-saħħa u s-servizzi soċjali fl-UE — Żviluppi reċenti" fir-Revista Trimestrali tiegħu dwar l-Impjiegi u s-Sitwazzjoni Soċjali tal-UE. Din il-pubblikazzjoni tanalizza d-dejta dwar l-investimenti fis-servizzi soċjali, u din id-dejta se tiġi aġġornata fl-2015.

Meta l-Kummissjoni esternalizzat it-tħejjija tal-Istudju dwar is-servizzi soċjali ta' interess ġenerali li għalih qed jirreferi l-Onorevoli Membru tal-Parlament, hija talbet biex dan ikopri tnejn u għoxrin Stat Membru għall-ewwel żewġ taqsimiet tiegħu, dwar l-oqfsa regolatorji fis-seħħ f'diversi Stati Membri biex issir definizzjoni tal-provvista u l-finanzjament tas-servizzi soċjali, u t-tipi ta' forniturі tas-servizzi soċjali. Fit-tielet taqsima kienu koperti għaxar Stati Membri, u ġew deskritti l-għodod ta' kwalità u l-oqfsa ewlenin li l-awtoritajiet pubbliċi daħħlu fis-seħħ. Dan l-approċċ assigura l-bilanċ xieraq bejn kopertura wiesgħa u l-possibilità tad-dejta u r-riċerka dwar l-informazzjoni fi żmien raġonevoli.

Il-Kummissjoni tista' tiddeċiedi abbażi tal-istess kunsiderazzjonijiet f'każ li jkollha l-ħsieb li tikkummissjona studju ieħor dwar dawn is-suġġetti.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003596/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Social services study

In 2011, the Commission's DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion commissioned the 'Study on social services of general interest', which analysed data from 22 EU/EEA countries in order to describe the status quo of four types of social services (long-term care, childcare, social housing and employment services) with regard to three main aspects: the applicable regulatory framework for service provision and financing, the types of service providers, and the main quality tools and frameworks. It also examined how these four types of social services have been affected by the current global economic downturn.

1. Does the Commission intend to update this report in order to evaluate the initial signs of gradual recovery from the global economic downturn?

2. Countries such as Malta were not included in the abovementioned report. Does the Commission feel that the report can give an overall picture of the situation in Europe if it fails to include all Member States?

3. Does the Commission plan to include all Member States in the next research publication of this kind?

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

At this stage it is not among the priorities of the Commission to update the Study on social services of general interest to which the Honourable Member of the Parliament refers. However, in December 2012 DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion published a Sectoral Focus on 'Health and social services in the EU — Recent developments' in its EU Employment and Social Situation Quarterly Review. This publication contains an analysis of data concerning investments in social services and these data will be updated in 2015.

When the Commission outsourced the preparation of the Study on social services of general interest to which the Honourable Member of the Parliament refers, it asked for it to cover twenty-two Member States for its first two sections, concerning the regulatory frameworks in place in various Member States to define the provision and financing of social services, and the types of social service providers. Ten Member States were covered in the third section, describing the main quality tools and frameworks that the public authorities have put in place. This approach ensured the appropriate balance between ample coverage and feasibility of the data and information research in a reasonable time.

The Commission might decide on the basis of the same considerations in case it would intend to commission another study on these subjects.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003597/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: It-Trattat ta' Marrakesh

It-Trattat ta' Marrakesh, approvat f'Ġunju 2013 taħt il-patroċinju tal-Organizzazzjoni Dinjija tal-Proprjetà Intellettwali (WIPO), jipprovdi aċċess għall-xogħlijiet ippubblikati għal persuni għomja, b'vista batuta jew b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata.

It-Trattat jirrappreżenta pass sinifikanti lejn l-iżgurar ta' opportunitajiet ta' aċċess indaqs għal materjal ta' testi għall-kulħadd, indipendentement mid-diżabilitajiet tagħhom.

Huwa wkoll punt tat-tluq ġdid fl-istorja tad-dritt tal-proprjetà intellettwali internazzjonali: l-ewwel trattat internazzjonali li l-fokus tiegħu hu li jiddefinixxi l-istandards minimi għal limitazzjonijiet u eċċezzjonijiet tad-dritt tal-awtur, aktar milli jistabbilixxi kundizzjonjiet għal drittijiet tal-proprjetà mtejba. Ħamsa biss mit-28 pajjiż tal-UE ffirmaw it-Trattat.

1. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar it-Trattat ta' Marrakesh?

2. Xi proġetti għandha mħejjija l-Kummissjoni biex tipprovdi aċċess għal xogħlijiet ippubblikati għal persuni għomja, b'vista batuta jew b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata?

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

1. L-iffaċilitar tal-aċċess għall-kotba huwa indispensabbli għall-progress lejn l-opportunitajiet indaqs fis-soċjetà għall-persuni b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata. Il-Kummissjoni temmen li t-Trattat ta' Marrakexx għall-Iffaċilitar tal-Aċċess għal Xogħlijiet Ippubblikati għal Persuni Għomja, b'Vista batuta jew b'Diżabilitajiet li Ma Jippermettulhomx Jaqraw Kitba Stampata se jikkontribwixxi għal dan il-progress fl-Ewropa u lil hinn minnha. Huwa ftehim ibbilanċjat u b'mira ċara li jaqdi l-bżonnijiet tal-persuni b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata imma ma jillimitax id-drittijiet tal-awtur u tal-pubblikaturi iktar minn dak li hemm bżonn biex tintlaħaq din il-fini.

2. Il-Kummissjoni trawwem kooperazzjoni bejn il-pubblikaturi u l-organizzazzjoni tal-għomja fl-Ewropa sabiex tiżdied il-produzzjoni tal-kotba aċċessibbli għal persuni b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata u l-aċċess transfruntier għal dawn il-kotba. Il-proġett ETIN (Netwerk Ewropew ta' Intermedjarji ta' Fiduċja) ġie stabbilit għal din il-fini fl-2010 b'riżultat tal-"Memorandum ta' Qbil tad-Djalogu tal-Partijiet Interessati tal-UE dwar l-aċċess għax-xogħlijiet ippubblikati minn nies b'diżabilitajiet li ma jippermettulhomx jaqraw kitba stampata".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003597/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Marrakesh Treaty

The Marrakesh Treaty, approved in June 2013 under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), provides access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled.

The Treaty represents a significant step towards assuring equal opportunities of access to text materials for all persons, irrespective of their disabilities.

It is also a new departure in the history of international intellectual property law: the first international treaty whose main focus is defining minimum standards for copyright limitations and exceptions, rather than establishing conditions for enhanced proprietary rights. Only five of the EU-28 countries have signed the Treaty.

1. What are the Commission's views on the Marrakesh Treaty?

2. What projects does the Commission have in place to provide access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled?

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

1. Facilitating access to books is indispensable to make progress towards equal opportunities for print-disabled persons in society. The Commission believes that the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled will contribute to this progress in and outside Europe. It is a targeted and balanced agreement that meets the needs of print-disabled persons but does not limit the rights of authors and publishers beyond what is necessary to achieve its purpose.

2. The Commission fosters cooperation between publishers and blind organisations in Europe in order to increase the production of and cross-border access to books that are accessible to persons with print disabilities. The ETIN project (European Trusted Intermediaries Network) was established for this purpose in 2010 as a result of the 'EU Stakeholders Dialogue Memorandum of Understanding on access to works by people with print disabilities'.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-003598/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 ta' Marzu 2014)

Suġġett: Il-Kanċer tal-frixa

Kif rappurtat fil-ġurnal *The Times of Malta,* skont l-indiċi tal-kanċer tal-frixa fl-Ewropa maħruġ mill-kumpanija Health Consumer Powerhouse, il-kanċer tal-frixa huwa r-raba' l-akbar kawża ta' mewt bil-kanċer fl-UE, jiġifieri aktar minn 100 000 persuna Ewropea fis-sena, waqt li dan l-għadd qiegħed jiżdied b'mod kostanti. Il-parti l-kbira tal-pazjenti b'kanċer tal-frixa jmutu fl-ewwel sena wara d-dijanjożi.

1. Il-Kummissjoni x'qiegħda tagħmel biex tqajjem kuxjenza dwar dan il-"qattiel silenzjuż"?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tagħti stima tal-għadd ta' rġiel u l-għadd ta' nisa milquta mill-kanċer tal-frixa fl-UE?

3. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tgħid kemm jiswew it-trattamenti tal-kanċer tal-frixa fit-28 Stat Membru tal-UE?

4. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi pjan ta' direzzjoni ta' kif qed tikkontribwixxi għall-ġlieda kontra l-kanċer tal-frixa fl-UE?

5. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tippubblika statistiki dwar l-għadd ta' rġiel u l-għadd ta' nisa li mietu bil-kanċer tal-frixa f'dawn l-aħħar ħames snin?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(2 ta' Mejju 2014)

Skont id-dejta pprovduta mill-Bażi tad-Dejta tal-Unjoni Ewropea dwar il-Kanċer, ġestita mill-Aġenzija Internazzjonali għar-Riċerka dwar il-Kanċer u ffinanzjata mill-Kummissjoni Ewropea, kien hemm 78 654 każ ġdid ta' kanċer tal-frixa fl-2012 fl-Unjoni Ewropea(li minnhom 39 084 laqtu lill-irġiel u 39 570 laqtu lin-nisa). Il-prevalenza stmata tul dawn l-aħħar ħames snin ta' nies fid-dinja li jgħixu bil-kanċer tal-frixa hija ta' 4.1 għal kull 100,000 persuna. Dan il-kanċer huwa kważi dejjem fatali, u huwa s-seba' l-aktar kawża komuni ta' mewt mill-kanċer. Skont id-dejta pprovduta mill-Eurostat, 364 130 persuna (li minnhom 182 189 kienu rġiel u 191 949 kienu nisa) mietu minħabba l-kanċer tal-frixa matul il-perjodu bejn l-2006 u l-2010 fl-Unjoni Ewropea.

Ma hemmx kalkoli speċifiċi għall-Unjoni Ewropea dwar l-ispiża tal-kanċer tal-frixa. Fl-Istati Uniti, il-bażi tad-dejta konnessa ta' Medicare dwar is-Sorveljanza, l-Epidemjoloġija u r-Riżultati Finali ([1]), attribwiet għadd totali ta' $65,500 bħala spejjeż mediċi diretti għal kull pazjent.

Il-kanċer tal-frixa qed jiġi indirizzat permezz tal-istrateġija tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea biex tiġġieled il-kanċer. Fl-2009, tnediet is-Shubija Ewropea għal Azzjoni Kontra l-Kanċer ([2]), li ffukat fuq l-azzjonijiet immirati biex jgħinu lill-Istati Membri jnaqqsu l-inċidenza tal-kanċer: il-pjanijiet nazzjonali kontra l-kanċer fl-Istati Membri kollha, il-prevenzjoni, l-iskrinjar u l-ġbir ta' dejta komparabbli. Fl-2014 tnediet Azzjoni Konġunta ġdida (Gwida Ewropea dwar it-Titjib tal-Kwalità fil-Kontroll Komprensiv tal-Kanċer), li hija ffinanzjata mill-programm tas-Saħħa tal-UE.

Bħalissa qed titħejja r-raba' verżjoni tal-Kodiċi Ewropew ta' Kontra l-Kanċer, permezz ta' għotja lill-Aġenzija Internazzjonali għar-Riċerka dwar il-Kanċer. Il-verżjoni aġġornata tal-kodiċi, li hija għodda ta' komunikazzjoni ewlenija fil-prevenzjoni tal-kanċer, għandha tkun disponibbli aktar tard fl-2014.

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22415469
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003598/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Pancreatic cancer

As reported in *The Times of Malta*, according to the Euro Pancreatic Cancer index issued by the Health Consumer Powerhouse, pancreatic cancer is rated as the fourth-largest cause of cancer deaths in the EU, killing more than 100 000 Europeans every year, with the number constantly rising. Most patients with pancreatic cancer will die in the first year following diagnosis.

1. What is the Commission doing to raise awareness of this 'silent killer'?

2. Can the Commission give an estimate of the number of men and the number of women who are affected by pancreatic cancer throughout the EU?

3. Can the Commission state how much pancreatic cancer treatments cost across the 28 Member States?

4. Can the Commission provide a roadmap of how it is contributing to the fight against pancreatic cancer in the EU?

5. Can the Commission release figures on the number of men and the number of women who have passed away due to pancreatic cancer in the last five years?

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

According to the data provided by the European Union Cancer Database, managed by the International Agency for Research on Cancer and funded by the European Commission, the number of new cases of pancreatic cancer in 2012 in the European Union were 78 654 (of which 39 084 men and 39 570 women). The estimated 5-year prevalence of people in the world living with pancreatic cancer is 4.1 per 100 000. This cancer is almost always fatal, and is the seventh most common cause of death from cancer. According to the data provided by Eurostat, 364 130 persons (of which 182 189 men and 191 949 women) died from pancreatic cancer during the period 2006-2010 in the European Union.

There are no specific calculations for the European Union on the cost of pancreatic cancer. In the USA, the linked Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results-Medicare database ([1]), attributed total direct medical costs of USD 65 500 per patient.

Pancreatic cancer is addressed through the European Commission strategy to fight against cancer. In 2009, the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer ([2]) was launched with a focus on actions aiming to help Member States to reduce cancer incidence: national cancer plans in all the Member States, prevention, screening, and comparable data collection. A new Joint Action (European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control) has been launched in 2014, funded under the EU Health Programme.

The 4th version of the European Code Against Cancer is currently being prepared through a grant to the International Agency for Research on Cancer. The updated version of the code which is a key communication tool in cancer prevention should be available later in 2014.

([1]) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22415469
([2]) http://www.epaac.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003599/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Air and noise pollution in Beckenham (south-east London)

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the current level of noise and air pollution over Beckenham, a locality in south-east London, which he believes is mainly caused by constant air traffic from Heathrow airport.

My constituent tells me that the Beckenham area is being used as a relatively new turning and stacking area for Heathrow airport, and that this is leading to persistent aircraft noise which starts at 4.30 a.m. and continues throughout the day. He also claims that the aircraft, which are meant to fly at over 4 000 feet (1 220 metres), are regularly seen flying at a much lower altitude.

In addition to the noise pollution, my constituent claims that fuel emissions from aircraft are responsible for as much as 20% of all pollution in London.

Given that this is causing an increase in environmental and noise pollution over Beckenham and other parts of London, could the Commission confirm if Heathrow airport is in breach of any EU environmental legislation? If so, what action does the Commission intend to take?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2013)

According to the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC ([1]), Member States have to establish noise maps and, based on the results of these noise maps, adopt action plans to tackle the impacts of excessive noise for agglomerations and major roads, railways and airports. Regarding Heathrow airport, the UK competent authorities have transmitted to the Commission the noise maps (accessible at: http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/gb/eu/noise/df8/envunn80w/London_Heathrow.pdf), but must still submit a summary of the noise action plan, as required by the directive.

The UK authorities, in their last annual quality report (2012) have informed the Commission about the PM10 and NO_2 exceedances of the limit values in the 'Greater London Urban Area' zone within which Beckenham and Heathrow airport are situated.

The Commission has already opened an infringement procedure against the UK as regards NO_2 exceedances in 16 air quality zones including this one (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-154_en.htm). With regard to PM10, Member States shall prepare an Air Quality Plan according to Directive 2008/50/EC ([2]) and communicate it to the Commission not later than two years after the end of the year the first exceedance was observed. Taking into account that the exceedance in this zone was observed in 2012, the Commission expects to receive the Air Quality Plan by the end of this year.

([1]) OJ L 189, 18.7.2002.
([2]) OJ L 152/1, 11.6.2008.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003602/14
to the Commission
Syed Kamall (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Access to sports broadcasts outside a home Member State

I have been contacted by a constituent who tells me that, when on a recent visit to Austria, he wanted to watch an FA Cup football game which was being broadcast on Sky Sports 1 and BT Sport in the UK. However, he says that these options were not available in Austria, where the rights are held by Deutsche Sport 1.

My constituent says that he was unable to watch the game online. When he contacted Sky, they confirmed that he could not use his Now TV account for pay-for-view outside the UK, but that they would offer him coverage if he subscribed to Sky Sports worldwide coverage for six months for GBP 210.

My constituent believes that with the advent of superfast broadband, the single market should facilitate Europe-wide broadcasting rights enabling access to coverage for citizens of EU countries in whichever Member State they reside or are temporarily staying in, preferably with a choice of commentary language.

Could the Commission confirm whether these current distribution arrangements and restrictions are in breach of EC law?

Does the Commission intend to tackle the restrictions imposed by broadcasters on customers who wish to watch sports events outside their home Member State?

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

In October 2011, the EU Court of Justice assessed in its Premier League/Murphy judgment ([1]) certain clauses contained in licensing agreements between sports right holders and satellite pay-TV broadcasters. These clauses obliged broadcasters not to supply decoding devices enabling access to live Premier League matches outside the territory covered by the licensing agreements.

The judgment clarified that while exclusive territorial licensing agreements are not *per se* contrary to EC law, the clauses in the licensing agreements constituted a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101 TFEU. ([2]) This case concerned licensing agreements with satellite pay-TV broadcasters and did not therefore refer directly to online viewing.

The Commission is aware that, following the ECJ's judgment, broadcasters and right holders have started to adapt their licensing agreements. It also appears that certain broadcasters are developing and offering 'portability' solutions, sometimes against payment of an additional fee, enabling customers to access content when travelling abroad ([3]).

The Commission has not assessed the current arrangements for sports broadcast under EC law. On 13 January 2014, however, it opened a formal antitrust investigation into certain clauses of licensing agreements for broadcasting by satellite or through online streaming between US film studios and major European pay-TV broadcasters. These clauses may prevent the latter from providing their services across borders ([4]).

This investigation will therefore also tackle, in the context of film rights, the issue of clauses relating to online streaming.

([1]) Joined Cases C-403/08 and C-429/08.

([2]) By prohibiting the broadcasters from effecting any cross-border provision of services that relates to those matches, they enabled each broadcaster to be granted absolute territorial exclusivity.

([3]) These possibilities were discussed by the industry during the Licensing for Europe dialogue organised by the Commission and led to the stakeholders' pledge on 13 November 2013 Representatives of the audiovisual sector have affirmed their willingness to 'continue to work towards the further development of cross-border portability. Consumers will increasingly be able to watch films, TV programmes and other audiovisual content for which they have subscribed to at home, when travelling in the EU on business or holidays'.

([4]) For example by refusing potential subscribers from other Member States or by blocking cross-border access to their services.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003603/14
to the Commission
Marta Andreasen (ECR)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Mandatory fuel charges for rental vehicles

Will the Commission make a statement regarding its position on mandatory fuel charging, which is the practice whereby car rental companies unexpectedly make an additional charge to customers for a full tank of fuel upon collection of the rental vehicle, despite these charges not being explained at the time the booking is made?

Does the Commission agree that this practice is unethical and unfair for consumers, who are forced to pay a mandatory charge for a product they do not need or want and which was not explained to them at the time of booking? Will the Commission express an opinion on whether this practice is in conflict with the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005/29/EC)?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its response to parliamentary Question E-011289/2011 ([1]), sharing the view that it is unacceptable if consumers must pay for fuel they have not consumed.

The Commission is aware of such practices taking place in Spain. Spanish authorities have taken action by issuing a notice on four practices which may violate consumers' economic interests in the car rental sector ([2]), including this fuel policy. Traders in Spain are informed of this and requested to correct their practices. If consumers still face such problems in Spain, they should complain to the relevant local authorities, or when back home to the European Consumer Centre in their country ([3]). The Commission has informed the European car rental association Leaseurope of this notice.

On 3 April 2014, the Commission, European Consumer Centres and national enforcers ([4]) met major car rental companies and Leaseurope to discuss issues affecting European consumers when renting cars. At the meeting, the industry representatives agreed to develop solutions to ensure better consumer protection.

The communication on the application of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (the UCPD) ([5]) and its accompanying Report, adopted on 14 March 2013, identify key areas in which enforcement of the UCPD should be strengthened. This includes travel and transport, such as car rentals. The Commission is working towards updating the Guidance on the implementation and application of the UCPD.

Furthermore, under Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts ([6]), unfair contract terms, i.e. contract terms causing a significant imbalance between the parties to the detriment of the consumer, are not binding on the consumer.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-011289&language=EN
([2]) http://consumo-inc.gob.es/informes/docs/CCC_CONSULTAS_2013.pdf, notice No 3
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/index_en.htm
([4]) From the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) network working under Regulation 2006/2004/EC.
([5]) COM(2013) 138 final.
([6]) OJ L 095, 21.4.1993.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003604/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati alla Bosnia Erzegovina in quanto paese in fase di preadesione

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi ricevuti, a titolo di preadesione, dalla Bosnia Erzegovina dall'acquisizione dello status di candidato a oggi?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La Bosnia-Erzegovina usufruisce dello strumento di assistenza di preadesione (IPA) dal 2007. Tra il 2007 e il 2013 l'Unione europea le ha destinato circa 655,5 milioni di EUR.

In quanto paese candidato potenziale, durante il quadro finanziario 2007-2013 la Bosnia-Erzegovina ha beneficiato di due componenti dello strumento di assistenza preadesione, la componente I — Sostegno alla transizione e sviluppo istituzionale e la componente II — Cooperazione transfrontaliera.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003604/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Pre-accession assistance for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Can the Commission say how much pre-accession funding Bosnia and Herzegovina has received since it was awarded the status of potential candidate country?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

Bosnia and Herzegovina benefits since the year 2007 from the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). From 2007 until 2013, the European Union allocated around EUR 655.5 million to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As a potential candidate country, during the financial framework 2007-13, Bosnia and Herzegovina has benefited from two components of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, notably component I — Transition Assistance and Institution Building — and component II — Cross-Border Cooperation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003605/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati all'Islanda in quanto paese in fase di preadesione

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi ricevuti, a titolo di preadesione, dall'Islanda a partire dall'acquisizione dello status di candidato ad oggi?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

Dal 2009, anno in cui ha presentato la domanda di adesione all'UE, sono stati assegnati all'Islanda poco più di 43 milioni di EUR nell'ambito dell'assistenza preadesione (IPA). Sono stati aggiudicati contratti per 17 milioni di EUR di questo importo, di cui quasi 9 milioni di EUR sono stati effettivamente pagati.

Dopo che il governo islandese ha deciso di sospendere i negoziati di adesione, non sono stati firmati nuovi contratti e i preparativi per IPA II sono stati interrotti. I progetti IPA in corso nell'ambito del programma nazionale per l'Islanda sono già terminati o sono in fase di completamento.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003605/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Pre-accession funding for Iceland

Can the Commission state how much pre-accession funding Iceland has received in total since it was awarded candidate status?

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

Since it applied for EU membership in 2009, slightly above EUR 43 million in pre-accession assistance (IPA) funding has been allocated to Iceland. Of this amount, EUR 17 million has been contracted, of which, nearly EUR 9 million have actually been paid.

Following the decision by the Icelandic government to put the accession negotiations on hold, no new contracts have been signed and preparations for IPA II have been stopped. As regards ongoing IPA projects under the national programme for Iceland, they have either been terminated or are being terminated.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003606/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Fondi erogati alla Croazia in quanto paese in fase di preadesione

Può la Commissione indicare l'ammontare dei fondi ricevuti, a titolo di preadesione, dalla Croazia a partire dall'acquisizione dello status di candidato al giorno dell'effettiva adesione all'Unione?

Risposta di Štefan Füle a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

Lo status di paese candidato è stato concesso alla Croazia il 1° giugno 2004. Tra il 2005 e il 1° luglio 2013 è stato assegnato al paese, attraverso vari programmi, un importo complessivo di 1,245 miliardi di EUR di fondi preadesione ripartiti come segue:

— 105 milioni di EUR (80 milioni di EUR per PHARE e 25 milioni di EUR per ISPA) nel 2005,

— 140 milioni di EUR (80 milioni di EUR per PHARE, 35 milioni di EUR per ISPA e 25 milioni di EUR per SAPARD) nel 2006 e

— 1 miliardo EUR a norma del regolamento IPA nel periodo 2007-2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003606/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Pre-accession funding for Croatia

Can the Commission state how much pre-accession funding Croatia received in total between the time it was awarded candidate status and its actual accession to the EU?

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

Croatia was granted the candidate country status on 1 June 2004. Between 2005 and 1 July 2013 a total amount of EUR 1.245 billion pre-accession funds was allocated to Croatia under various programmes, as follows:

— EUR 105 million (EUR 80 million for Phare and EUR 25 million for ISPA) was allocated to Croatia in 2005,

— EUR 140 million (EUR 80 million for Phare, EUR 35 million for ISPA, and EUR 25 million for Sapard) was allocated in 2006 and

— EUR 1 billion was allocated under the IPA Regulation from 2007 to 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003607/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Radicalismo islamico in Nigeria

Borno è uno dei tre Stati della Nigeria dove è più attiva e sanguinosa l'azione del Gruppo della Gente della Sunna per la propaganda religiosa e il Jihad, il cosiddetto Boko Haram, le cui violenze dal 2009 ad oggi hanno causato oltre seimila vittime. In queste ore proprio a Borno almeno 17 persone sono morte durante un attacco da parte dei miliziani del gruppo terroristico islamista.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza degli eventi?

2. Quali misure intende adottare per monitorare la nuova minaccia rappresentata dal rafforzamento del Boko Haram?

3. Può spiegare quali sono e a quanto ammontano i finanziamenti dell'UE destinati alla Nigeria per migliorare la sicurezza e contrastare il radicalismo e l'estremismo violento?

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

I persistenti atti di violenza nello Stato di Borno destano notevole preoccupazione.

La delegazione dell'UE ad Abuja segue attentamente la situazione relativa alla sicurezza non solo nei tre Stati nord-orientali in cui vige attualmente lo stato di emergenza, cioè Borno, Yobe e Adamawa, ma in tutta la Nigeria.

L'UE collabora con il governo e il popolo della Nigeria per contribuire ad arginare la spirale di violenza attraverso il dialogo e aiuti mirati volti ad eliminare le cause profonde della violenza.

Il 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo (677 milioni di EUR) sostiene un'ampia gamma di interventi a livello di democratizzazione, Stato di diritto, risorse idriche, impianti igienico-sanitari e salute materna per migliorare le condizioni generali di vita dei nigeriani. Lo strumento inteso a contribuire alla stabilità e alla pace (20 milioni di EUR) sostiene diversi programmi di pacificazione e mediazione nel delta del Niger e nel Middle Belt, l'attuale riforma del sistema di giustizia penale e il potenziamento dell'ufficio del consulente nazionale per la sicurezza (ONSA). Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (1,3 milioni di EUR) finanzia diverse azioni a tutela dei diritti umani, in particolare con le ONG. Tutti questi progetti contribuiscono a migliorare la sicurezza nel paese nell'ambito di un approccio globale. In particolare, il sostegno all'ONSA comprende elementi specifici relativi all'antiradicalizzazione e alla deradicalizzazione.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003607/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Islamic radicalism in Nigeria

Borno is one of the three Nigerian states in which the Congregation of the People of Tradition for Proselytism and Jihad, better known as Boko Haram, is most active. Since 2009 more than 6 000 people have died as a result of the brutal violence meted out by this Islamist terrorist group. Only recently at least 17 people were killed in an attack carried out in the state by members of the group.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. How does it intend to monitor the new threat posed by the growing influence of Boko Haram?

3. What, and how much, funding does the EU provide to Nigeria with a view to improving the security situation and combating violent radicalism and extremism in the country?

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

The continued violence in Borno state is of great concern.

The EU Delegation in Abuja is monitoring the security situation not only in the three north-eastern states currently under emergency rule — Borno, Yobe and Adamawa — but in the whole of Nigeria.

The EU is working with the government and people of Nigeria to help bring an end to the cycle of violence. It does so through dialogue and targeted aid interventions focusing on the underlying root causes of violence.

The 10th European Development Fund (EUR 677 million) is supporting a broad range of actions in the field of democratisation, rule of law, water, sanitation and maternal health with the aim to improve the general living conditions for Nigerians. The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (EUR 20 million) is supporting several peace and mediation programmes in the Niger Delta and the Middle Belt. It also provides a contribution to the ongoing reform of the criminal justice system and to the strengthening of the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA). The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EUR 1.3 million) funds several actions to protect human rights, particularly with NGOs. As part of a comprehensive approach, all these projects contribute to improve the security situation in the country. The support to the ONSA in particular includes specific elements on counter- and de-radicalisation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003608/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: India: sostenitrice bacia un politico durante un comizio elettorale e per questo viene bruciata viva dal marito

Secondo l'autorevole associazione femminista Nari Mukti Sangram Samiti nell'Assam, Stato del Nord dell'India, è accaduto che l'esponente politico Rahul Gandhi sia stato baciato da Bonti Chutia, una sua sostenitrice, durante un comizio. La notizia ha fatto il giro dei villaggi fino ad arrivare all'orecchio del marito che per punizione ha deciso di bruciarla viva. La storia di Chutia è simile, purtroppo, a quella di milioni di donne indiane vittime di una cultura che le ritiene, ancora oggi, esseri inferiori, oggetti di esclusiva proprietà dell'uomo.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente di questi fatti?

2. Ha intenzione di prendere posizione per sostenere i diritti delle donne in India?

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

La Commissione è al corrente della morte di Bonti Chutiya in seguito a in incendio nella sua abitazione; le circostanze di questo decesso tragico e controverso, su cui la polizia locale sta indagando, devono ancora essere totalmente chiarite.

L'UE segue attentamente la situazione delle donne in India e già da tempo coinvolge le autorità indiane e la società civile nel dibattito sulla violenza e sulla discriminazione nei confronti delle donne e sulle questioni di genere. L'approccio dell'UE si basa su tre principi: la promozione dell'uguaglianza di genere e dell'emancipazione femminile, la lotta alle discriminazioni di genere e alla violenza contro le donne e le bambine, la tutela e la promozione dei diritti dei minori, in particolare delle bambine. Questi sono temi centrali, fra l'altro, delle riunioni del regolare dialogo UE-India sui diritti umani, che costituisce la piattaforma più appropriata per discutere la questione con il paese. L'ultima di queste riunioni ha avuto luogo il 27 novembre 2013. Della violenza contro le donne si è parlato esplicitamente anche durante una conferenza nazionale organizzata a metà marzo a Dehli dall'UE e da UN Women in occasione della giornata internazionale della donna.

Le questioni relative alle donne sono parte integrante anche delle attività di cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'UE: il benessere delle donne e delle bambine è al centro dei programmi in materia di istruzione e di sanità, mentre numerosi progetti hanno aiutato le organizzazioni della società civile ad affrontare questioni come la violenza contro le donne, compresi fenomeni quali la tratta di minori, i matrimoni infantili, la violenza domestica e l'HIV/AIDS. Nel 2013 è stato pubblicato uno specifico invito a presentare proposte relativo alla violenza di genere in India e nei prossimi mesi partiranno almeno tre progetti in questo ambito.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003608/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: India: woman who kissed politician at electoral meeting burned alive by her husband

According to the authoritative feminist group Nari Mukti Sangram Samity, the politician Rahul Gandhi was kissed by a supporter, Bonti Chutiya, during an electoral meeting held in the northern Indian state of Assam. News of what had happened spread through the local area, and when it reached the ears of Bonti's husband, he decided to her to burn her alive as a punishment. What happened to Bonti is far from unusual in India, where millions of women are victimised as a result of a culture that still views women as inferior beings; as the property of their husbands, who may do with them as they will.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above events?

2. Does it intend to take any steps in support of women's rights in India?

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

The Commision is aware of the death of Ms Bonti Chutiya in a fire in her house; full light still has to be shed on the circumstances of this tragic and controversial death, which the local police is investigating.

The EU pays great attention to the situation of women in India and has engaged the Indian authorities and civil society for some time already on violence, discrimination against women and gender issues. The EU approach is based on three principles: promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, combating gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, and protecting and promoting the rights of children, especially girls. These topics feature prominently, *inter alia*, in the meetings of the regular EU-India Human Rights Dialogue, which provides the most relevant platform to discuss this issue with India. The latest such meeting took place on 27 November 2013. The issue of violence against women was also explicitely addressed during a national conference jointly organised by the EU and UN Women mid March this year in Delhi on the occasion of International Women's Day.

Women's issues are also mainstreamed into EU's development cooperation activities: education and health-related programmes have a strong focus on women and girls' welfare, while numerous projects have helped civil society organisations to address issues such as violence against women, including trafficking and child marriage, domestic violence and HIV/AIDS. A specific call for proposals focused on gender based violence was launched in India in 2013 and at least three projects will start in the coming months.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003609/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: India: genitori uccidono la propria figlia rea di aver sposato un uomo appartenente ad un'altra casta

Nell'India meridionale nello Stato dell'Andhra Pradesh, i genitori di una ragazza ventiseienne hanno confessato l'omicidio della figlia, rea di aver sposato un uomo di un'altra casta.

Occorre tenere presenti le risoluzioni del Parlamento europeo del 13 dicembre 2012 sulla discriminazione di casta in India e del 17 gennaio 2013 sulla violenza contro le donne in India e prendere atto delle convenzioni internazionali in materia di diritti umani, comprese la Convenzione internazionale sull'eliminazione di ogni forma di discriminazione razziale (CERD) e la raccomandazione generale XXIX del Comitato per l'eliminazione della discriminazione razziale.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È al corrente dei fatti?

2. Intende integrare la lotta contro la discriminazione basata sulle caste nella legislazione europea, nelle politiche e nei documenti di programmazione ed adottare le linee guida operative per la sua attuazione?

3. Intende rafforzare i meccanismi di monitoraggio e di valutazione per valutare efficacemente l'impatto dell'azione dell'Unione sulla situazione delle persone colpite da questa forma di discriminazione?

4. Intende effettuare una valutazione sistematica dell'impatto di accordi commerciali e/o di investimento sui gruppi colpiti da discriminazioni di casta e affrontare questi temi con i rappresentanti del settore industriale, le autorità governative e le pertinenti organizzazioni della società civile?

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

L'Unione europea è al corrente dei persistenti episodi di discriminazione basata sulla casta e di violenze contro le donne in India, tra cui quello menzionato nell'interrogazione dell'onorevole deputato. I diritti umani e le libertà fondamentali rimarranno un elemento centrale del dialogo dell'UE con l'India.

L'UE ha inoltre fornito un sostegno finanziario per affrontare il problema della discriminazione basata sulla casta e delle relative conseguenze tramite strumenti geografici (strategie nazionali o regionali) e tematici, in particolare lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR). I documenti di strategia dell'EIDHR per il periodo 2011-2013 e il nuovo regolamento dell'UE che istituisce uno strumento per il finanziamento della cooperazione allo sviluppo (DCI) per il periodo 2014-2020 contengono un riferimento esplicito alla lotta contro la discriminazione basata sulla casta.

L'UE è attiva anche nell'ambito delle Nazioni Unite e ha contribuito ai lavori dell'ex sottocommissione ONU sulla promozione e la protezione dei diritti umani, compresa la relazione finale sulla discriminazione basata sul lavoro e sulla nascita. L'Unione ha inoltre contribuito a inserire le questioni connesse alla discriminazione basata sulla casta nel processo di revisione periodica universale relativo a India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal e Bangladesh.

La delegazione dell'UE in India affronta attivamente la questione della discriminazione basata sulla casta nell'ambito del dialogo politico (a cui partecipano gli Stati membri) e attraverso il finanziamento di progetti che interessano la società civile.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003609/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: India: parents kill their own daughter for having married a man from a different caste

In the Andhra Pradesh State in Southern India, the parents of a twenty-six year old girl have confessed to having murdered their daughter for having married a man from a different caste.

One should see this against the backdrop of the European Parliament resolutions of 13 December 2012 on cast discrimination in India and of 17 January 2013 on violence against women in India and take note of the relevant international human rights conventions, including the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and General Recommendation XXIX of the Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

In the light of the above, can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of the above events?

2. whether it plans to incorporate the combating of caste-based discrimination into EU legislation, policies and programming documents and to adopt operational guidelines for its implementation?

3. whether it will strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in order to efficiently gauge the impact of EU action on the circumstances of people suffering this type of discrimination?

4. whether it will conduct a systematic evaluation of the impact of trade agreements and/or investments on groups affected by caste discrimination and address these issues with the representatives of the manufacturing sector, the government authorities and the relevant civil society organisations?

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

The EU is aware of persistent episodes of caste-based discrimination and violence against women in India, including the one mentioned by the Honourable Member in her question. Human rights and fundamental freedoms will continue to be an essential element of the EU's dialogue with India.

Caste discrimination and its effects have also been targeted by the EU financial support to India, both through geographic instruments (Country or Regional Strategies) and thematic instruments (in particular the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rigths). The EIDHR strategy documents for 2011-2013 and the new EU Regulation establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI) for 2014-2020 contain an explicit reference to the fight against caste-based discrimination.

The EU is also active in the UN context and has contributed to the work of the former UN Sub-Commission for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, including the final report on Discrimination based on Work and Descent. The EU has also contributed in including caste-based discrimination issues in the Universal Periodic Review process. Such has been the case for the reviews regarding India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh.

The EU Delegation in India is actively engaged on the issue of caste-based disrimination, both at policy dialogue level (involving Member States) and through civil society project funding.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003610/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Cipro ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002902/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte di Cipro in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

Il programma «Sviluppo sostenibile e competitività» 2007-2013 relativo a Cipro non è stato modificato in modo da prevedere un cofinanziamento dell'UE per qualsiasi intervento nella categoria delle infrastrutture edilizie.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003610/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Cyprus, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002902/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Cyprus under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

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

The 2007-2013 'Sustainable development and Competitiveness' programme for Cyprus has not been modified so as to include EU co-financing for any intervention in the category of housing infrastructure.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003611/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Slovenia ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002911/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Slovenia in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

La Slovenia non ha optato per la possibilità di impiegare il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]) per finanziare spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate.

([1]) REGOLAMENTO (CE) N. 1080/2006 DEL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO E DEL CONSIGLIO, del 5 luglio 2006, relativo al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e recante abrogazione del regolamento (CE) n. 1783/1999 (GU L 210 del 31.7.2006).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003611/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Slovenia, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002911/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Slovenia under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

Slovenia did not choose the possibility to use the European Regional Development Fund under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]) for financing expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999 OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003612/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Slovacchia ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002910/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Slovacchia in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

Nell'ambito del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale sono state accantonate risorse finanziarie destinate all'edilizia abitativa a favore delle comunità emarginate di rom in Slovacchia per il periodo 2007-2013. Il programma prevede a tal fine 7 milioni di EUR. L'obiettivo è quello di costruire circa 15 alloggi per uso locativo, comprendente ciascuno 12 unità abitative, per le comunità emarginate di rom. L'invito a presentare proposte di progetti è stato bandito nel dicembre 2013 e si è concluso nel maggio 2014. Si prevede che la realizzazione degli alloggi per uso locativo sarà ultimata entro la fine del 2015. Ulteriori informazioni sull'invito a presentare proposte di progetti sono disponibili in http://www.ropka.sk/aktualne-vyzvy.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003612/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Slovakia, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002910/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Slovakia under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

There are European Regional Development Fund finances set aside for housing for marginalised Roma in Slovakia in the 2007-2013 period. The programme foresees EUR 7 million for this purpose. The aim is to build approximately 15 rental houses (with 12 living units in each rental house) for marginalised Roma communities. The call for project proposals was launched in December 2013 and closed in May 2014. It is expected that the construction of rental properties will be finished by the end of 2015. More information regarding the call for project proposals can be found at http://www.ropka.sk/aktualne-vyzvy

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003613/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Malta ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002903/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte di Malta in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

Nell'ambito della priorità «Riqualificazione urbana e miglioramento della qualità della vita» del programma maltese per il periodo 2007-2013 intitolato «Investire sulla competitività per una migliore qualità della vita» sono previsti investimenti sulle infrastrutture sociali e per l'inclusione sociale (in particolare gli alloggi sociali) da cofinanziare con il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR). Alla fine del 2012 erano stati assegnati 0,95 milioni di EUR agli investimenti su infrastrutture edilizie, e ulteriori 0,3 milioni di EUR ad altre infrastrutture sociali. Come indicato nella risposta all'interrogazione scritta E-002903/2010, i finanziamenti e i programmi dell'UE possono esplicitamente essere destinati ai Rom senza escludere altre persone che versano in una situazione socioeconomica analoga. Di conseguenza non è possibile determinare l'entità dei fondi assegnati ai progetti e ai programmi volti a promuovere l'integrazione economica e sociale delle sole comunità Rom. Questo principio si applica in particolare a Malta, dove non esiste una comunità Rom.

Per informazioni più dettagliate in merito all'attuazione di progetti specifici finanziati dal FESR, la Commissione invita l'onorevole parlamentare a prendere direttamente contatto con l'autorità di gestione competente ([1]).

([1]) Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division, Triq il-Kukkanja, Santa Venera, SVR 1411, info.ppcd@gov.mt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003613/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Malta, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002903/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Malta under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

Investments in social and social inclusion infrastructure (including social housing) to be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) are foreseen under the 'Urban regeneration and improving the quality of life' priority of the 2007-2013 Maltese programme 'Investing in competitiveness for a better quality of life'. At the end of 2012, EUR 0.95 million had been allocated to investments in housing infrastructure and a further EUR 0.3 million to other social infrastructure. As mentioned in the reply to Written Question E-002903/2010, EU funding and programmes may explicitly target Roma without excluding other people in a similar socioeconomic situation. It is therefore not possible to determine the funds allocated to projects and programmes to promote the social and economic integration of the Roma communities only. This principle applies more particularly to Malta, where there is no Roma community.

For more detailed information about the implementation of specific projects funded by the ERDF, the Commission kindly invites the Honourable Member to contact directly the relevant managing authority ([1]).

([1]) Planning and Priorities Coordination Division, Triq il-Kukkanja, Santa Venera, SVR 1411, info.ppcd@gov.mt

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003614/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Lituania ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002908/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Lituania in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

In Lituania, l'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]) è attuato mediante due attività rientranti nel programma «Promozione della coesione»:

— ristrutturazione dei condomini, in primo luogo migliorando l'efficienza energetica, mediante una dotazione del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) di 49 milioni di EUR, e

— sviluppo e miglioramento della qualità degli alloggi sociali, con una dotazione FESR di 9 milioni di EUR.

Il primo tipo di sostegno riguarda l'ammodernamento dei condomini costruiti prima del 1993 che necessitano di ristrutturazione. La seconda attività è stata istituita per fornire alloggi sociali alle famiglie a basso reddito. Entrambi i tipi di sostegno potrebbero essere di beneficio alle comunità Rom e Sinti, ma non sono destinati esplicitamente a tali gruppi specifici. Pertanto, le dotazioni finanziarie non sono assegnate in maniera specifica, né i progetti sono registrati specificamente per le comunità Rom e Sinti; di conseguenza, non sono agevolmente accessibili informazioni sulla diffusione dell'attività edilizia in relazione a tali gruppi specifici.

([1]) REGOLAMENTO (CE) N. 1080/2006 DEL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO E DEL CONSIGLIO, del 5 luglio 2006, relativo al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e recante abrogazione del regolamento (CE) n. 1783/1999, GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003614/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Lithuania, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002908/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Lithuania under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

In Lithuania, Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]) is being implemented through two activities under the 'Promotion of Cohesion' programme:

— Renovation of multi-apartment housing by primarily increasing energy efficiency, with an European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) allocation of EUR 49 million, and

— Development and increase of quality of social housing, with an ERDF allocation of EUR 9 million.

The first type of support concerns upgrading of multi-apartment housing constructed prior to 1993 in need of renovation. The second activity has been set up to provide social housing to low income households. Both types of support could be of benefit to Roma and Sinti communities but do not explicitly target these specific groups. Therefore, the financial allocations are not specifically earmarked nor are projects specifically recorded for Roma and Sinti communities and, consequently, information is not readily available on the uptake of the housing activities in relation to these specific groups.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999 OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003615/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Lettonia ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002906/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte della Lettonia in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

Non vi sono cambiamenti recenti nel sostegno del FESR per le comunità Rom e Sinti in Lettonia nel contesto dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006. In Lettonia non sono previste specificamente attività di alloggio destinate ai Rom. I gruppi socialmente vulnerabili in generale sono sostenuti tramite attività di interesse generale per le quali è possibile ottenere un tasso di cofinanziamento superiore a livello di progetto, nel rispetto della normativa sugli aiuti pubblici.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003615/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Latvia, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-002906/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Latvia under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2014)

There are no recent changes in the ERDF support to Roma and Sinti communities in Latvia in the context of Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006. Housing activities targeted at Roma are not specifically earmarked in Latvia. Socially vulnerable groups in general are supported via mainstream activities, giving the possibility of an increased co-financing rate at the project level in line with state aid rules.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003616/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Aggiornamento sull'utilizzo del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale in Estonia ai sensi dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-002905/2010, può la Commissione fornire nuovi aggiornamenti circa l'impiego del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale da parte dell'Estonia in applicazione delle disposizioni contenute nell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) 1080/2006, che consente ai paesi che hanno aderito all'UE dal 2004 di finanziare con parte dei fondi europei di sviluppo le spese per programmi e operazioni in materia abitativa a favore di comunità emarginate, nello specifico delle comunità dei rom e dei sinti?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

In Estonia non si sono avuti recentemente cambiamenti per quanto riguarda il sostegno delle comunità Rom e Sinti mediante il Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale connessi all'applicazione dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 2, del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]). Il sostegno ai gruppi socialmente vulnerabili generalmente passa dallo svolgimento di attività ordinarie. In Estonia non sono previste attività edilizie a particolare vantaggio delle comunità Rom.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, relativo al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e recante abrogazione del regolamento (CE) n. 1783/1999, GU L 210 del 31.7.2006.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003616/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Update on the use of the European Regional Development Fund in Estonia, under Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006

With reference to my Written Question E-2909/2010, can the Commission provide new updates on the use of the European Regional Development Fund by Estonia under the provisions laid down in Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006, whereby the countries which joined the EU from 2004 can use EU development funds to finance expenditure for housing programmes and operations for socially excluded communities, with specific reference to the Roma and Sinti communities?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

There are no recent changes in the European Regional Development Fund support to Roma and Sinti communities in Estonia using Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]). In general, socially vulnerable groups are supported via mainstream activities. Housing activities targeted at Roma are not specifically earmarked in Estonia.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999 ,OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-003617/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(25 martie 2014)

Subiect: Extindere finanțare JASPERS

JASPERS este un parteneriat între Comisia Europeană (Direcția Generală Politica Regională), Banca Europeană de Investiții (BEI), Banca Europeană pentru Reconstrucție și Dezvoltare (BERD) și Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). Prin acest parteneriat se oferă asistență tehnică pentru cele douăsprezece țări care au aderat la UE în 2004 și 2007. Astfel, statelor membre în cauză li se oferă sprijinul de care au nevoie pentru a pregăti proiecte importante de înaltă calitate, care urmează a fi cofinanțate din fonduri ale UE.

Având în vedere rata mică de absorbție a fondurilor europene de către noile state membre, precum și finanțarea marilor proiecte de infrastructură transeuropeană pentru transport, energie și comunicații prin Mecanismul de conectare a Europei pentru perioada 2014-2020, estimăm că JASPERS va fi tot mai solicitat în perioada 2014-2017.

Luând în considerare cele de mai sus, aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă are în vedere să crească fondurile puse la dispoziție parteneriatului JASPERS în perioada 2014-2020?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(27 mai 2014)

Pe baza experienței reușite din 2007-2013, JASPERS va continua să ofere sprijin în perioada 2014-2020, atât sub formă de consiliere pentru statele membre beneficiare, cât și, pentru statele membre care solicită acest lucru, sub formă de evaluare a proiectelor majore în calitate de expert independent. Fondurile care urmează să fie puse la dispoziția JASPERS vor depinde de cererile pentru aceste servicii venite de la beneficiarii potențiali.

Un sprijin din partea JASPERS este, de asemenea, avut în vedere în cadrul Mecanismului pentru interconectarea Europei (MIE). Programul de lucru multianual adoptat de Comisie în martie 2014 prevede posibilitatea statelor membre eligibile de a folosi sprijinul JASPERS pentru dezvoltarea de proiecte de implementare a rețelei centrale TEN-T. Aceste state membre vor fi invitate în scurt timp să își confirme interesul de a utiliza sprijinul JASPERS pentru a pregăti proiecte în vederea unei finanțări prin MIE. Dacă statele membre își confirmă interesul, acordul dintre Comisie și Banca Europeană de Investiții cu privire la serviciile de asistență tehnică ale JASPERS va fi extins pentru a include MIE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003617/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Expanding Jaspers funding

'Jaspers' is a partnership between the Commission (DG Regional Policy), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). Through this partnership, technical assistance is provided to the twelve countries which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. The Member States concerned are thus offered the support they need to draw up high-quality major projects to be co-financed from EU funds.

Given the low take-up rate for European funds by the new Member States and the financing of large-scale trans-European infrastructure projects for transport, energy and communications through the Connecting Europe facility for the period 2014-2020, Jaspers is likely to be even more in demand over the period 2014-2017.

Is the Commission planning to increase the funding made available to the Jaspers partnership in the period 2014-2020?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

On the basis of the successful experience in 2007-2013, Jaspers will continue to provide support in the 2014-2020 period, both as an adviser to the beneficiary Member States and, for those Member States which request it, as an independent expert providing an appraisal of major projects. The funding to be made available to Jaspers will depend on the demand for these services requested by the potential beneficiaries.

Support from Jaspers is also envisaged under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). The Multiannual Work Programme adopted by the Commission in March 2014 opens the possibility for the eligible Member States to use Jaspers' support for development of projects implementing the TEN-T core network. These Member States will soon be asked to confirm their interest in using Jaspers' support to prepare projects in view of CEF funding. If the Member States confirm their interest, the agreement between the Commission and the European Investment Bank regarding Jaspers' technical assistance services will be enlarged to include the CEF.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003618/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Incumplimiento de las normas de la Unión sobre ayudas estatales por parte de la Comunidad de Madrid y del club de fútbol español Atlético de Madrid

A mediados del pasado mes de diciembre, la Comisión Europea informó de la apertura de una investigación pormenorizada sobre la financiación pública de algunos clubes de fútbol profesional españoles, a fin de comprobar si algunas de las medidas de apoyo público adoptadas por ciertas administraciones españolas respetaban las normas de la Unión sobre ayudas estatales. La preocupación de la Comisión es que ese tipo de medidas hayan conferido ventajas significativas a los clubes beneficiarios, en detrimento de los que funcionan sin ese apoyo. De acuerdo con la información facilitada, son siete los clubes investigados: Real Madrid C. F., F. C. Barcelona, Athletic Club de Bilbao, Club Atlético Osasuna, Valencia C. F., Hércules C. F. y Elche C. F.

Según diversas informaciones, el club de fútbol español Atlético de Madrid firmó en el año 2007 un contrato millonario de cesión de derechos audiovisuales por cinco temporadas con Telemadrid —cadena de televisión pública de la Comunidad de Madrid— con condiciones muy positivas para la entidad deportiva, pero ruinoso para la cadena pública. El hecho de que Telemadrid suscribiera el contrato, a pesar de existir informes internos y externos que desaconsejaban esa inversión, refuerza la idea de que esta operación podría consistir en una concesión de ayudas estatales encubiertas.

Basta con examinar los argumentos expuestos por la Comisión para justificar la apertura de la investigación de los sietes clubes de fútbol anteriormente citados para apreciar indicios de incumplimiento de las normas de la Unión sobre ayudas estatales en la operación suscrita por el Atlético de Madrid. El citado club de fútbol se benefició de un contrato que le proporcionó ventajas de las que no hubiera disfrutado si ese contrato hubiera sido firmado con otra entidad, en condiciones normales de mercado.

En vista de lo expuesto anteriormente:

¿Ve oportuno la Comisión ampliar al club de fútbol Atlético de Madrid la investigación iniciada sobre la financiación pública de algunos clubes de fútbol profesional españoles, y comprobar si se cumplió la normativa de la Unión sobre ayudas estatales cuando este club formalizó el contrato con Telemadrid?

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

La Comisión no tenía conocimiento de la posible ayuda al Atlético de Madrid CF en forma de adquisición de derechos de difusión por Telemadrid. Por lo tanto, no ha tenido la oportunidad de evaluar el asunto y decidir si debía seguirse investigando con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003618/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Infringement of Union rules on state aid by the Community of Madrid and the Spanish football club Atlético de Madrid

In mid-December 2013, the Commission announced the launch of an in-depth investigation into the public funding of various Spanish professional football clubs, to ascertain whether or not some of the public funding measures used by certain Spanish authorities complied with Union rules on state funding. The Commission is concerned that some such measures may have given significant advantages to clubs benefiting from them, to the detriment of other clubs operating without this support. According to the information provided, seven clubs are being investigated: Real Madrid FC, Barcelona FC, Athletic Club de Bilbao, Club Atlético Osasuna, Valencia FC, Hércules FC and Elche FC.

It has been reported by various sources that in 2007 Atlético de Madrid FC signed a multi-million euro contract awarding five seasons worth of audiovisual rights to Telemadrid — the Community of Madrid's public television channel — on terms that were extremely favourable to the club but disastrous for the television channel. The fact that Telemadrid signed the contract despite the existence of internal and external reports advising against the investment gives credence to the idea that the operation could have been a covert means of providing state aid to the club.

Simply from looking at the reasons given by the Commission for launching its investigation into these seven football clubs, it is evident that Community rules on state aid may have also been infringed in this operation involving Atlético de Madrid. The club benefited from a contract giving it advantages which it would not have enjoyed if the same contract had been signed with another body under normal market conditions.

In the light of the above,

Does the Commission consider it appropriate to expand the investigation into the public funding of certain Spanish professional football clubs to include Atlético de Madrid FC and determine whether Community rules on state aid were followed when the club signed this contract with Telemadrid?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(20 May 2014)

The Commission was not aware of the possible support for Atlético de Madrid CF in the form of the acquisition of broadcasting rights by Telemadrid. Therefore it has not had the opportunity to assess the matter and to decide whether it should be further investigated under the state aid rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003619/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — España invita al dictador Obiang como conferenciante en las sedes del Instituto Cervantes y la UNED en Bruselas

Hace unos meses me dirigí a usted (E-013704/2013) para expresar mi preocupación al constatar que el Gobierno español había permitido que la selección española de fútbol participara en un partido amistoso celebrado en Guinea Ecuatorial, satisfaciendo los deseos del dictador Obiang.

En mi escrito le planteaba si ese tipo de actuaciones podían influir en la estrategia diseñada por la Unión Europea en defensa de los derechos humanos y la democratización de ese país. En su respuesta señaló que «la Unión Europea concede la máxima importancia a la protección de los derechos humanos y al fomento de la democracia en Guinea Ecuatorial», algo difícilmente compatible con la celebración de eventos como el descrito.

Diversos medios de comunicación se hacen eco hoy de una nueva iniciativa impulsada por el Gobierno español. Las delegaciones del instituto Cervantes y la Universidad Española de Educación a Distancia (UNED) albergarán en Bruselas dos conferencias en las que participará el dictador de Guinea Ecuatorial, Teodoro Obiang. El hecho de que las instituciones organizadoras dependan del Ministerio de Educación y Cultura y se financien con dinero público hace dudar todavía más de la pertinencia de celebrar dos eventos como estos.

Pienso que la Unión Europea debe mostrar contundencia al reprobar comportamientos de este tipo y pronunciarse sobre las iniciativas impulsadas por ciertos Estados miembros. Por todo lo expuesto, pregunto a la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante:

¿Qué impacto considera que puede tener en la estrategia de la Unión que España permita que un dictador como el Sr. Obiang participe en dos conferencias organizadas por el Gobierno español y financiadas con dinero público? ¿No le parece que este tipo de actuaciones van en contra del objetivo de la Unión Europea de proteger los derechos humanos y fomentar la democracia en Guinea Ecuatorial?

Respuesta de la Alta Representante/Vicepresidenta Ashton en nombre de la Comisión
(10 de junio de 2014)

Este asunto incumbe a las organizaciones en cuestión, que actúan bajo su propia responsabilidad. También entendemos que el acto de la UNED fue anulado.

Los representantes de la UE han manifestado reiteradamente su deseo de que se apliquen efectivamente reformas en Guinea Ecuatorial, especialmente en materia de derechos humanos. Este compromiso se mantiene inalterado. La UE también se propone intensificar su actividad en este ámbito crítico a través de todos los medios disponibles.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003619/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Spain's invitation to the dictator Teodoro Obiang to participate in conferences at the Instituto Cervantes and UNED in Brussels

A few months ago I addressed a question to you (E-013704/2013) expressing my concern at the news that the Spanish Government was to allow the national football team to play a friendly match in Equatorial Guinea at the invitation of the country's dictator, Teodoro Obiang.

I asked whether such behaviour could have any impact on the EU's strategy to support human rights and democratisation in Equatorial Guinea. In your answer, you said that 'the EU attaches the highest importance to the protection of human rights and the promotion of democracy in Equatorial Guinea', a statement which is difficult to equate with the celebration of events such as that described above.

Various media sources are now drawing attention to a new initiative launched by the Spanish Government. The Brussels branches of the Cervantes Institute and the Spanish University of Distance Education (UNED) are to host two conferences in which the dictator of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang, will participate. The fact that these two institutions are dependent on the Ministry of Education and Culture and are financed from public funds makes the holding of such events even more questionable.

It is my view that the EU should take a firm line, by repudiating such behaviour and saying what it thinks about the initiatives backed by some Member States. In light of the above, I wish to ask the Vice-President/High Representative:

What does she see as being the possible impact on Union strategy of Spain allowing a dictator such as Mr Obiang to take part in two conferences organised by the Spanish Government and financed by public funds? Does she not think that such behaviour runs counter to the EU's objective of defending human rights and promoting democracy in Equatorial Guinea?

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

This is a matter for the organisations concerned, who act under their own responsibility. We also understand that the UNED event was cancelled.

Representatives of the EU have repeatedly stated their wish to see the effective implementation of reforms in Equatorial Guinea, especially in the field of human rights. This commitment is unchanged. The EU further intends to intensify its work in this critical area using all possible means it has at its disposal.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003620/14
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Ayudas a la investigación para la memoria histórica de Europa (2)

Como continuación a mi pregunta E-000228/2014, con respuesta de 12 de marzo de 2014, ¿no considera la Comisión que el Reglamento por el que se establezca el programa Europa de los Ciudadanos 2014-2020 deberá incorporar entre sus líneas de financiación aquellas acciones que, fomentando la reconciliación y la tolerancia como modo de superar el pasado y construir el futuro, incorporen a las víctimas de la Guerra Civil en España?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(25 de abril de 2014)

El programa Europa con los Ciudadanos ([1]) correspondiente al periodo 2014-2020 ([2]) respaldará proyectos que se hagan eco de las causas de los regímenes totalitarios de la historia moderna de Europa, así como proyectos sobre otros momentos determinantes y puntos de referencia de la historia reciente de Europa, donde se incluyen actividades sobre las víctimas de la Guerra Civil española.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/future-programme-2014-2020/index_en.htm

([2]) El programa Europa con los Ciudadanos no entró en vigor el 1 de enero de 2014 tal y como estaba previsto porque, a finales de 2013, el Parlamento nacional del Reino Unido todavía no había procedido a la aprobación necesaria con arreglo a la legislación nacional para que el representante del Reino Unido en el Consejo vote a favor de la adopción de un acto jurídico basado en el artículo 352 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la Unión Europea (TFUE). Tan pronto como el Parlamento nacional del Reino Unido dé su beneplácito, el Consejo podrá adoptar el programa, que entrará en vigor el día de su publicación en el Diario Oficial.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003620/14
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Support for research into European historical remembrance (2)

To follow up on my question for written answer E000228/2014, which was replied to on 12 March 2014, does the Commission not consider that the regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020 should include among its lines of funding actions encouraging tolerance and reconciliation as a means of moving beyond the past and building the future which incorporate the victims of the Spanish civil war?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(25 April 2014)

The Europe for Citizens ([1]) programme 2014-2020 ([2]) will support projects reflecting on causes of totalitarian regimes in Europe's modern history as well as projects concerning other defining moments and reference points in recent European history including activities which incorporate the victims of the Spanish civil war.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/about-the-europe-for-citizens-programme/future-programme-2014-2020/index_en.htm

([2]) The Europe for Citizens Programme has not entered into force on 1 January 2014 as foreseen because the approval by the national Parliament of the United Kingdom which is required by national legislation for the UK representative in Council voting in favour of the adoption of a legal act based on article 352 TFEU, could not be achieved before the end of 2013. As soon as the national Parliament of the United Kingdom has given its approval, the programme can be adopted by Council and will enter into force the day of its publication in the Official Journal.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003621/14
an die Kommission
Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D)
(25. März 2014)

Betrifft: Anerkennung des Zahntechnikerberufs im Vereinigten Königreich

Die Freizügigkeit von Arbeitnehmerinnen und Arbeitnehmern ist in Artikel 45 des Vertrags über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union verankert. Sie gehört zu den vier Grundfreiheiten des europäischen Binnenmarkts. In diesem Kontext unterstützt die gegenseitige Anerkennung beruflicher Qualifikationen die Mobilität der Bürger und Bürgerinnen. Immer noch gibt es allerdings aufgrund der spezifischen nationalen Ausbildungen Schwierigkeiten bei der Anerkennung von reglementierten Berufen.

In einem konkreten Fall handelt es sich um die Anerkennung des erlernten Berufs des Zahntechnikers in Deutschland und der entsprechenden Berufsausübung in Großbritannien. Die elektronische Datenbank für reglementierte Berufe weist bei der erworbenen Berufsausbildung des Zahntechnikers in Deutschland die Möglichkeit der Ausübung des Berufs des „Dental Technician" und „Clinical Dental Technician" in Großbritannien zu. Es wird dabei das Qualifikationsniveau DSE-Diplom, das nach einer postsekundären Ausbildung erteilt wird, und Anhang II (ex 92/51, Anhang C, D), Art. 11 Buchstabe c, gefordert. Im konkreten Fall jedoch akzeptiert der General Dental Council im Vereinigten Königreich allerdings nur die Ausübung des Berufs „Dental Technician", nicht jedoch die Ausübung des Berufs des „Clinical Dental Technician".

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

Liegen der Kommission weitere Beschwerden über Fälle der Anerkennung des deutschen Zahntechnikerberufs in Großbritannien vor?

Ist für die Ausübung der Berufe „Dental Technician" und „Clinical Dental Technician" in Großbritannien der Erwerb des Gesellenbriefs für Zahntechniker in Deutschland ausreichend oder wird darüber hinaus möglicherweise der Meisterbrief für die Ausübung verlangt?

Welche Zusatzausbildungen oder -seminare sind erforderlich, um den Beruf des „Clinical Dental Technician" in Großbritannien ausüben zu können?

Welche Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission zu ergreifen, um die Voraussetzungen für die Ausübung eines Berufs auf der Webseite der Datenbank für reglementierte Berufe übersichtlicher zu gestalten?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(12. Mai 2014)

Zahntechniker können vom allgemeinen System der gegenseitigen Anerkennung nach der Richtlinie 2006/36/EG ([1]) (die „Richtlinie") profitieren, in der ein System der gegenseitigen Anerkennung von Qualifikationen zwischen den EU-Mitgliedstaaten festgelegt ist. Die zuständigen Behörden des Aufnahmemitgliedstaats müssen den Antragstellern die Aufnahme und Ausübung des Berufs, für den sie in ihrem Herkunftsland qualifiziert sind, unter denselben Bedingungen erlauben, die für die Angehörigen des Aufnahmemitgliedstaats gelten. Jedoch ist die zuständige Behörde in diesem Zusammenhang befugt, die Ausbildung des betreffenden Berufsangehörigen mit den nationalen Ausbildungsanforderungen zu vergleichen und gegebenenfalls sogenannte Ausgleichsmaßnahmen zu verlangen, sollten gravierende Unterschiede zwischen den Ausbildungen bestehen.

Abgesehen davon obliegt es einzig den Mitgliedstaaten zu entscheiden, ob die Berufe des Zahntechnikers und des klinischen Zahntechnikers zu den reglementierten Berufen zählen, für die bestimmte Ausbildungsvoraussetzungen gelten können.

Der Kommission ist nicht bekannt, welche Voraussetzungen für deutsche Zahntechniker in Großbritannien gelten. Die Mitgliedstaaten tragen lediglich die in ihrem Hoheitsgebiet erforderlichen Ausbildungsniveaus in die Datenbank der reglementierten Berufe der Kommission ein, jedoch nicht den Inhalt der nationalen Ausbildungsanforderungen. Die Kommission ist laufend bemüht, den Inhalt und die Zugänglichkeit ihrer Datenbank zu verbessern, um noch genauere Informationen zu gewährleisten. Die Bürgerinnen und Bürger werden jedoch ersucht, sich in Einzelfällen an die zuständigen Behörden in Großbritannien oder eine auf der Kommissionswebseite ([2]) gelistete nationale Kontaktstelle zu wenden.

Auf Basis der verfügbaren Informationen sind der Kommission keine Beschwerden im Zusammenhang mit deutschen Zahntechnikern in Großbritannien bekannt.

([1]) Richtlinie 2005/36/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 7. September 2005 über die Anerkennung von Berufsqualifikationen, ABl. L 255 vom 30.9.2005.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contact/national_contact_points_de.htm#UNITED_KINGDOM

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003621/14
to the Commission
Evelyne Gebhardt (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Recognition of the profession of dental technician in the UK

The freedom of movement of workers is enshrined in Article 45 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It is one of the four fundamental freedoms of the European single market. To that end, the mutual recognition of professional qualifications encourages individual mobility. However, specific features of national training systems mean that there are still difficulties with the recognition of regulated professions.

One particular case concerns the recognition of a qualification as dental technician ('Zahntechniker') obtained in Germany and the practice of the corresponding profession in the United Kingdom. The online Regulated Professions Database states that those who have obtained a professional qualification as a 'Zahntechniker' in Germany may practise the profession of 'dental technician' or 'clinical dental technician'. The qualification level required is DSE — Diploma (post-secondary education), including Annex II (ex 92/51, Annex C,D), Art. 11 c. However, in this specific case the UK General Dental Council accepts this qualification only for the profession of 'dental technician' but not for that of 'clinical dental technician'.

I therefore have the following questions:

Has the Commission received any other complaints in cases relating to the recognition of the German profession of 'Zahntechniker' in the UK?

In order to practise the professions of dental technician and clinical dental technician in the UK, is it sufficient to have obtained a journeyman's certificate ('Gesellenbrief') as a 'Zahntechniker' in Germany, or is a master craftsman's certificate ('Meisterbrief') required in addition?

What additional training courses or seminars need to be attended in order to practise the profession of a clinical dental technician in the UK?

What measures does the Commission propose to take to improve the clarity of the Regulated Professions Database website as regards the conditions required for practising a profession?

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

Dental technicians can benefit from the so-called general system of mutual recognition under Directive 2005/36/EC ([1]) (the directive), which sets out a system for mutual recognition of qualifications between the EU Member States. The competent authorities of the host country are obliged to allow access to and the pursuit of a professional activity to applicants who are qualified in their home country under the same conditions as host country's nationals. However, in that context, the competent authority of the host country is entitled to compare the training of the professional concerned with its own national training requirements and may impose so-called compensation measures, should substantial differences in training exist.

That said, it remains within the sole competence of individual Member States to decide whether dental technicians or clinical dental technicians are regulated professions which can then be made subject to specific professional qualification requirements.

The Commission is not aware of the requirements applicable to German technicians in the UK. In the Commission's database of regulated professions, Member States only report the qualification levels required in their territory, but not the content of national training requirements. While the Commission is constantly trying to improve the content and the accessibility of its database, to ensure more accurate information, individuals are encouraged to contact the competent authorities in the UK or a national contact point, listed on the Commission's website, ([2]) as regards individual cases.

Based on the available information, the Commission is not aware of any complaints specific to the German dental technicians in the UK.

([1]) Directive 2005/36/EC of Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications, OJ L 255, 30.9.2005.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contact/national_contact_points_en.htm#UNITED_KINGDOM

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-003622/14
an die Kommission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(25. März 2014)

Betrifft: Wespenfallen und die damit zusammenhängenden Gefahren für Bienen

Im Zusammenhang mit dem Bienensterben in Europa und dem daraufhin erlassenen, auf zwei Jahre befristeten und teilweisen Neonicotinoide-Verbot sind die Gefahren für Bienen nicht beseitigt worden. Nach aktuellen Meldungen stellen in der Union regulär vertriebene Wespenfallen eine nicht unerhebliche Gefahr für Bienen dar, da diese neben Wespen auch Bienen anlocken. Vor diesem Hintergrund stellen sich folgende Fragen:

1. Welche Stelle entscheidet über die Zulassung eines solchen Produkts (Wespenfalle), bzw. nach welchen Parametern wird bei der Prüfung vorgegangen?

2. In welcher Rechtsquelle finden sich die einschlägigen Normen?

3. Hat die Kommission bereits weitere Maßnahmen in Ausarbeitung, um die Bienen auch zukünftig zu schützen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(22. Mai 2014)

Das Inverkehrbringen von Wespenfallen ist nicht durch EU-Vorschriften geregelt. Die Verordnung (EU) Nr. 528/2012 über die Bereitstellung auf dem Markt und die Verwendung von Biozidprodukten ([1]) erfasst Insektizide sowie chemische Insektenrepellentien und -lockmittel, aber keine Fallen.

Bezüglich der Maßnahmen zum Schutz von Bienen verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf die Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage P-012225/2013 ([2]), die umfassende Informationen zu den Maßnahmen der Kommission zum Schutz von Honigbienen enthält, sowie zu den Informationen, die anlässlich der von der Kommission am 7. April 2014 veranstalteten „Conference for Better Bee Health" ([3]) (Konferenz für eine bessere Gesundheit der Bienen) zur Verfügung gestellt wurden

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:167:0001:0123:de:PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2013-012225&language=de
([3]) http://sanco-bee-health-conference2014.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003622/14
to the Commission
Elisabeth Köstinger (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Wasp traps and associated risks to bees

In response to the widespread bee mortality in Europe, a ban on neonicotinoids was adopted — albeit a partial ban for two years only — but the dangers to bees have not been eradicated. It is currently reported that wasp traps which are legally marketed in the EU present a significant risk to bees, as they attract bees as well as wasps. That being so, I should like to ask the following questions:

1. What body decides about the approval of products such as wasp traps, and what are the parameters used in testing such products?

2. In what source of law are the relevant legal standards to be found?

3. Is the Commission working on any other measures to ensure the continued protection of bees in future?

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

The placing on the market or use of wasp traps is not regulated by EU legislation. Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 on the making available on the market and use of biocidal products ([1]) cover insecticides, insect's repellents and insect's attractants acting through a chemical active substance but not traps.

As regards the actions taken to protect bees, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-012225/2013 ([2]) where comprehensive information on Commission actions for honeybees was given, as well as to the information that was made available during the Conference for Better Bee Health ([3]) organised by the Commission on 7 April 2014.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:167:0001:0123:EN:PDF
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=P-2013-012225&language=EN
([3]) http://sanco-bee-health-conference2014.eu/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003625/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αισθητές περικοπές σε υγεία και παιδεία

Οι πολιτικές αυστηρής λιτότητας έχουν περικόψει αισθητά τα κονδύλια για την υγεία και την παιδεία ναρκοθετώντας τη δημόσια επένδυση για το μέλλον της κάθε χώρας που υπόκειται σε μνημόνιο (Ελλάδα, Ιρλανδία, Κύπρος, Πορτογαλία).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με τέτοια δεδομένα, πώς αναμένει και πώς έμπρακτα στηρίζει την οικονομική και κοινωνική ανάκαμψη της κάθε χώρας;

2. Τι απαντά στις κραυγές αγωνίας των Ευρωπαίων πολιτών που βλέπουν την ποιότητα ζωής τους να χειροτερεύει μέρα με τη μέρα;

3. Πώς αντιδρά βλέποντας στους δέκτες των τηλεοράσεων κάθε μέρα τους Ευρωπαίους πολίτες του Νότου να ζητούν ψωμί και στοιχειώδη τρόφιμα για να θρέψουν τα παιδιά τους;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(28 Μαΐου 2014)

Τα προγράμματα οικονομικής βοήθειας απέτρεψαν την ανεξέλεγκτη χρεοκοπία κράτους μέλους, και κατ' αυτό ώστε αποφεύχθησαν πολύ πιο απότομες και σοβαρές κοινωνικές συνέπειες. Μετά από μια δύσκολη φάση προσαρμογής τα δικαιούχα κράτη μέλη βρίσκονται πλέον σε καλύτερη θέση από ό, τι ήταν πριν από τρία χρόνια. Η οικονομική ανάκαμψη κερδίζει έδαφος και εδραιώνεται.

Ο κοινωνικός αντίκτυπος των πολιτικών αποτελεί πάντα σημαντικό θέμα κατά τον σχεδιασμό των όρων για τις χώρες που βρίσκονται σε πρόγραμμα. Συγχρόνως, εναπόκειται στις δημοκρατικά εκλεγμένες κυβερνήσεις να προβούν στις επιλογές που απαιτούνται για τη διόρθωση των συσσωρευμένων ανισορροπιών, σύμφωνα με τους στόχους του προγράμματος.

Οι όροι του προγράμματος έχουν προσαρμοστεί προκειμένου να περιοριστούν οι επιπτώσεις των μεταρρυθμίσεων στις ομάδες με χαμηλό εισόδημα. Όλα τα προγράμματα τονίζουν τον κρίσιμο ρόλο που διαδραματίζουν τα δίχτυα ασφαλείας και επιδιώκουν να αυξήσουν την αποδοτικότητα και την αποτελεσματικότητά τους. Σε σχέση με την υγειονομική περίθαλψη, τα προγράμματα προσαρμογής κατευθύνουν μέτρα που να ενισχύουν τη συνολική κάλυψη, εντός πλαισίου κοινωνικής ασφάλισης υγείας, και να προστατεύουν αποτελεσματικά άτομα και νοικοκυριά χαμηλού εισοδήματος. Τα ευρωπαϊκά διαρθρωτικά ταμεία ενεργοποιούνται σε χώρες που βρίσκονται σε πρόγραμμα με στόχο τη βελτίωση των εκπαιδευτικών και υγειονομικών υποδομών, τη στήριξη της μεταρρύθμιση των συστημάτων κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, και την παροχή βοηθείας στους νέους προκειμένου να επανενταχθούν στην αγορά εργασίας.

Επιπλέον, πολλές από τις διαρθρωτικές μεταρρυθμίσεις που τίθενται σε ισχύ στο πλαίσιο προγράμματος προσαρμογής αντιμετωπίζουν κατεστημένα συμφέροντα, ενώ θα βοηθήσουν τους πολίτες με τη μείωση των τιμών, την ενίσχυση του αναπτυξιακού δυναμικού της οικονομίας, τη βελτίωση της ανταγωνιστικότητας και τη διευκόλυνση μιας δίκαιης οικονομικής προσαρμογής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003625/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Swingeing cuts in health and education spending

The austerity policies have resulted in deep cuts in spending on health and education, thereby severely jeopardising public investment in the future of all the countries under adjustment programmes (Greece, Ireland, Cyprus and Portugal).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Given such a situation, how does it expect the economic and social recovery of each of these countries to occur and how is it actively supporting such a recovery?

2. What answers does it have to the anguished cries of European citizens who see their quality of life deteriorating day by day?

3. What is its response to the daily scenes on our television screens of citizens of southern European countries demanding bread and staple foods to feed their children?

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

The economic assistance programmes prevented the disorderly default of a Member State, avoiding much more severe and abrupt social consequences. After a difficult adjustment phase the beneficiary Member States are now in a better position than they were three years ago. The economic recovery is gaining ground and firming up.

The social impact of policies has always been a concern when designing conditionality for programme countries. At the same time it is for democratically elected national governments to make the choices necessary to correct the accumulated imbalances, in line with programme targets.

Programme conditionality has been tailored to limit the impact of reforms on low income groups. All programmes emphasise the crucial role of safety nets, and aim to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. In relation to healthcare, the adjustment programmes target measures which strengthen universal coverage within a social health insurance framework, and protect low-income individuals and households effectively. European structural funds are being mobilised in programme countries to improve education and healthcare infrastructure, to support the reform of the welfare system, and to help young people to re-enter the labour market.

In addition, many of the structural reforms that are being enacted in the context of an adjustment programme are addressing vested interests and will help citizens by lowering prices, strengthening the economy's growth potential, improving competitiveness and facilitating a fair economic adjustment.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-003627/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 Μαρτίου 2014)

Θέμα: Έλλειψη προόδου στην επίτευξη των στόχων της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020»

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Προτίθεται να εκπονήσει έκθεση σχετικά με την πρόοδο που σημειώθηκε προς την επίτευξη των στόχων της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» μέχρι σήμερα, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην έλλειψη προόδου των χωρών που υποβλήθηκαν σε πρόγραμμα, και να υποβάλει προτάσεις για να μπουν οι χώρες αυτές σε αξιόπιστη πορεία προς επίτευξη όλων των στόχων της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020»;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(30 Μαΐου 2014)

Η στρατηγική «Ευρώπη 2020» έχει διανύσει σχεδόν το ήμισυ τη διάρκειας κάλυψής της. Κατά τη διάρκεια των τελευταίων τεσσάρων ετών, η Ευρώπη βρέθηκε αντιμέτωπη με μια χωρίς προηγούμενο κρίση, η οποία είχε θεμελιώδη αντίκτυπο στην οικονομία και την κοινωνία. Η κρίση είχε σαφή αντίκτυπο ιδίως σε θέματα απασχόλησης και φτώχειας, περιόρισε δε την πρόοδο για την επίτευξη αυτών των στόχων. Επίσης ενέτεινε τις διαφορές των επιδόσεων μεταξύ των κρατών μελών σε πολλούς τομείς. Στις χώρες που υποβλήθηκαν σε πρόγραμμα, τα προγράμματα οικονομικής βοήθειας απέτρεψαν τον κίνδυνο ανεξέλεγκτης χρεοκοπίας, και κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο αποφεύχθησαν πολύ πιο σοβαρές και αιφνίδιες οικονομικές και κοινωνικές συνέπειες, ενώ η ανάκαμψη αρχίζει να κερδίζει έδαφος. Ωστόσο, ενώ η χειρότερη φάση της κρίσης έχει πλέον παρέλθει, η οικονομική ανάπτυξη εξακολουθεί να είναι εύθραυστη και η ΕΕ πρέπει να διπλασιάσει τις προσπάθειές της για επιτάχυνση της ανάπτυξης, της παραγωγικότητας και της δημιουργίας θέσεων εργασίας.

Η ανακοίνωση της Επιτροπής, της 5ης Μαρτίου 2014, σχετικά με τον απολογισμό της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» ([1]), κινεί μια ενδιάμεση επανεξέταση της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» και παρέχει μια πρώτη επισκόπηση των αποτελεσμάτων της στρατηγικής από το 2010, καθώς και του ρόλου που διαδραματίζουν οι στόχοι, οι εμβληματικές πρωτοβουλίες και το Ευρωπαϊκό Εξάμηνο. Στην ανακοίνωση επισημαίνεται ότι η πρόοδος για την επίτευξη των στόχων της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» ήταν ανάμεικτη. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο του Μαρτίου 2014 αξιολόγησε τη στρατηγική βάσει της ανακοίνωσης· δήλωσε ότι η επίτευξη του στόχου της στρατηγικής της ΕΕ για έξυπνη, διατηρήσιμη και χωρίς αποκλεισμούς ανάπτυξη παραμένει ζωτικής σημασίας και ζήτησε να επιταχυνθούν οι προσπάθειες για την επίτευξη των στόχων.

Η Επιτροπή σκοπεύει να ξεκινήσει δημόσια διαβούλευση για τη διατύπωση απόψεων ως προς τα διδάγματα που αποκομίστηκαν από τα πρώτα χρόνια της στρατηγικής «Ευρώπη 2020» και ως προς τα στοιχεία που πρέπει να ληφθούν υπόψη κατά την περαιτέρω ανάπτυξή της. Στη συνέχεια, αρμόδια θα είναι η νέα Επιτροπή να υποβάλει προτάσεις προκειμένου η ΕΕ 28 να μπει σε κατεύθυνση που οδηγεί στην επίτευξη των στόχων της στρατηγικής για την «Ευρώπη 2020», εγκαίρως, πριν από το Εαρινό Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο του 2015.

([1]) Βλέπε επίσης «Smarter, greener, more inclusive? Indicators to support the Europe 2020 strategy», Eurostat, 2013. Έκθεση προόδου σχετικά με τη στρατηγική για την «Ευρώπη 2020» πραγματοποιήθηκε επίσης τον Νοέμβριο του 2011. Η έκθεση αυτή είναι διαθέσιμη στη διεύθυνση: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_annex1_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003627/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Lack of progress in achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy

Will the Commission say:

Will it draw up a report on progress made so far towards achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, with particular emphasis on the lack of progress in countries under adjustment programmes and put forward proposals to put these countries on track to achieving all the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy?

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

The Europe 2020 strategy is almost half way through its term of coverage. During the last four years, Europe has faced an unprecedented crisis, which has had a fundamental impact on its economy and society. The crisis has had a clear impact particularly on employment and poverty and has constrained progress towards these targets. It has also exacerbated the differences in performance between Member States in several areas. In programme countries, the economic assistance programmes prevented disorderly defaults, thus avoiding much more severe and abrupt economic and social consequences, and the recovery is now gaining ground. Yet, while the worst of the crisis is behind us, growth is still fragile and the EU must redouble its efforts to accelerate growth, productivity and job creation.

The Commission Communication of 5 March 2014, on Taking stock of the Europe 2020 strategy ([1]), initiates a mid-term review of Europe 2020 and gives a first overview of results of the strategy since 2010, as well as of the role played by targets, flagships and the European Semester. The communication finds that progress towards the Europe 2020 targets has been mixed. The March 2014 European Council assessed the strategy on the basis of the communication; it stated that achieving the strategy's goal of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth remains crucial and called for stepping up efforts to reach the targets.

The Commission indents to launch a public consultation to seek views on the lessons learned from the early years of Europe 2020 and on the elements to be taken into account in its further development. It will then be up to the new College to come out with proposals to put the EU28 on track to achieving the objectives of Europe 2020 in time for the spring 2015 European Council.

([1]) See also 'Smarter, greener, more inclusive? Indicators to support the Europe 2020 strategy', Eurostat, 2013. A progress report on the Europe 2020 strategy was also carried out in November 2011. The report can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/ags2012_annex1_en.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003632/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 mars 2014)

Objet: Accord de partenariat transatlantique UE/États-Unis

De nombreux articles de presse et rapports d'experts signalent que le traité transatlantique en préparation, dont les négociations sont confidentielles, implique l'abolition de toutes les lois européennes et nationales des États membres contraires aux intérêts et aux normes du libéralisme.

Toutes les exigences et normes actuelles de l'Union européenne en matière de sécurité alimentaire seraient éliminées si elles font obstacle aux intérêts des multinationales. Il en va de même des lois réglementant le travail jugées trop contraignantes par ces mêmes multinationales: ces dernières ne seraient pas obligées de les respecter, et l'État membre qui souhaiterait en défendre l'application se retrouverait devant des tribunaux spécialement créés à cet effet et serait contraint de payer des millions d'euros en dommages et intérêts.

1. La Commission peut-elle confirmer ces affirmations?

2. Dans un souci de transparence, la Commission peut-elle fournir tous les échanges de courriers (lettres, courriels d'experts et autres) de préparation et de suivi d'un tel accord?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(16 mai 2014)

1. Les négociations sur le partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement n'entraîneront pas de changement de la législation de l'UE ni des États membres. Tous les investisseurs qui voudront s'établir dans l'UE devront respecter l'ensemble de la législation applicable dans le pays où ils effectuent leur investissement. De plus, un investisseur n'aura pas le droit de contester la législation européenne ou nationale sous prétexte qu'elle ne sert pas ses intérêts, parce que l'accès à un arbitrage international ne sera autorisé que dans un nombre de situations très limité et étroitement défini, telles que la discrimination, l'absence de procès équitable et l'expropriation sans indemnisation. Enfin, l'arbitrage n'est pas un nouveau procédé de règlement des différends entre particuliers et États souverains. Les États membres ont conclu depuis le début des années soixante plus de 1 400 accords d'investissement avec des pays tiers incluant des dispositions en matière de règlement des différends entre États et investisseurs, qui n'ont pas empêché l'adoption d'une législation ambitieuse de l'UE dans des domaines tels que la santé et la protection des consommateurs.

2. La Commission cherche à être aussi transparente que possible lorsqu'elle négocie et applique des accords commerciaux. Elle le fait en informant activement le public des négociations en cours, en publiant autant de documents et d'informations que possible et en écoutant un éventail aussi large que possible de groupes d'intérêt de toute l'Europe, tant au cours de la période qui précède les discussions que pendant le processus de négociation lui-même. Une fiche d'information récente sur la transparence du partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement fournit plus de renseignements ([1]).

Des experts externes et autres peuvent à tout moment donner leur avis à la Commission, et le font effectivement, ce qui l'aide à arrêter des positions qui prennent en considération un éventail d'intérêts aussi large que possible au sein de l'UE.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/march/tradoc_152276.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003632/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: EU-USA Transatlantic Partnership Agreement

A series of press articles and expert reports have been published claiming that, under the terms of the transatlantic agreement currently being negotiated behind closed doors, any EU or Member State laws that are not in keeping with free market principles and standards would have to be repealed.

Any current EU food safety requirements and standards which are at odds with the interests of multinationals would have to be sacrificed, as would any labour laws deemed too restrictive. Multinationals would simply not be required to comply with their provisions, and any Member State seeking to enforce them would find itself dragged before specially established tribunals and forced to pay millions of euros in damages.

1. Can the Commission confirm these claims?

2. In the interests of transparency, can the Commission make public all correspondence (letters, e-mails from experts and others) relating to the preparation and future enforcement of the agreement?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(16 May 2014)

1. Negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will not lead to a change of EU or Members States legislation. Any investor wishing to establish in the EU will have to comply with all legislation applicable in the State in which the investment is made. In addition, an investor would not be entitled to challenge EU or national legislation on the grounds that it does not serve his/her interests because access to international arbitration will be allowed only in a very limited and narrowly defined number of situations, such as discrimination, lack of due process and expropriation with no compensation. Finally, arbitration is not a novel way of resolving disputes between individuals and sovereign states. Member States have concluded since the early 1960s over 1 400 investment agreements with third countries that include investor-state dispute settlement provisions, without hindering the enactment of far-reaching EU legislation in areas such as health and consumer protection.

2. The Commission aims to be as transparent as possible as it negotiates and implements trade agreements. It does so by actively informing the public about on-going negotiations; by publishing as many documents and as much information as possible; and by listening to as wide as possible a range of interest groups from across Europe, both in the run-up to talks and during the negotiating process itself. A recent factsheet on transparency in TTIP provides more detail ([1]).

Outside experts and others can and do share their views with the Commission at any time. This helps the Commission form positions which take into account as wide a spectrum of EU interests as possible.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2014/march/tradoc_152276.pdf

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-003633/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 mars 2014)

Objet: Traité transatlantique UE-USA et label OGM

D'après certaines informations, la Chambre américaine de commerce et BusinessEurope ont appelé les négociateurs du traité transatlantique UE-USA à réunir autour d'une table de travail un échantillon de gros actionnaires et de responsables politiques afin qu'ils «rédigent ensemble les textes de régulation» qui auront ensuite force de loi aux États-Unis et dans l'Union européenne.

Les multinationales se montrent d'une remarquable franchise dans l'exposé de leurs intentions sur la question des OGM. Alors qu'aux États-Unis, un État sur deux envisage de rendre obligatoire un label indiquant la présence d'organismes génétiquement modifiés dans un aliment — une mesure souhaitée par 80 % des consommateurs du pays —, les industriels de l'agroalimentaire, là comme en Europe, poussent à l'interdiction de ce type d'étiquetage. L'association nationale des confiseurs n'y est pas allée par quatre chemins: «L'industrie américaine voudrait que l'[accord de partenariat transatlantique] avance sur cette question en supprimant la labellisation OGM et les normes de traçabilité».

L'association de l'industrie biotechnologique (Biotechnology Industry Organization, BIO), dont fait partie le géant Monsanto, s'indigne que des produits contenant des OGM et vendus aux États-Unis puissent essuyer un refus sur le marché européen. Ces multinationales ne cachent pas leur espoir que la zone de libre-échange transatlantique permette d'imposer enfin aux Européens leur «catalogue foisonnant de produits OGM en attente d'approbation et d'utilisation».

1. La Commission peut-elle confirmer ces affirmations?

2. Quels ont été les contacts de la Commission avec la Chambre américaine de commerce et BusinessEurope?

3. Dans un souci de transparence, la Commission peut-elle fournir tous les échanges de courriers (lettres, courriels d'experts et autres) avec la Chambre américaine de commerce et BusinessEurope et ses représentants?

Réponse donnée par M. De Gucht au nom de la Commission
(16 juin 2014)

Dans le cadre des négociations qui visent à la conclusion d'un partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement (TTIP), la Commission œuvre dans l'intérêt de l'Europe, et non dans celui de certaines associations d'entreprises américaines.

En ce qui concerne l'incidence des négociations sur les normes européennes en vigueur, y compris les normes alimentaires, la Commission tient à rappeler qu'elle a pris l'engagement de veiller à ce qu'aucune mesure de renforcement des flux d'échanges et d'investissement ne se fasse aux dépens des valeurs et des normes sur lesquelles se fonde l'UE et qu'aucune mesure de cette nature ne portera atteinte à son droit de faire passer les réglementations qu'elle considère utiles. L'UE ne procédera à aucun nivellement par le bas des normes de protection fixées par sa législation, du fait du TTIP. La Commission a déjà souligné à plusieurs reprises que les négociations portant sur le partenariat transatlantique n'entraîneront aucune modification de la législation de l'Union européenne sur la question des organismes génétiquement modifiés.

Quant à l'assertion de l'Honorable Parlementaire relative au fait de «réunir autour d'une table de travail un échantillon de gros actionnaires et de responsables politiques afin qu'ils rédigent ensemble les textes de régulation qui auront ensuite force de loi aux États-Unis et dans l'Union européenne», la Commission insiste sur le fait que la législation de l'UE est décidée conjointement par le Conseil de ministres et par le Parlement européen, sur proposition de la Commission, et que les négociations portant sur le partenariat transatlantique n'ont pas la capacité de modifier ce principe constitutionnel et ne le modifieront donc pas.

Les informations concernant les relations entre la Commission et les parties intéressées, notamment la Chambre de commerce des États-Unis et Business Europe, peuvent être rendues accessibles dans le respect du règlement (CE) n° 1049/2001 du 30 mai 2001 relatif à l'accès du public aux documents du Parlement européen, du Conseil et de la Commission.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003633/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: The EU-USA transatlantic treaty and the GMO label

According to some sources, the US Chamber of Commerce and BusinessEurope have called for the negotiators of the EU-USA transatlantic treaty to gather a representative group of major shareholders and policymakers around a table in order to 'co-write legislation' that would then have force of law in the United States and the European Union.

The multinationals have been remarkably candid in expressing their intentions on the question of GMOs. While in the US one in every two states intends to impose mandatory labelling indicating the presence of genetically modified organisms in a food item — a measure favoured by 80% of the country's consumers — agribusiness corporations both in the US and in Europe are pushing for this type of labelling to be quashed. The National Confectioners Association did not beat about the bush in stating that 'US industry also would like to see the [transatlantic partnership agreement] achieve progress in removing mandatory GMO labelling and traceability requirements'.

Biotechnology Industry Organisation (BIO), which includes US giant Monsanto, is outraged that products that contain GMOs and are sold in the United States may be refused on the European market. These multinationals make no secret of their desire for the transatlantic free-trade area to enable them to finally impose on Europeans their 'burgeoning backlog of GM products awaiting approval/processing'.

1. Can the Commission confirm these statements?

2. What contact has the Commission had with the US Chamber of Commerce and BusinessEurope?

3. In the interests of transparency, can the Commission produce all the correspondence (letters, emails from experts, etc.) that it has exchanged with the US Chamber of Commerce and BusinessEurope and their representatives?

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

While conducting negotiations for a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the Commission is accountable to the European interest and not to interests expressed by specific US business associations.

As regards the impact of the negotiations on existing EU standards, including food standards, the Commission would like to recall its commitment to ensure that progress in terms of enhanced trade and investment will not come at the expense of EU's fundamental values and standards of the EU and will be without prejudice to its right to regulate in the way it considers appropriate. The EU will not lower its standards of protection in its legislation as a result of TTIP. The Commission has already at several occasions stressed that the TTIP negotiations will not lead to a change of the EU legislation on Genetically Modified Organisms.

As regards the call referred to by the Honourable Member for 'gathering a group of shareholders and policymakers around a table in order to "co-write legislation" that would then have force of law in the United States and the European Union', the Commission wishes to point out that EU legislation is co-decided by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, upon proposal of the Commission and that the TTIP negotiations cannot and will not change this constitutional principle.

Information regarding the contacts between the Commission and all interested stakeholders, including the US Chamber of Commerce and Business Europe, can be made available in line with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003636/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Attentato nello Yemen

Un'agenzia internazionale di stampa ha riportato la morte di venti soldati yemeniti durante un attacco contro un checkpoint nella provincia di Hadramout. Si sospetta che a pianificare e porre in atto l'attacco siano stati militanti di al Qaeda nella penisola araba (AQAP), anche se non vi è stata alcuna rivendicazione ufficiale.

Lo Yemen è ancora in crisi a causa delle lotte contro i movimenti separatisti nel sud del paese e i gruppi ribelli stanziati nel nord, oltre a dover affrontare la minaccia terroristica di al Qaeda.

Può la Commissione chiarire se l'UE stia fornendo un sostegno, e di che genere, allo Yemen al fine di stabilizzare la situazione politica del paese?

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

L'UE ha copatrocinato l'iniziativa del Consiglio di cooperazione del Golfo, che ha permesso di avviare la fase di transizione nello Yemen, ed è uno dei partner più attivi del paese in questo processo. L'UE ha fornito sostegno sia al Dialogo nazionale, rivolgendosi a tutte le parti e chiedendo un'attuazione pacifica della transizione, sia al segretariato del Dialogo nazionale, per arrivare alle comunità locali di Taiz, Hodeida, Hadramaut e Aden attraverso dialoghi «locali», in alcuni casi anche con la partecipazione diretta dell'ambasciatore dell'UE. L'UE intende ora appoggiare il processo per la nuova costituzione (stesura e adozione tramite referendum) e le elezioni previste per il 2015.

Riconoscendo che la sicurezza rimane una delle sfide principali per la transizione yemenita, l'UE ha avviato un rapporto di cooperazione con il Ministero dell'interno in vista della sua riforma. A una prima revisione dell'organigramma, tra l'altro con l'introduzione della figura dell'ispettore generale, incaricato di combattere la corruzione e le violazioni dei diritti umani, dovrebbero seguire misure di più ampio respiro volte a creare un apparato di sicurezza civile legittimo e orientato ai servizi. Inoltre, le autorità yemenite continuano ad essere incluse, in qualità di partner principali, negli approcci a livello regionale per potenziare l'applicazione della legge e lottare contro il terrorismo e la pirateria.

Oltre a queste misure, l'UE collabora con le organizzazioni internazionali e della società civile per comprendere le radici dei conflitti locali, per sostenere i meccanismi tradizionali di risoluzione dei conflitti e per formare mediatori e intermediari locali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003636/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Attack in Yemen

An international press agency has reported the deaths of 20 Yemeni soldiers during an attack on a checkpoint in the governorate of Hadramaut. There has been no official claim of responsibility, but Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is suspected of having planned and carried out the attack.

Yemen is still in crisis due to its struggle against separatist movements in the south of the country and rebel groups based in the north. It also has to face the Al-Qaida terrorist threat.

Can the Commission explain whether the EU is providing support, and what kind, to Yemen to stabilise the country's political situation?

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

The EU co-sponsored the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative that initiated the Yemeni transition and is one of the most active partners of Yemen in this process. It has supported the National Dialogue, reaching out to all parties and urging for a peaceful implementation of the transition. The EU has also provided support to the National Dialogue secretariat to reach local communities in Taiz, Hodeida, Hadramaut and Aden by launching 'local dialogues', in some instances with the direct participation of the EU Ambassador. It now plans to support the new constitution process: drafting and adoption by referendum, and the elections planned in 2015.

Recognising that security remains one of the biggest challenges for the Yemeni transition, the EU has also initiated cooperation with the Ministry of Interior in view of its reform. The initial review of the organigramme and the creation of the position of an Inspector General to combat corruption and human rights abuses in this institution should be followed by broader measures to create a legitimate, service-oriented civil security apparatus. Additionally, regional approaches to enhance law enforcement and combat terrorism and piracy continue to include Yemeni authorities as key partners.

In addition to these measures, the EU has worked with civil society and international organisations to understand the roots of local conflicts, to support traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and to train community mediators and facilitators.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003637/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Dipendenza dalla rete come patologia

La scorsa settimana si è tenuto a Milano il primo congresso internazionale sui disturbi di dipendenza da Internet (Internet Addiction Disorders, IAD), il quale ha cercato di fare luce su un fenomeno in crescita, ma ancora poco conosciuto nei suoi aspetti medici: la dipendenza dalla rete. Si tratta di un disturbo multiforme, che può riguardare diversi aspetti della rete, come pornografia, gioco d'azzardo, o semplice incapacità di abbandonare lo schermo del computer.

Secondo gli esperti si tratta di una vera e propria dipendenza, in quanto si basa sugli stessi elementi su cui si fondano le dipendenze dalle classiche sostanze stupefacenti: soddisfazione immediata, facile, illusoriamente infinita. La rete viene vista dagli esperti (psicologi, sociologi, medici) come un luogo virtuale in cui le azioni hanno conseguenze materiali sulla vita degli individui, ma che, a differenza della «realtà offline», è priva di un confronto chiaro con i confini e le conseguenze che ne conseguono. Permettendo di eliminare i feedback negativi che arrivano da altri soggetti o «capitalizzando» amicizie e relazioni interpersonali (ad esempio accumulando quanti più «mi piace» possibile oppure cercando di aumentare il numero di sostenitori e amici sui social network), secondo alcuni esperti, rischiano di insorgere alcune patologie che comportano isolamento e ricerca di soddisfazione solitaria, come nel caso del disturbo noto come «hikikomori», che consiste in un isolamento sociale e una clausura quasi totale per almeno sei mesi, con casi che arrivano a durare decenni.

In merito a questo genere di disturbi, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Dispone di dati o studi scientifici specifici?

2. È a conoscenza di terapie per la cura della «dipendenza dalla rete»?

3. Dispone di dati in merito alla diffusione di questa patologia tra i cittadini europei?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

L'età dei giovani internauti si abbassa sempre di più. Internet è diventata parte integrante della vita di bambini e ragazzi, i quali trascorrono sempre più tempo online e questo inizia a sollevare alcuni interrogativi sulla loro capacità di autogestire l'uso della Rete.

Al fine di valutare in modo realistico in quale misura bambini e ragazzi fanno un uso eccessivo di internet, la Commissione ha finanziato uno studio approfondito, condotto nel 2012, sull'uso di internet e sui comportamenti dei minori europei che favoriscono la dipendenza da internet ([1]). Sono stati intervistati 13 284 adolescenti, di età compresa tra i 14 e i 17 anni, provenienti da 7 paesi europei. L'1,2 % di tutti gli intervistati mostra segni di dipendenza da internet ([2]). Dallo studio EU Kids Online ([3]), anch'esso finanziato dalla Commissione, è emerso che, sebbene il 29 % dei bambini abbia presentato almeno uno dei cinque indicatori ([4]) associati a un uso eccessivo di internet, soltanto l'1 % fa un uso della Rete che può essere ritenuto patologico. I risultati suggeriscono che i più vulnerabili all'uso eccessivo di internet e alle sue conseguenze negative sono i ragazzi più grandi, quelli che hanno difficoltà emotive e quelli che sono alla ricerca di sensazioni forti.

Le conclusioni di entrambi gli studi indicano che trascorrere tanto tempo online non sempre è segno di un uso problematico di internet. Gli studi raccomandano ai genitori di partecipare attivamente alle attività online dei loro figli attraverso il dialogo e il supporto.

La Commissione cofinanzia i centri «Internet più sicuro», presenti in tutti gli Stati membri, che sensibilizzano i più giovani, gli insegnanti e i genitori circa i possibili rischi ai quali sono esposti i ragazzi in Rete, fornendo loro gli strumenti per difendersi. I centri gestiscono inoltre un servizio telefonico di assistenza per ragazzi e genitori che fornisce consigli su come affrontare eventuali problemi che si presentano online.

([1]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/
([2]) La dipendenza da internet è definita come un modello comportamentale caratterizzato dalla perdita di controllo in relazione all'uso di internet. Tale dipendenza può portare ad isolarsi e a trascurare lo studio, le attività sociali e ricreative, l'igiene personale e la salute.
([3]) http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/47344/
([4]) Salienza, ripiegamento su se stessi, tolleranza, conflitto, ricaduta.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003637/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: When web dependence becomes an illness

Last week the first international conference on Internet Addiction Disorders (IADs) was held in Milan. The aim was to cast light on this growing phenomenon, about which little medical knowledge yet exists. The disorder comes in many forms and may involve various aspects of the Internet, such as pornography, games of chance or a simple inability to get up from the computer screen.

Experts (psychologists, sociologists and doctors) believe this is a genuine addition based on the same factors as conventional drugs: instant, easy and apparently limitless satisfaction. These experts view the Internet as a virtual place, where actions do have material consequences in the lives of individuals. However, unlike offline reality, there is no clear measurement of boundaries, with the consequences that derive from this, and no negative feedback from other people. Instead, it is possible to 'capitalise' on friendships and interpersonal relations (e.g. collecting as many 'likes' as possible or trying to increase numbers of supporters and friends on social networks). Some experts perceive these factors as potential causes of illnesses involving isolation and solitary seeking of satisfaction. One example is the disorder known as hikikomori, which consists of social isolation and near-total withdrawal for at least six months and, in some cases, for decades.

1. Can the Commission provide specific data or scientific studies about this type of disorder?

2. Does it know of therapies to treat 'web dependence'?

3. Can it provide figures on the spread of this illness among European citizens?

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

Children are going online younger and younger. The Internet has become an integral part of children and young people's lives. The increased time spent online is prompting questions about whether they are in control of their Internet usage.

In order to be able to assess realistically to what extent children and young people use the Internet excessively, the Commission funded an extensive study on the Internet use and Internet addictive behaviour of minors in Europe ([1]). The study from 2012 surveyed 13 284 adolescents, aged 14 to 17, from 7 European countries. Of all those surveyed, 1.2% showed signs of Internet Addictive Behaviour (IAB) ([2]). The EU Kids Online study ([3]), also funded by the Commission, showed that while 29% of children experienced one or more of the five components ([4]) associated with excessive Internet use, only 1% can be said to show pathological levels of use. The results suggest that those children who are most vulnerable to excessive Internet use and its negative consequences are those who are older, have emotional problems and exhibit high levels of sensation-seeking.

Conclusions from both studies show that spending a lot of time online is not necessarily a sign of a child having problems related to Internet use. The studies recommend that parents involve themselves actively in their child's online activities through support and discussion.

Safer Internet Centres in all Member States, co-funded by the Commission, raise awareness among children, teachers and parents, regarding online risks and empower them to deal with these risks. The Centres run helplines for children and parents if they need advice on any issue they face online.

([1]) http://www.eunetadb.eu/en/
([2]) IAB is defined as a behavioural pattern characterised by a loss of control over Internet use. IAB can lead potentially to isolation and neglect of social, academic and recreational activities or personal hygiene and health.
([3]) http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/47344/
([4]) Salience, withdrawal, tolerance, conflict, relapse.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003638/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Falsi autovelox in Italia

Negli ultimi anni in Italia hanno avuto larga diffusione i cosiddetti «falsi autovelox», grossi cilindri arancioni sistemati a bordo strada che simulano, a scopo deterrente, la presenza di rilevatori di velocità delle autovetture in transito. Critiche contro questi strumenti sono state mosse diverse volte in Italia, da più parti, ma la Polizia di Stato ha risposto che non esiste una normativa italiana che ne vieti l'utilizzo, in quanto non sono inquadrabili in alcuna delle categorie di dispositivo o di segnaletica previste dal vigente Codice della strada e quindi non sono suscettibili di omologazione né di approvazione o autorizzazione.

Alcuni critici sostengono inoltre che la loro presenza possa rappresentare un pericolo per gli automobilisti, in quanto ostacolo fisso a bordo strada.

1. Può la Commissione chiarire se l'installazione di tali dispositivi a bordo strada può essere oggetto di violazioni di disposizioni del diritto unionale in merito alla sicurezza stradale?

2. È la Commissione a conoscenza di altri Stati membri dove questi dispositivi fissi siano abitualmente utilizzati come deterrente contro l'eccesso di velocità? Può far sapere se tali paesi hanno riscontrato le stesse critiche che sono mosse in Italia e come hanno reagito le autorità di governo all'eventuale problema?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(29 aprile 2014)

1. Non esiste una legislazione dell'UE che stabilisca regole specifiche per quanto riguarda la progettazione e l'uso di telecamere o rilevatori di velocità. La fissazione di tali regole è, in linea di principio, di competenza degli Stati membri interessati.

2. La Commissione non è al corrente di un problema analogo negli altri Stati membri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003638/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Dummy speed cameras in Italy

In recent years there has been a large increase in Italy of the so-called 'dummy speed cameras', large, orange cylinders located at the roadside which simulate the presence of vehicle speed detectors, in order to act as a deterrent. This equipment has been repeatedly criticised in Italy by various parties, but the State Police has responded that its use is not prohibited by Italian legislation, since it does not fall within any of the categories of apparatus or signage covered by the current Highway Code and therefore is not subject to standardisation, and does not require approval or authorisation.

Some critics also maintain that its presence may be a danger to drivers, being a fixed roadside obstacle.

1. Can the Commission clarify whether the installation of these roadside devices may be an infringement of Community road safety legislation?

2. Is the Commission aware of any other Member States in which these fixed devices are regularly used as a deterrent to driving over the speed limit? Can it advise whether such countries have faced the same criticisms voiced in Italy and how government authorities have dealt with the problem?

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

1. There is no EU legislation that specifies rules concerning the design and use of speed cameras or detectors. The decision to set such rules lies in principle in the competence of the Member States concerned.

2. The Commission is not aware of the problems, as described by the Honourable Members, in the other Member States.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003639/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Focolaio di febbre emorragica in Guinea

In Guinea è esplosa un'epidemia di Ebola, virus che causa una febbre emorragica gravissima e talvolta inguaribile. Su ottanta casi dichiarati, 59 persone hanno perso la vita. A preoccupare le autorità è soprattutto il fatto che il virus si è diffuso a partire da aree isolate, fino a raggiungere la capitale.

È già scattato l'allarme internazionale per cercare di arginare l'epidemia: diverse agenzie internazionali e ONG stanno inviando personale medico e medicinali per fronteggiare l'emergenza.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. è a conoscenza della crisi?

2. Sta inviando sostegno medico alle autorità del paese africano?

3. Ha informazioni relative alle origini di questa nuova diffusione nel paese?

4. Ha motivo di ritenere concreto il rischio che il virus possa in qualche modo raggiungere il continente europeo?

Risposta di Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(12 maggio 2014)

La Commissione è stata informata il 21 marzo che una febbre emorragica sospetta in Guinea era all'origine del virus Ebola e ha iniziato immediatamente a monitorare la crisi. Finora l'epidemia ha colpito solo la Guinea e la Liberia. I casi sospetti in altri paesi dell'Africa occidentale si sono rivelati negativi.

La Commissione ha erogato 1,4 milioni di EUR, provenienti dalla sua dotazione di bilancio per gli aiuti umanitari, a favore di Médecins Sans Frontières, dell'OMS e della Croce Rossa e ha inviato nella regione tre esperti umanitari incaricati di coadiuvare le valutazioni e il coordinamento. La DG Sviluppo della Commissione ha finanziato un laboratorio mobile attualmente operativo in Guinea. Il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie (ECDC) ha distaccato esperti presso la squadra dell'OMS in loco.

Dal 28 marzo si tengono regolarmente riunioni interistituzionali di coordinamento e condivisione delle informazioni sotto l'egida del Centro di coordinamento della risposta alle emergenze della Commissione, che ha anche elaborato aggiornamenti periodici delle informazioni. L'UE ha inoltre partecipato a riunioni di coordinamento locali.

Il virus Ebola si trasmette notoriamente attraverso i pipistrelli e i primati, ma il contagio tra esseri umani richiede un contratto strettissimo. Il rischio che l'epidemia si estenda all'Europa è basso. Le compagnie aeree e i porti di entrata e di uscita europei interessati hanno adottato misure precauzionali. Le disposizioni della decisione 1082/2013/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio relativa alle gravi minacce per la salute a carattere transfrontaliero consentono di dare una risposta coerente a livello di Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003639/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Outbreak of haemorrhagic fever in Guinea

There has been a sudden epidemic of Ebola in Guinea, a virus which causes a very serious haemorrhagic fever which is sometimes untreatable. Of the 80 declared cases, 59 people have lost their lives. The authorities are especially worried that the virus has spread from isolated areas to the capital.

An international alarm has been raised in an effort to contain the epidemic. Various international agencies and NGOs are sending medical personnel and medicines to tackle the emergency.

1. Is the Commission aware of the crisis?

2. Is it sending medical support to the Guinean authorities?

3. Does it have information on the origins of this new outbreak in Guinea?

4. Does it have reason to believe that there is a definite risk of the virus somehow reaching the European continent?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(12 May 2014)

The Commission was made aware that a suspicious haemorrhagic fever in Guinea was caused by the Ebola virus on 21 March and immediately started monitoring the crisis. So far the outbreak has only affected Guinea and Liberia. Suspected cases in other West African countries have tested negative.

The Commission has provided EUR 1.4 million from its humanitarian budget to Medecins Sans Frontieres, the WHO and the Red Cross. It has also deployed three humanitarian experts to the region to assist with assessments and coordination. The Commission's development department funded a mobile laboratory which is now operational in Guinea. The European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) has seconded experts to the WHO field team.

Inter-institution information sharing and coordination meetings have been held regularly since 28 March under the auspices of Commission's Emergency Response Coordination Centre that has also produced regular information updates. The EU has also participated in local coordination meetings.

Bats and primates are known reservoirs for Ebola but human-to-human contagion requires very close contact. The risk of spread to Europe is low. Concerned European airlines and ports of exit and entry have taken precautionary measures. Provisions under Decision 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on serious cross border threats to health allow a consistent response at EU level.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003640/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovo attentato in Nigeria

Un nuovo attentato del gruppo terroristico *Boko Haram* ha causato la morte di circa una ventina di persone, nel nord della Nigeria, nei pressi di Bama. Alcuni miliziani hanno lanciato una granata in un mercato affollato causando un'esplosione in mezzo alle persone che si trovavano nella zona.

In tutto, le violenze del gruppo terroristico hanno causato oltre seimila vittime negli ultimi 6 anni, un bilancio terribile che ha coinvolto anche cittadini stranieri.

La Commissione dispone di ulteriori informazioni relative all'attacco? È a conoscenza dell'eventuale coinvolgimento di cittadini europei tra le vittime e/o i feriti?

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

Le ripetute violenze in diverse parti della Nigeria destano grande preoccupazione.

Le informazioni ottenute dall'AR/VP sugli attacchi perpetrati nei dintorni di Bama, nella Nigeria settentrionale, si limitano a quanto riferito dalla stampa, poiché per il momento è difficile recarsi nei tre Stati del nord-est in cui vige lo stato di emergenza.

All'AR/VP non risulta che tra i morti e/o i feriti vi siano cittadini europei.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003640/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: New attack in Nigeria

Another attack by the terrorist group Boko Haram has caused around 20 deaths near Barma in Northern Nigeria. Armed men fired a grenade into a crowded market, causing an explosion in the midst of the crowd.

In total, more than 6 000 people have been victims of violence by this terrorist group in the past six years, a terrible record which also includes foreign citizens.

Does the Commission have further information about this attack? Is it aware of any European citizens among the dead and/or injured?

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

The continued violence in several parts of Nigeria is of great concern.

The information obtained by the HR/VP on the attacks around Bama in Northern Nigeria does not go beyond reports from the press since it is difficult to visit the three North Eastern states under emergency for the time being.

To our knowledge, no European citizen was amongst the dead and/or injured.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003641/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Proposta di spartizione dell'Ucraina da parte del partito liberaldemocratico russo

I media polacchi riferiscono che il ministero degli Esteri polacco ha ricevuto una lettera ufficiale dal partito liberaldemocratico russo in cui si propone la spartizione del territorio ucraino tra i due paesi. Lo scorporamento dell'Ucraina dovrebbe avvenire tramite un referendum in cui si domanda agli abitanti di cinque regioni occidentali del paese (Volyn, Lvov, Ivano-Frankovsk, Ternopoli e Rovenskoj) se vogliano separarsi dall'Ucraina per aderire alla Polonia.

Secondo una rete televisiva polacca, suggerimenti simili sarebbero arrivati anche alle ambasciate ungherese e rumena, in relazione all'annessione della Transcarpazia e della regione di Chernivtsi.

Il portavoce del ministero polacco ha affermato che la Polonia non prenderà in seria considerazione la proposta, mentre dalla Russia giungono voci che sottolineano che non si tratterebbe di una spartizione del territorio, bensì di un ritorno alla situazione precedente alla creazione dell'Ucraina da parte dell'Urss.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. ritiene che la proposta del partito liberaldemocratico russo possa rappresentare un campanello d'allarme per la sicurezza e la stabilità politica dell'Europa orientale?

2. Ha discusso la questione con gli Stati membri interessati?

3. Non teme che la lettera possa costituire il preludio di un'ulteriore crisi nella regione?

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

La proposta non è stata presentata ufficialmente dalle autorità russe e il partito liberaldemocratico non è un partito di governo in Russia. Alla riunione svoltasi il 16 aprile a Ginevra, cui partecipavano l'Alta Rappresentante e i ministi degli Affari esteri della Russia, dell'Ucraina e degli Stati Uniti, tutte le parti hanno stabilito di comune accordo misure concrete iniziali volte a ridurre le tensioni e a ripristinare la sicurezza per tutti i cittadini e hanno sottolineato l'importanza della stabilità economica e finanziaria in Ucraina ([1]).

Come ribadito nelle conclusioni del Consiglio Affari esteri del 14 aprile, l'Unione europea sostiene fermamente l'unità, la sovranità, l'indipendenza e l'integrità territoriale dell'Ucraina ed esorta la Russia a fare altrettanto ripudiando gli ultimi atti illegali nell'Ucraina orientale e a contribuire a stabilizzare la situazione ([2]). L'UE condanna energicamente l'annessione illegale della Crimea e di Sebastopoli alla Federazione russa e non la riconosce. Inoltre, l'UE accoglie con favore l'adozione della risoluzione dell'Assemblea generale delle Nazioni Unite n. 68/262.

Eventuali altri atti della Federazione russa finalizzati a destabilizzare la situazione in Ucraina determinerebbero ulteriori gravi conseguenze per le relazioni tra l'Unione europea e i suoi Stati membri da una parte e la Federazione russa dall'altra in un'ampia gamma di settori economici.

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142223.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003641/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Proposal by Russian Liberal Democratic Party to partition Ukraine

The Polish media have reported that the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs has received an official letter from the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia proposing the division of Ukraine between the two countries. The dismantling of Ukraine would come about by means of a referendum in which the inhabitants of the five western regions of the country (Volyn, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil and Rivne) would be asked whether they wish to leave Ukraine and join Poland.

According to a Polish television channel, similar suggestions have also been received by the Hungarian and Romanian embassies, in relation to the annexing of Transcarpatia and the Chernivtsi region.

A spokesman for the Polish ministry has confirmed that Poland will not give this proposal serious consideration, whereas rumours are circulating in Russia that this would not be a partition of the territory but a return to the situation prior to the creation of Ukraine by the USSR.

In view of the foregoing,

1. Does the Commission consider that the proposal by the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia may be a warning signal for the security and political stability of Eastern Europe?

2. Has the Commission discussed this matter with the Member States concerned?

3. Does the Commission fear that the letter may be the prelude to a further crisis in the region?

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

This is not a proposal tabled officially by the Russian authorities and the Liberal Democratic Party is not Russia's governing party. In the 16 April Geneva meeting between the High Representative and the foreign ministers of Russia, Ukraine and the US, all parties agreed on initial concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and restore security for all citizens and underlined the importance of economic and financial stability in Ukraine ([1]).

As reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 14 April, the EU strongly supports Ukraine's unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and calls upon Russia to do likewise and to repudiate the latest lawless acts in Eastern Ukraine and to contribute to stabilise the situation ([2]). The EU strongly condemns the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol to the Russian Federation and will not recognise it. The EU welcomes the adoption of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly No 68/262.

Any further steps by the Russian Federation to destabilise the situation in Ukraine would lead to additional and far reaching consequences for relations in a broad range of economic areas between the European Union and its Member States, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other hand.

([1]) http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140417_01_en.pdf
([2]) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/142223.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-003642/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Tensioni tra Siria e Turchia

I ribelli siriani del Fronte Islamico hanno annunciato l'eliminazione del capo delle forze paramilitari siriane, cugino del premier siriano, facendo esplodere un missile contro un'abitazione in cui egli si trovava. L'uomo era il fondatore delle milizie civili che affiancano l'esercito regolare di Damasco in una serie di dure operazioni militari, milizie accusate più volte dall'Onu di crimini di guerra. I mezzi di comunicazione vicini a Damasco hanno accusato la Turchia di sostenere le azioni dei ribelli, dichiarando che diversi cittadini siriani testimoniano la presenza di carri armati e aerei turchi a sostegno degli insorti.

La notizia giunge quasi in contemporanea con l'abbattimento di un velivolo militare siriano da parte di alcuni caccia turchi, notizia che è stata confermata dallo stesso premier di Ankara.

In merito a questi eventi, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se ritiene che il confine tra Turchia e Siria possa divenire teatro di un conflitto simmetrico tra i due paesi;

2. se dispone di informazioni concrete e aggiornate relativamente al presunto sostegno della Turchia alle forze di opposizione siriane e alla presenza di forze armate turche in territorio siriano;

3. quali siano i progressi dei negoziati internazionali sul conflitto civile siriano?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente mantiene contatti regolari con la Turchia. Anche se in una situazione di guerra civile in un paese limitrofo vi è sempre un rischio concreto che si sviluppi un conflitto regionale, l'impegno militare della Turchia nei confronti del regime siriano, di cui nell'interrogazione, è stato minimo e conforme al diritto internazionale.

La Turchia ha sempre sostenuto l'opposizione siriana e ospita il quartier generale della coalizione nazionale delle forze siriane di opposizione.

L'UE continua ad appoggiare una soluzione politica del conflitto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003642/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Tension between Syria and Turkey

Syrian rebels from the Islamic Front have announced that they have killed the head of the Syrian paramilitary forces, a cousin of the Syrian President, in a missile strike on a house where he was staying. He was the founder of the civilian militia groups which are supporting the Syrian regular army in a series of difficult military operations and which have repeatedly been accused by the UN of perpetrating war crimes. Media outlets close to the Damascus regime have accused Turkey of backing the rebels, claiming that a number of Syrian citizens have seen Turkish armoured vehicles and aircraft supporting the insurgents.

At almost the same time, news emerged of the downing of a Syrian military aircraft by Turkish fighter jets, which has since been confirmed by the Turkish Prime Minister.

In the light of these events:

1. Does the Commission consider that the border between Turkey and Syria may become a theatre of war between the two countries?

2. Does the Commission have any specific, up-to-date information which corroborates or otherwise the claims that Turkey is supporting the Syrian opposition forces and that Turkish armed forces are present on Syrian soil?

3. What progress has been made in the international negotiations designed to bring an end to the civil war in Syria?

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

The HR/VP is in regular contact with Turkey. While the danger of regional conflict is always real in the situation of civil war in a neighbouring country, Turkish limited military engagement *vis-à-vis* the Syrian regime as quoted in the question has been minimal and in line with international law.

Turkey has been consistently supporting the Syrian opposition and hosts the headquarters of the Syrian Opposition Coalition.

The EU continues to support a political settlement of the conflict.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-003643/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(25 maart 2014)

Betreft: Onderzoek naar ongeoorloofde staatssteun in de auto-industrie

Plastic Omnium Automotive had een Belgische tak in Herentals, die vorig jaar de deuren moest sluiten. Het bedrijf vervaardigde auto-onderdelen, voornamelijk bumpers, die werden afgeleverd aan onder meer autofabrikant Vauxhall, een dochteronderneming van General Motors in het Verenigd Koninkrijk.

Het Britse bedrijf Vauxhall zou van de Britse overheid subsidies gekregen hebben voor de productie van een specifiek model auto, maar met als voorwaarde dat ook de onderdelen voor dat model in het Verenigd Koninkrijk gefabriceerd worden. Dit zou dan de doorslaggevende reden geweest zijn om de productie van de bumpers te verhuizen van België naar Groot-Brittannië.

Het verlenen van staatssteun is in bepaalde gevallen toegelaten, maar het lijkt in dit geval toch om illegale staatssteun te gaan die de interne EU-markt ernstig verstoort. De Europese auto-industrie is al enkele jaren in crisis. Daarom is een correcte werking van de interne markt bijzonder belangrijk en is het aan de Commissie om de naleving van de mededingingsregels nauwgezet te controleren.

Vandaar volgende vragen aan de Commissie:

1. Is de Commissie op de hoogte van dit dossier? Kan de Commissie haar opinie geven over deze zaak?

2. Is de Commissie, als hoedster van het Europees Verdrag, bezig met het onderzoeken van de toegekende fondsen vanuit de Britse overheid aan het bedrijf in kwestie? Is de Commissie van mening dat het hier om ongeoorloofde staatssteun gaat?

3. Is de Commissie van plan om, zodra bewezen dat er vanuit de Britse overheid ongeoorloofde staatssteun werd toegekend, actie te ondernemen tegen Groot-Brittannië?

Antwoord van de heer Almunia namens de Commissie
(12 mei 2014)

Naar aanleiding van parlementaire vraag E-004322/2013 heeft de Commissie ambtshalve een onderzoek ingesteld naar mogelijke onrechtmatige staatssteun aan Vauxhall Ellesmere Port (d.w.z. General Motors UK Limited).

Volgens de informatie van de Britse autoriteiten heeft General Motors UK Limited inderdaad staatssteun ontvangen op basis van een goedgekeurde regeling (SA 32538 (X/11) Regional Growth Fund Scheme PB C 110 van 8.4.2011, blz. 67 ([1])).

Op 8 februari 2011 werd de Commissie van deze regeling in kennis gesteld op basis van artikel 9 van Verordening (EG) nr. 800/2008 van de Commissie van 6 augustus 2008 waarbij bepaalde categorieën steun op grond van de artikelen 87 en 88 van het Verdrag met de gemeenschappelijke markt verenigbaar worden verklaard (algemene groepsvrijstellingsverordening).

Bovendien verklaarden de Britse autoriteiten dat General Motors UK Limited niet verplicht is om alle auto-onderdelen te laten leveren door ondernemingen die in het Verenigd Koninkrijk gevestigd zijn.

Gezien het bovenstaande hebben de diensten van de Commissie geconcludeerd dat de steun aan General Motors UK Limited aan de voorwaarden voor algemene groepsvrijstelling voldoet. Bijgevolg gaat het om steun die verenigbaar is met de interne markt en is vrijgesteld van de verplichting tot aanmelding bij de Commissie.

Op basis van het voorgaande werd het ambtshalve ingesteld onderzoek afgesloten.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:110:0067:0073:NL:PDF.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003643/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Investigation into unlawful state aid in the car industry

Plastic Omnium Automotive used to have a Belgian branch in Herentals, which had to close down last year. The business was manufacturing car components, mainly bumpers, which were supplied *inter alia* to car manufacturer Vauxhall, a United Kingdom subsidiary of General Motors.

The British business Vauxhall is said to have received British Government subsidies for the production of a specific model of car, but on condition that the components for that model should also be manufactured in the UK. This was apparently the main reason why the production of bumpers was transferred from Belgium to the UK.

State aid is permitted in certain cases, but in the circumstances described it may reasonably be assumed that the state aid was illegal and seriously distorted the EU internal market. The European car industry has already been in crisis for some years. Correct functioning of the internal market is therefore particularly important, and it is up to the Commission to monitor observance of competition rules closely.

1. Is the Commission aware of this case? Can the Commission state an opinion on it?

2. As guardian of the Treaty, is the Commission investigating the funds granted by the British Government to the business concerned? Does the Commission consider this to be an instance of unlawful state aid?

3. As soon as it is proven that the British Government provided state aid unlawfully, will the Commission take action against the United Kingdom?

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

Following Parliamentary Question E-004322/2013, the Commission investigated within the framework of an '*ex officio*' case whether unlawful state aid had been provided to Vauxhall Ellesmere Port (i.e. General Motors UK Limited).

In view of the information provided by the UK authorities, General Motors UK Limited did indeed receive a state aid grant on the basis of an approved scheme (SA.32538 (X/11) Regional Growth Fund Scheme, OJ C 110, 8.4.2011, p.67 ([1])).

The scheme was forwarded to the Commission on 8 February 2011 on the basis of Article 9 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 of 6 August 2008 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty (General Block Exemption Regulation).

In addition, the UK authorities explained that there is no obligation imposed on General Motors UK Limited to have all car components supplied by companies based in the UK.

In view of the above, the Commission services concluded that the provision of the grant to General Motors UK Limited was made on the basis of the block-exempted scheme. It therefore constitutes aid compatible with the internal market and is exempt from the notification requirement to the Commission.

On the basis of the above, the '*ex officio*' case has been closed.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:110:0067:0073:EN:PDF

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-003644/14
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(25 maart 2014)

Betreft: Derogatie voor Nederland bij nitraatrichtlijn

De Europese Commissie en de Nederlandse regering hebben vrijwel overeenstemming bereikt over het verlenen van derogatie voor Nederland voor het uitrijden van 230 of 250 kilogram stikstof uit dierlijke mest per hectare in plaats van de in de nitraatrichtlijn vastgestelde 170 kg.

Volgens staatssecretaris Dijksma is een voorwaarde die de Commissie daarbij gesteld zou hebben dat de Tweede Kamer in Nederland in moet stemmen met het voorlopig (in ieder geval voor de periode 2014-2017) handhaven van dierrechten voor varkens en pluimvee en akkoord moet gaan met een wettelijk stelsel dat verantwoorde ontwikkeling van de melkveehouderij borgt.

1. Stelt de Commissie inderdaad deze voorwaarden aan derogatie voor Nederland?

2. Is het systeem van dierrechten het enige systeem dat Nederland kan inzetten om derogatie te verkrijgen?

3. Is de Commissie van mening dat een passend pakket van alternatieven (bv. borging van een fosfaatplafond per sector, een monitoringssysteem om de fosfaatproductie te beoordelen en het inzetten op bronmaatregelen zoals het veevoerspoor) dat hetzelfde doel bereikt had ook tot het verlenen van derogatie had kunnen leiden?

4. Stelt de Commissie als voorwaarde dat het systeem van dierrechten behouden moet blijven tot ten minste 2017? Zo ja, zouden door Nederland voorgedragen passende alternatieven die hetzelfde doel zouden bereiken, het systeem van dierrechten eerder kunnen laten beëindigen?

5. Wat zegt het vele aantal derogaties voor de nitraatrichtlijn volgens de Commissie over de werkbaarheid van deze wetgeving? Overweegt de Commissie herziening van de regelgeving?

6. Als Denemarken derogatie verkrijgt zonder het gebruik van dierrechten, zou dat dan ook voor Nederland mogelijk moeten zijn?

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(23 april 2014)

De nitratenrichtlijn ([1]) voorziet in de mogelijkheid om af te wijken van het maximum van 170 kg stikstof per hectare per jaar uit dierlijke mest, op voorwaarde dat aan bepaalde objectieve criteria in bijlage III bij die richtlijn wordt voldaan en dat de vastgestelde hoeveelheden geen afbreuk doen aan de verwezenlijking van de doelstellingen van de richtlijn. Afwijkingen worden verleend bij besluit van de Commissie, na advies van het Nitraatcomité, dat de Commissie bijstaat bij de uitvoering van de richtlijn.

De Commissie zal tijdens de volgende vergadering van het Nitraatcomité een voorstel voor een afwijking voor Nederland in stemming brengen.

De voorgestelde voorwaarden voor deze afwijking bouwen voort op de voorwaarden van voorgaande afwijkingen en de voorschriften van het vijfde Nederlandse actieprogramma, en zijn toegesneden op de Nederlandse waterkwaliteit.

De voorgestelde afwijking bevat een voorwaarde om de dierproductierechten tijdens de volledige looptijd van de afwijking te behouden. Deze maatregel werd noodzakelijk geacht om verontreiniging bij de bron in Nederland te voorkomen

Voorbeelden van objectieve criteria waarnaar in de richtlijn worden verwezen zijn landbouwkundige behoeften en de bodem- en klimaatgesteldheid. Bijgevolg moet het aantal verleende afwijkingen eerder worden geïnterpreteerd in het licht van bodem- en klimaatverschillen, dan in het oogpunt van de werkbaarheid van de wettekst.

Voor Denemarken gelden dezelfde overwegingen. De voorwaarden van de afwijking waarvan het profiteert zijn op de specifieke situatie afgestemd.

([1]) Richtlijn 91/676/EEG van de Raad van 12 december 1991 inzake de bescherming van water tegen verontreiniging door nitraten uit agrarische bronnen — PB L 375 van 31.12.1991.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003644/14
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Derogation from the Nitrates Directive for the Netherlands

The Commission and the Netherlands Government have virtually reached agreement on the granting to the Netherlands of a derogation to allow 230 or 250 kg of nitrogen from manure to be spread on farmland per hectare rather than the 170 kg permitted by the Nitrates Directive.

According to State Secretary Dijksma, one condition which the Commission has attached to this is that the Netherlands House of Representatives must agree to the temporary continuation (at least for the period 2014-2017) of the system of tradable livestock production permits for pigs and poultry, and must agree to a statutory system to ensure responsible development of dairy farming.

1. Is the Commission indeed attaching these conditions to a derogation for the Netherlands?

2. Is the system of livestock production permits the only system that the Netherlands can apply in order to obtain a derogation?

3. Does the Commission consider that an appropriate package of alternatives which would have achieved the same aim (e.g. a guaranteed phosphate ceiling for each sector, a monitoring system to assess phosphate production and the application of measures at source such as reducing phosphate levels in animal feed) could also have led to the granting of a derogation?

4. Is the Commission imposing the condition that the livestock production permits system must be retained until at least 2017? If so, would it be possible to abandon this system earlier if the Netherlands proposed appropriate alternatives which would achieve the same aim?

5. In view of the numerous derogations from the Nitrates Directive, what conclusions can be drawn regarding its workability? Is the Commission considering reviewing it?

6. If Denmark is securing a derogation without using a livestock production permit system, ought the same to be possible for the Netherlands as well?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(23 April 2014)

The Nitrates Directive ([1]) envisages the possibility to derogate from the maximum amount of 170 kg of nitrogen per hectare per year from livestock manure, provided that objective criteria set in Annex III to the directive are met and that the derogated amounts do not prejudice the achievement of the directive objectives. Derogations are granted by means of a Commission Decision, following the opinion of the Nitrates Committee, which assists the Commission in the implementation of the directive.

The Commission will submit to vote a proposal for a derogation for the Netherlands in the next meeting of the Nitrates Committee.

The conditions proposed for this derogation build upon the conditions of previous derogations, the requirements of the Dutch fifth Action Programme and are tailored to the water quality in the Netherlands.

The proposed derogation does include a condition to maintain the animal production rights for the full duration of the derogation. This measure was deemed necessary to prevent pollution at source in the Netherlands.

Examples of objective criteria referred to in the directive are agronomic needs, soil and climatic conditions. Hence the number of derogations granted needs to be interpreted in light of soil and climatic variability rather than in terms of practicability of the legal text.

The same considerations were made for Denmark. The derogation conditions which it benefits from are suited to its specific case.

([1]) Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources — OJ L 375, 31.12.1991.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-003645/14
alla Commissione
Giovanni Barbagallo (S&D)
(25 marzo 2014)

Oggetto: Flussi migratori in Sicilia

Considerato quanto segue:

negli ultimi giorni gli sbarchi di immigrati a Lampedusa e in numerose altre località e porti siciliani sono ripresi in maniera molto intensa: 8.500 sbarchi in Italia dall'inizio del 2014. Un dato 10 volte superiore a quello registrato nello stesso periodo 2013;

la situazione politica fortemente instabile in Libia lascia inoltre prevedere che, col migliorare delle condizioni climatiche, questi flussi si rafforzeranno ulteriormente e, mantenendo i ritmi attuali, si supereranno di gran lunga i 43.000 sbarchi dello scorso anno;

il 3 ottobre scorso centinaia di migranti sono morti al largo delle coste di Lampedusa dopo il naufragio dell'imbarcazione sulla quale cercavano di raggiungere il territorio italiano, ma l'impatto dei flussi migratori nel Mediterraneo interessa numerose località e porti siciliani;

pochi giorni dopo, il 10 ottobre 2013, il Parlamento europeo ha approvato in via definitiva il nuovo sistema europeo di sorveglianza delle frontiere EUROSUR;

a inizio dicembre 2013 la Commissione europea ha stanziato 50 milioni di euro, di cui 30 destinati all'Italia, per finanziare iniziative in grado di rafforzare la solidarietà e l'assistenza tra Stati membri per salvare la vita ai migranti in pericolo nel Mediterraneo;

poche settimane dopo, le immagini del trattamento riservato agli immigrati nel centro di prima accoglienza di Lampedusa hanno scatenato forti polemiche internazionali e la Commissaria Malmström ha pubblicamente fatto riferimento a un'indagine avviata per verificare che gli standard europei nel ricevimento di migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati fossero rispettati dalle autorità italiane;

può la Commissione far sapere:

come si stanno sviluppando le operazioni di sorveglianza aerea e marittima del Mediterraneo coordinate dall'agenzia FRONTEX;

come si sta implementando il nuovo sistema europeo di sorveglianza delle frontiere EUROSUR;

quali risultati ha dato l'indagine avviata in merito alle condizioni di ricevimento di migranti, richiedenti asilo e rifugiati da parte delle autorità italiane;

come sta procedendo il lavoro della task force approvata dal Consiglio europeo di ottobre?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(2 maggio 2014)

In seguito al tragico incidente avvenuto il 3 ottobre 2013 nei pressi di Lampedusa, è stato disposto un potenziamento delle operazioni congiunte già in corso nel Mediterraneo fino alla fine del marzo 2014, allo scopo di permettere una rapida individuazione delle imbarcazioni con migranti a bordo e di impedire che avvenissero altri decessi in mare. Le operazioni marittime coordinate da Frontex saranno presto disciplinate da un nuovo regolamento in corso di adozione da parte dei colegislatori, che comprende disposizioni in materia di intercettazione, ricerca e salvataggio e sbarco. Dall'inizio dell'aprile 2014 Frontex svolge le operazioni secondo il suo programma di lavoro e discute con gli Stati membri su eventuali nuove esigenze.

Il 2 dicembre 2013 il sistema EUROSUR è divenuto operativo in 19 Stati membri, a cui seguiranno entro la fine di quest'anno gli altri 11 Stati membri e i paesi associati. Di conseguenza, lo scambio d'informazioni e la cooperazione tra le autorità nazionali competenti per la sorveglianza delle frontiere sono notevolmente migliorati, sia all'interno di vari Stati membri che tra di essi.

Un gruppo di rappresentanti della Commissione si è recato a gennaio a Lampedusa e al centro di accoglienza di Foggia. Sono state espresse alle autorità italiane varie preoccupazioni sulla qualità dell'accoglienza fornita e sui rischi di sovraffollamento delle strutture. La Commissione sta anche valutando la possibilità di ricorrere al braccio preventivo dell'articolo 33 del regolamento Dublino ([1]) per agevolare misure mirate di solidarietà all'Italia, considerando l'aumento del numero di persone che raggiungono le sue coste meridionali.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 604/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 26 giugno 2013, che stabilisce i criteri e i meccanismi di determinazione dello Stato membro competente per l'esame di una domanda di protezione internazionale presentata in uno degli Stati membri da un cittadino di un paese terzo o da un apolide (GU L 180 del 29.6.2013, pagg. 31-59).

Le raccomandazioni della Task Force ([2]) sono attuate dagli Stati membri, dalle agenzie dell'UE e dalla Commissione europea. Quest'ultima ha aggiornato la commissione per le libertà pubbliche del Parlamento europeo sugli ultimi sviluppi il 1º aprile e pubblicherà in giugno una relazione completa.

([2]) Comunicazione della Commissione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio sull'attività della Task Force «Mediterraneo» (COM(2013) 869 def.).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-003645/14
to the Commission
Giovanni Barbagallo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Migration flows to Sicily

Immigrants have once again started to arrive in Lampedusa and in many other ports and coastal areas in Sicily in recent days, but in far greater numbers: 8 500 have landed in Italy since the start of 2014. This is ten times the number recorded in the same period in 2013.

What is more, the highly unstable political situation in Libya makes it likely that as weather conditions improve, the numbers of migrants arriving will rise still further and, at the current rate, will far exceed the 43 000 who landed last year.

Approximately 100 migrants died off the coast of Lampedusa on 3 October 2013 when the boat in which they were trying to reach Italy sank. However the impact of the streams of migrants crossing the Mediterranean is also felt in many other coastal and inland areas of Sicily.

A few days after this incident, on 10 October 2013, Parliament gave its final approval to the new EU border surveillance system Eurosur.

The Commission allocated EUR 50 million at the beginning of December 2013 to initiatives that would strengthen mutual help and solidarity between Member States in order to save the lives of migrants in peril in the Mediterranean. Italy was allocated EUR 30 million of this.

A few weeks later, images of the treatment immigrants receive at the initial reception centre in Lampedusa sparked a major international controversy and Commissioner Malmström said publically that an investigation was underway to check that EU standards for the reception of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees were being observed by the Italian authorities.

In view of the above, can the Commission state how the Mediterranean air and sea surveillance operations coordinated by Frontex are progressing?

How is the new EU border surveillance system Eurosur being implemented?

What have been the findings of the investigation into reception conditions for migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, as provided by the Italian authorities?

How is the work of the task force approved by the October European Council progressing?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(2 May 2014)

Following the tragic accident on 3 October 2013 near Lampedusa, on-going joint operations in the Mediterranean were strengthened until the end of March 2014. This was aimed at ensuring early detection of boats with migrants on board, thus preventing loss of life. Sea operations coordinated by Frontex will soon be governed by a new Regulation which is being adopted by the co-legislators and which includes provisions on interception, search and rescue and disembarkation. As of the beginning of April 2014, Frontex is carrying out operations in accordance with its work programme and discussing with Member States possible further needs.

On 2 December 2013, Eurosur became operational in 19 Member States, to be followed by the remaining 11 Member States and associated countries by the end of this year. As a result, information exchange and cooperation among national authorities with a responsibility for border surveillance have considerably improved both within and between several Member States.

A Commission team visited Lampedusa in January as well as the reception centre in Foggia. Several concerns on the quality of reception provided and the risks of overcrowding of the facilities have been put to the Italian authorities. The Commission is also considering the activation of the preventive arm of Art.33 of the Dublin Regulation ([1]) in order to facilitate targeted measures of solidarity to Italy in view of the increasing arrivals on its southern coast.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person; OJ L 180, 29.6.2013, p. 31-59.

The Task Force recommendations ([2]) are being implemented by Member States, EU Agencies and the European Commission. The Commission updated the EP Civil Liberties Committee on developments on 1 April and a full report will be made available by the Commission in June.

([2]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the work of the Task Force Mediterranean; COM(2013) 869 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003646/14
al Consejo
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Lista negra de países no cooperantes en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR) y alternativas para la flota europea

El Consejo de Ministros de la Unión Europea acordó ayer la creación de una lista negra de países no cooperantes en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR) en la que incluiría a Camboya, Belice y Guinea.

De esta manera, la importación en el mercado europeo de los productos de la pesca capturados por buques que enarbolen el pabellón de esos países queda prohibida pero, al mismo tiempo, los buques de la UE deben interrumpir toda actividad en esas aguas sea mediante licencias privadas, operaciones conjuntas o acuerdos de pesca.

La medida afecta a la flota comunitaria sin que se hayan previsto de manera previa la posibilidad de ofrecer caladeros alternativos a nuestra flota, como planteara en mi pregunta E-012195/2013 y otras en relación con la expulsión de los cefalopoderos comunitarios del último protocolo de pesca firmado con Mauritania. De hecho, en las aguas de Guinea habían buscado refugio cinco de los 16 cefalopoderos de mi región, Galicia, que habían sido previamente expulsados de aguas de Mauritania y que habían esquivado el desguace.

A su vez, aun cuando la flota comunitaria actúe conforme a todas las medidas de control de la UE —caja azul, diario electrónico, etc. —, países como Corea, por ejemplo, podrán seguir vendiendo a la UE productos de la pesca obtenidos en Guinea, puesto que el origen de ese pescado es Corea, al igual que sucede con los cefalópodos procedentes de aguas mauritanas pescados por embarcaciones chinas. Por otra parte, no se actúa contra otros países que amparan actividades ilegales, como es el caso de Papúa.

¿Tiene previsto adoptar medidas contra aquellos países que desarrollan su actividad pesquera en los países incluidos en la nueva lista negra? ¿Tiene previsto incluir a nuevos países en esta lista?

Respuesta
(28 de mayo de 2014)

La Decisión del Consejo de 24 de marzo de 2014 de incluir a tres países en la lista negra de países no cooperantes en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada fue la primera de este tipo. Toda ampliación de la lista, así como la exclusión de países de ella, queda supeditada a una propuesta de la Comisión al Consejo.

Por lo que se refiere a la actividad de los buques de países terceros en aguas de los países que figuran en la lista negra, el Reglamento (CE) n.° 1005/2008 del Consejo, de 29 de septiembre de 2008, por el que se establece un sistema comunitario para prevenir, desalentar y eliminar la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada ([1]) no contempla medida alguna de mercado contra los países como consecuencia de que sus buques faenen en aguas de un país incluido en la lista negra. A tenor del Reglamento, esos países únicamente podrán verse sujetos a medidas relacionadas con el mercado si se declaran a sí mismos no cooperantes, según las mismas normas que han llevado a establecer la lista de países donde faenan sus buques.

([1]) DO L 286, de 29.10.2008, p. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003646/14
to the Council
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Blacklist of non-cooperating countries in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and alternatives for the European fishing fleet

Yesterday, the Council of Ministers of the European Union approved the drafting of a blacklist of countries that are not cooperating in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which includes Cambodia, Belize and Guinea.

This means that it is illegal to import fish produce into the European market that has been caught by vessels flying the flags of these countries, whilst EU vessels must suspend any activity in these countries' waters, whether they are operating under a private licence, joint operation or fishing agreement.

This measure affects the Community's fishing fleet, but there has been no offer of alternative fishing grounds provided to our fleet in advance, an issue that I raised in my Question E-012195/2013 and others related to the expulsion of the Community's cephalopod fleet in the latest Fisheries Protocol signed with Mauritania. In fact, five of the 16 cephalopod vessels from my region, Galicia, have sought refuge in the waters of Guinea, having been previously expelled from Mauritanian waters, to avoid being scrapped.

Moreover, even though the Community fleet acts in accordance with all EU control measures — blue box, electronic diary, etc. — countries like Korea can continue to sell fish produce to the EU that is caught in Guinea, given that the origin of this fish is Korea, as is the case for the cephalopods in Mauritanian waters fished by Chinese vessels. Furthermore, there is no action taken against other countries that engage in illegal activities, as is the case in Papua.

Does the Council intend to adopt measures against countries fishing in the countries included on the new blacklist? Does it intend to include any other countries on this list?

Reply
(28 May 2014)

The Council's Decision of 24 March 2014 to blacklist three countries as non-cooperating in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing was the first of its kind. Any extension of this list, as well as the removal of countries from this list, depends on a proposal by the European Commission to the Council.

As for the activity of vessels of other third countries in the waters of blacklisted countries, Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing ([1]) does not foresee market-related measures against countries as a consequence of their vessels fishing in the waters of a blacklisted country. Those countries may become subject to market-related measures according to this regulation only if they are themselves identified as non-cooperating, according to the same rules which have led to the listing of the countries in which their vessels are operating.

([1]) OJ L 286, 29.10.2008, p. 1.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003647/14
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Lista negra de países no cooperantes en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR) y alternativas para la flota europea

El Consejo de Ministros de la Unión Europea acordó ayer la creación de una lista negra de países no cooperantes en la lucha contra la pesca ilegal, no declarada y no reglamentada (INDNR) en la que incluiría a Camboya, Belice y Guinea.

De esta manera, la importación en el mercado europeo de los productos de la pesca capturados por buques que enarbolen el pabellón de esos países queda prohibida pero, al mismo tiempo, los buques de la UE deben interrumpir toda actividad en esas aguas sea mediante licencias privadas, operaciones conjuntas o acuerdos de pesca.

La medida afecta a la flota comunitaria sin que se hayan previsto de manera previa la posibilidad de ofrecer caladeros alternativos a nuestra flota, como planteara en mi pregunta E-012195/2013 y otras en relación con la expulsión de los cefalopoderos comunitarios del último protocolo de pesca firmado con Mauritania. De hecho, en las aguas de Guinea habían buscado refugio cinco de los 16 cefalopoderos de mi región, Galicia, que habían sido previamente expulsados de aguas de Mauritania y que habían esquivado el desguace.

A su vez, aun cuando la flota comunitaria actúe conforme a todas las medidas de control de la UE —caja azul, diario electrónico, etc. —, países como Corea, por ejemplo, podrán seguir vendiendo a la UE productos de la pesca obtenidos en Guinea, puesto que el origen de ese pescado es Corea. Por otra parte, no se actúa contra otros países que amparan actividades ilegales, como es el caso de Papúa.

¿Qué alternativas está desarrollando la Comisión para la flota afectada? ¿Qué nuevos caladeros de pesca tiene como objetivo? ¿Cuál es el calendario de trabajo y cuáles son los terceros Estados? ¿Tiene previsto adoptar medidas contra aquellos países que desarrollan su actividad pesquera en los países incluidos en la nueva lista negra? ¿Tiene previsto incluir a nuevos países en esta lista?

Respuesta de la Sra. Damanaki en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2014)

La decisión del Consejo de incluir en la lista a Belice, Camboya y Guinea ha provocado un catálogo de medidas, incluida una prohibición de pesca para los buques de la UE en aguas de dichos países. El Reglamento (UE) n° 1005/2008 (Reglamento sobre la pesca INDNR) se basa principalmente en el principio de la responsabilidad del Estado del pabellón, de acuerdo con el Derecho internacional y no afecta a las actividades de los buques de otros terceros Estados de pabellón que no están identificados como países no cooperantes, pero que se encuentran faenando en aguas de un país incluido en la lista de no cooperantes.

La Comisión continúa su diálogo con Belice, Camboya y Guinea con el objetivo de adoptar medidas concretas que mejoren de forma duradera la situación. También está manteniendo contactos con varios terceros países, en particular con aquellos previamente identificados en noviembre de 2012 y 2013, vigilando de cerca sus avances a la hora de abordar las principales deficiencias en el expediente de pesca INDNR.

Como ya se subrayó en la respuesta a su anterior pregunta (E-012195/2013), la Comisión explora activamente las posibilidades de nuevos caladeros con Estados ribereños con los que no existen actualmente acuerdos, siempre que estos dispongan de recursos pesqueros y exista un excedente.

Las evaluaciones científicas llevadas a cabo por el Comité de Pesca para el Atlántico Centro-Oriental indican que las diferentes poblaciones de cefalópodos están sobreexplotadas en esta zona. Según la información de que dispone la Comisión, los Estados ribereños afectados prefieren que estas pesquerías de cefalópodos queden en manos de sus flotas nacionales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003647/14
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Blacklist of non-cooperating countries in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and alternatives for the European fishing fleet

Yesterday, the Council of Ministers of the European Union approved the drafting of a blacklist of countries that are not cooperating in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which includes Cambodia, Belize and Guinea.

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This measure affects the Community's fishing fleet, but there has been no offer of alternative fishing grounds provided to our fleet in advance, an issue that I raised in my Question E-012195/2013 and others related to the expulsion of the Community's cephalopod fleet in the latest Fisheries Protocol signed with Mauritania. In fact, five of the 16 cephalopod vessels from my region, Galicia, have sought refuge in the waters of Guinea, having been previously expelled from Mauritanian waters, to avoid being scrapped.

Moreover, even though the Community fleet acts in accordance with all EU control measures — blue box, electronic diary, etc. — countries like Korea can continue to sell fish produce to the EU that is caught in Guinea, given that the origin of this fish is Korea. Furthermore, there is no action taken against other countries that engage in illegal activities, as is the case in Papua.

What alternatives is the Commission developing for the fleet in question? What new fishing grounds is the Commission considering? What is the timetable and what third States are involved? Does the Commission intend to adopt measures against countries fishing in the countries included on the new blacklist? Does it intend to include any other countries on this list?

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

The Council decision listing Belize, Cambodia and Guinea triggers a catalogue of measures, including a fishing ban for EU vessels in these countries' waters. The EU Regulation 1005/2008 (the IUU Regulation) is mainly based on the principle of flag State responsibility, in line with international law and it does not affect the activities of vessels from other non-EU flag States that are not identified as non-cooperating countries, but that are fishing in the waters of a listed non-cooperating country.

The Commission continues its dialogue with Belize, Cambodia and Guinea aiming for concrete measures capable of achieving a lasting improvement of the situation. It is also in dialogue with several third countries, in particular those pre-identified in November 2012 and 2013, watching closely their progress in addressing the highlighted shortcomings in the IUU file.

As highlighted in the answer to your previous question (E-012195/2013), the Commission is actively exploring the possibilities of new fishing grounds with coastal States with which there are currently no agreement, on condition that fishing resources are available and that a surplus exists.

Scientific assessments carried out by the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic indicate that the different stocks of cephalopods are overexploited in this area. According to the information available to the Commission, the concerned coastal States prefer to keep these cephalopods fisheries for their national fleets.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-003648/14
a la Comisión
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 de marzo de 2014)

Asunto: Importancia de la actividad profesional de los procuradores en España

Desde su creación, los procuradores de los tribunales asumen en el ordenamiento español la representación técnica de las partes en los procedimientos judiciales y tienen reservadas funciones de cooperación con la Administración de Justicia de inequívoco carácter público. Mediante sus servicios vinculantes de recepción de notificaciones y traslado de copias, los 67 Colegios de Procuradores, de los que son miembros 10 000 profesionales de la Procuraduría que, con sus colaboradores, suman 50 000 personas, contribuyen a la eficiencia de la potestad jurisdiccional y al ahorro de más de 188 millones de euros anuales al Tesoro Público español, según estudios recientes.

Por su parte, a los 130 000 abogados colegiados en España les corresponde legalmente la dirección y defensa procesal de las partes en los procedimientos judiciales, así como su asesoramiento y consejo jurídico.

Procuradores y abogados realizan actividades procesales completamente distintas con una naturaleza y posición jurídica bien diferenciada. La legislación española sigue un principio de radical separación e independencia de funciones y dispone la incompatibilidad de ambas profesiones. Las reservas de actividad dirigidas a garantizar mejor la tutela judicial, restringir privilegios legales y evitar conflictos de intereses entre ambas profesiones cumplen los requisitos de necesidad, no discriminación y proporcionalidad de la Directiva 2006/123/CE relativa a los servicios que, por lo demás, no cubre las funciones que desarrolla el procurador vinculadas al ejercicio de una autoridad pública.

La Comisión Permanente del Consejo de Estado Español y el Consejo General del Poder Judicial consideran que la incompatibilidad de las funciones de ambas profesiones debe ser mantenida al igual que la figura del procurador como representante procesal, aspectos ligados a la efectividad de mandatos constitucionales.

¿No considera la Comisión injustificado, desproporcionado, costoso y contrario a los Tratados pretender que en la transposición de la Directiva de servicios se establezca la compatibilidad entre estas dos profesiones reguladas? ¿No considera que existe un interés general digno de protección por parte del Estado Español y que una decisión contraria afectaría innecesariamente a aspectos esenciales de la vida constitucional de un Estado miembro y, en particular, a la eficacia de la Justicia española? ¿Va a archivar el expediente Eupilot Markt/11/2171?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión desea agradecer a su Señoría la información facilitada en su pregunta.

La Comisión mantiene un diálogo constructivo con las autoridades españolas sobre este tema en el marco del sistema EU Pilot. Con vistas al resultado positivo de este diálogo, es necesario preservar la confidencialidad de los contactos en curso, por lo que la Comisión no puede revelar la información correspondiente.

Además, en el contexto más amplio del proceso del Semestre Europeo y del seguimiento de las recomendaciones específicas por países formuladas para España en lo que respecta a los servicios profesionales, la Comisión está muy atenta a las reformas emprendidas por el Gobierno español, en particular la reforma de la Ley de servicios y colegios profesionales, que incluye, entre otras cosas, las profesiones de procurador y abogado.

Solo tras un minucioso análisis del nuevo marco jurídico, la Comisión estará en condiciones de adoptar una posición definitiva sobre el asunto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-003648/14
to the Commission
Antolín Sánchez Presedo (S&D)
(25 March 2014)

Subject: Importance of professional activity of public prosecutors in Spain

Since the creation of their roles, public prosecutors under Spanish law provide technical representation for parties to judicial proceedings and have cooperative roles of an unequivocal public nature with the Administration of Justice. Through their associated services of receipt of notices and notification of copies, the 67 bar associations — of which 10 000 Public Prosecution professionals are members, a number that rises to 50 000 when their associates are taken into consideration — contribute to the efficient operation of the jurisdictional authority and to a saving of more than EUR 188 million each year for the Spanish public treasury, according to recent studies.

The 130 000 lawyers registered with the bar in Spain, for their part, are legally responsible for providing procedural guidance and defence for parties to judicial proceedings, as well as legal advice and counsel.

Prosecutors and lawyers carry out completely different procedural activities with clearly separate roles and juridical positions. Spanish legislation follows a principal of a radical separation and independence of roles, and stipulates that both professions are incompatible with each other. Restrictions on professional activity aimed at guaranteeing better legal protection, limiting legal privileges and avoiding conflicts of interests between both professions fulfil the criteria of necessity, non-discrimination and proportionality under Services Directive 2006/123/EC, which incidentally does not cover the activities carried out by public prosecutors associated with the exercise of public authority.

The Standing Committee of the Spanish Council of State and the General Council of the Judiciary consider that the incompatibility of both professions and the position of the public prosecutor as a procedural representative — aspects that ensure the effectiveness of constitutional mandates — must be maintained.

Does the Commission not believe it to be unjustified, disproportionate, costly and contrary to Treaties to claim that the transposition of the Services Directive establishes compatibility between these two regulated professions? Does it not consider that there is a general interest deserving of protection from the Spanish State and that a ruling to the contrary would unnecessarily affect aspects essential to the constitutional life of a Member State and in particular the efficiency of Spanish justice? Will the Commission close the case Eupilot Markt/11/2171?

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

The Commission would like to thank the Honourable Member for the information provided in his question.

The Commission is currently holding a constructive dialogue with the Spanish authorities on this matter in the framework of the EU-Pilot system. In order to allow a positive outcome of these discussions it is necessary to preserve the confidentiality of the ongoing contacts, thus the Commission cannot disclose related information.

Moreover, in the wider context of the European Semester process and the follow-up to the Country Specific Recommendations issued for Spain in respect of professional services, the Commission is closely following the reforms undertaken by the Spanish Government, in particular the Reform on the Professional Association and Professional Services Law, which covers, amongst others, the professions of 'procuradores' and the lawyer.

Only after a careful analysis of the adopted new legal framework, will the Commission be in the position to take a final position on this issue.