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 279/01)

Treść Strona

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-014424/13
à la Commission
José Bové (Verts/ALE)
(20 décembre 2013)

Objet: Nouvelles techniques de biotechnologies

En 2008, la Commission européenne lançait un travail de réflexion sur le sujet des nouvelles techniques de biotechnologie. Ces techniques émergentes visent à modifier le génome d'organismes comme les plantes en vue de leur faire acquérir de nouvelles caractéristiques. Au vu de la législation européenne sur les OGM, la question se pose de connaître le statut des produits obtenus par ces techniques, c'est-à-dire s'ils sont soumis ou non à la législation européenne sur les OGM.

La Commission européenne a indiqué fin novembre 2013 qu'un «*travail d'analyse [visant à] établir si les nouvelles techniques mentionnées dans le rapport du groupe de travail tombent ou pas sous la définition d'organisme génétiquement modifié prévue à l'article 2 de la directive 2001/18/EC» était en cours, tout en précisant qu'il «n'est pas possible à ce stade de donner un calendrier ou des indications quant aux modalités de la publication de ces travaux par la Commission»* ([1]).

La Commission peut-elle préciser:

— quel(s) service(s) de la Commission européenne est(sont) en charge de ce travail d'analyse?

— s'il s'agit d'un travail mené par un groupe extérieur mandaté par la Commission, quel est ce groupe et qui le compose?

— si des auditions de parties extérieures sont et/ou ont été menées et si oui, de qui?

Les 27 et 28 mai 2010, un atelier sur le thème des nouvelles techniques de biotechnologie fut organisé par l'Institut d'études technologiques prospectives (IPTS). Cet institut est un des sept instituts scientifiques du Centre commun de recherche, sous tutelle de la Commission européenne. Si quelques grandes lignes de ce qui fut discuté lors de cet atelier ont été indiquées dans un rapport plus général sur les nouvelles techniques de biotechnologie, publié en 2011 ([2]), aucun compte rendu détaillé formel ne semble disponible à l'instar du compte rendu détaillé de l'atelier sur la comparaison des approches réglementaires des nouvelles techniques organisé en septembre 2011 ([3]).

La Commission peut-elle rendre public le compte rendu formel de cet atelier organisé par l'IPTS, en mai 2010, sur les nouvelles techniques de biotechnologie?

Réponse donnée par M. Borg au nom de la Commission
(27 février 2014)

1. La direction générale de la santé et des consommateurs de la Commission européenne, responsable de la législation de l'Union européenne en matière d'organismes génétiquement modifiés, procède à l'analyse du statut juridique de nouvelles techniques de sélection végétale, en étroite coopération avec d'autres services concernés de la Commission.

2. La Commission n'a chargé aucun groupe extérieur de ce travail.

3. À ce stade, elle n'a organisé aucune audition de tierces parties sur les nouvelles techniques de sélection végétale, mais elle a rencontré des parties prenantes qui se sont dites prêtes à partager leur expérience et leurs points de vue. Elle s'est engagée à poursuivre le dialogue avec les parties prenantes que cela intéresse.

4. Elle n'a pas rédigé de compte rendu officiel de l'atelier organisé par l'Institut de prospective technologique (IPTS) en mai 2010, parce que les principales constatations et conclusions de cet atelier avaient été insérées dans le rapport scientifique et technique du Centre commun de recherche (JRC) intitulé «Les nouvelles techniques de sélection végétale — État de la technique et perspectives de développement commercial». En effet, l'atelier s'inscrivait dans la méthodologie intégrée utilisée pour planifier le développement de nouvelles techniques de sélection végétale dans l'Union européenne et dans le monde (en complément d'une recherche portant sur la littérature et les brevets pertinents, d'une analyse d'essais sur le terrain dans l'Union et d'une enquête sur l'industrie des biotechnologies dans l'Union). Cette méthodologie a donné lieu à un rapport unique présentant l'ensemble des résultats.

([1]) Article de référence Inf'OGM en ligne demain 28 novembre.
([2]) «New plant breeding techniques. State-of-the-art and prospects for commercial development», Centre commun de recherche 2011.
([3]) «Comparative regulatory approaches for new plant breeding techniques», Centre commun de recherche 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014424/13
to the Commission
José Bové (Verts/ALE)
(20 December 2013)

Subject: New biotechnology techniques

In 2008, the Commission began a study into new biotechnology techniques. These emerging techniques seek to modify the genome of organisms, such as plants, with a view to giving them new characteristics. In view of EU legislation on GMOs, the question arises as to the status of products obtained using these techniques, i.e. whether or not they are subject to EU legislation on GMOs.

At the end of November 2013, the Commission stated that an analysis was under way seeking to establish whether the new techniques referred to in the working group's report did, or did not, fall within the definition of genetically modified organism laid down in Article 2 of Directive 2001/18/EC. It added that it was not possible at that stage to provide a timeframe or any indications regarding the arrangements for the Commission to publish this work ([1]).

Which Commission service/s is/are responsible for carrying out this analysis?

Is this work is being carried out by an external group appointed by the Commission, which group is it and who are its members?

Are hearings with third parties taking place and/or have any taken place and, if so, with whom?

On 27 and 28 May 2010, a workshop on new biotechnology techniques was held by the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS). This institute is one of the seven scientific institutes of the Commission's Joint Research Centre. While the broad lines of what was discussed at this workshop were set out in a more general report on new biotechnology techniques, published in 2011 ([2]), no official detailed proceedings after the fashion of the detailed proceedings of the workshop on the comparison of regulatory approaches for new techniques, held in September 2011 ([3]), appear to be available.

Can the Commission publish the official proceedings of this workshop held by IPTS in May 2010 on new biotechnology techniques?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

1. The Directorate General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission holding responsibility for the European Union legislation on Genetically Modified Organisms is carrying out the analysis of the legal status of New Plant Breeding Techniques (NPBT), in close cooperation with other relevant services of the Commission.

2. There is no external group appointed by the Commission for the abovementioned purpose.

3. The Commission has not organised any hearings with third parties on NPBT at this stage, but has met with stakeholders that have expressed their interest in sharing their experience and views. The Commission is committed to continuing dialogues with interested stakeholders.

4. The Commission did not produce official proceedings of the workshop held by the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) of May 2010, as the main finding and conclusions of that workshop were integrated in the JRC Scientific and Technical Report on 'New plant breeding techniques — State of the art and prospects for commercial development'. Indeed the workshop was part of the integrated methodology that was used to map the development of NPBT in the EU and worldwide (together with literature and patent search, analysis of field trials in the EU and survey to the biotech industry in the EU) and which resulted in one single report with the overall results.

([1]) Reference article by Inf'OGM online since 28 November 2013.
([2]) 'New plant breeding techniques. State-of-the-art and prospects for commercial development', Joint Research Centre, 2011.
([3]) 'Comparative regulatory approaches for new plant breeding techniques', Joint Research Centre, 2012.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-014425/13
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(20 december 2013)

Betreft: CE-markering

Door de CE-markering op zijn producten aan te brengen, verklaart de fabrikant, op eigen verantwoordelijkheid, dat deze producten aan alle wettelijke eisen voor zo'n markering beantwoorden. Voor een aantal producten wordt het toekennen van een CE-markering onderworpen aan controle door een aangemelde instantie („notified body"). Deze aangemelde instanties worden erkend door de lidstaten.

Hoe garandeert de Commissie dat de aangemelde instanties uit de verschillende lidstaten de richtlijnen even strikt interpreteren en toepassen?

Hoe garandeert de Commissie dat er geen ongelijkheden ontstaan tussen lidstaten inzake de soepelheid waarmee bedrijven de CE-markering kunnen verkrijgen?

Oefent de Commissie toezicht uit op de werkzaamheden van deze aangemelde instanties? En indien dit het geval is, hoe doet zij dit?

Antwoord van de heer Tajani namens de Commissie
(17 februari 2014)

Overeenkomstig Verordening (EG) nr. 765/2008 moet een conformiteitsbeoordelingsinstantie die een aangemelde instantie wil worden, als dusdanig worden erkend door de nationale accreditatie-instantie van de lidstaat waar zij gevestigd is. Indien een lidstaat besluit om geen gebruik te maken van accreditatie, moet hij de Commissie en de andere lidstaten alle bewijsstukken verschaffen die nodig zijn om de bekwaamheid van de conformiteitsbeoordelingsinstantie in kwestie te verifiëren.

Ter vergroting van het vertrouwen in de werkzaamheden en bevindingen van conformiteitsbeoordelingsinstanties wordt in Verordening (EG) nr. 765/2008 het rechtskader voor accreditatie vastgelegd, inclusief de eisen voor nationale accreditatie-instanties; accreditatie valt onder de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaten en is onderworpen aan collegiale toetsing door de Europese accreditatie-infrastructuur „Europese Samenwerking voor Accreditatie" (EA). De Commissie ziet er samen met de lidstaten op toe dat deze toetsing naar behoren functioneert. De Commissie zorgt er ook voor dat accreditatie in het kader van harmonisatiewetgeving aan de bekwaamheidseisen voldoet. Zij werkt op dit vlak nauw samen met de EA.

Aangemelde instanties moeten bovendien deelnemen aan de activiteiten van de coördinatiegroep van aangemelde instanties die uit hoofde van de relevante wetgeving van de Unie is opgericht. Zij zijn gebonden aan de besluiten van deze groep. De Commissie neemt deel aan de werkzaamheden van deze groepen en zorgt er onder meer voor dat de aangemelde instanties hun evaluaties in de hele EU met dezelfde strengheid verrichten.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-014425/13
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(20 December 2013)

Subject: CE marking

By affixing the CE marking on their products, manufacturers declare, at their own liability, that these products meet the legal requirements for having this marking. In the case of a number of products, awarding the CE marking is subject to verification by a notified body. These notified bodies are recognised by Member States.

How does the Commission guarantee that the notified bodies from the various Member States interpret and apply the guidelines with equal rigour?

How does the Commission guarantee that no discrepancies arise between Member States regarding how flexible the procedure is allowing companies to obtain the CE marking?

Does the Commission supervise the activities of these notified bodies? If so, how does it do this?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

According to Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, a conformity assessment body wishing to become a notifed body should be accredited by the National Accreditation Body of the Member State in which it is established or, where a Member State decides not to use accreditation, the latter must provide the Commission and other Member States with all the documentary evidence necessary for the verification of the competence of the conformity assessment body in question.

With the aim of enhancing trust in the work and results of conformity assessment bodies, Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 sets out the legal framework for accreditation, including the requirements for national accreditation bodies, under the responsibility of Member States and subject to the peer evaluation process performed by the European accreditation infrastructure 'European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA)'. The Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, oversees the proper functioning of this process. The Commission also ensures that accreditation meets the necessary level of competence in the area of harmonisation legislation. It closely cooperates with EA in this field.

Furthermore, notified bodies are obliged to participate in the activities of the 'Notified Body Coordination Group' established under the relevant Union legislation. They are bound by the decisions of that group. The Commission participates in the work of these groups and ensures amongst other things that notified bodies carry out their evaluations with the same stringency across the EU.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000014/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE e conseguenze per la formazione di intere classi di futuri ricercatori tra cui biologi, farmacisti e biotecnologi

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici è stata correttamente recepita in gran parte degli Stati membri dell'UE.

L'Italia ha inasprito tale direttiva approvando un testo che proibisce l'utilizzo degli animali nelle attività di formazione universitaria, a eccezione di quella di medici e medici veterinari.

Tale attività di ricerca in laboratorio eseguita da biologi, farmacisti, biotecnologi, vieterà loro una adeguata formazione durante gli studi universitari. Questo provvedimento, quindi, pregiudicherà in modo grave la formazione pratica di tutti i futuri ricercatori, ponendoli in una condizione di svantaggio competitivo rispetto ai colleghi di altri Stati membri che potranno avere maggiori e migliori opportunità lavorative.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, potrebbe la Commissione valutare se tale recepimento restrittivo della direttiva, che pregiudica la formazione universitaria degli studenti impegnati nello studio di materie scientifiche e il campo della ricerca in Italia rispetto agli altri Stati membri, possa creare effetti di distorsione del mercato interno UE?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000015/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE e divieto di utilizzo di animali per xenotrapianti

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici è stata correttamente recepita in gran parte degli Stati membri dell'UE.

L'Italia ha approvato un testo che vieta l'utilizzo di animali per gli xenotrapianti, ovvero il trapianto di cellule, tessuti o organi da una specie a un'altra, molto utilizzati per terapie sperimentali riguardanti patologie molto gravi.

Alcune ricerche dimostrano come sia possibile far crescere un organo «estraneo» in un animale ospite tramite iniezione di cellule staminali pluripotenti indotte.

Se gli esperimenti continueranno a dare risultati promettenti, questa metodologia permetterebbe di «generare» in un animale ospite organi perfettamente compatibili con il ricevente umano. Inoltre, gli xenotrapianti rappresentano uno strumento vitale per testare farmaci antineoplastici di nuova generazione. Le norme italiane, invece, cancellerebbero la possibilità di effettuare questo tipo di ricerche.

Reputa la Commissione che tale recepimento restrittivo della direttiva possa comportare seri danni alla ricerca e ai numerosi pazienti in attesa di terapie antitumorali più efficaci e di cellule, tessuti e organi necessari per la medicina rigenerativa?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000016/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE e peggioramento delle condizioni degli animali

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici è stata correttamente recepita in gran parte degli Stati membri dell'UE.

L'Italia ha approvato un testo che prevede il divieto di allevamento sul territorio italiano di cani, gatti e scimmie destinate alla ricerca, senza vietarne l'impiego.

Poiché questo implica che tutte le colonie presenti in Italia (principalmente universitarie) dovranno essere chiuse e gli animali da inserire nelle sperimentazioni acquistati all'estero, la conseguenza sarà il peggioramento delle condizioni degli animali, che saranno sottoposti a lunghi e stressanti viaggi per arrivare ai centri di ricerca italiani.

Reputa la Commissione che tali condizioni possano essere in contrasto con il rispetto dei principi fondanti della direttiva 2010/63/UE riguardanti l'obbligo di una cura adeguata e il divieto di trattamento crudele degli animali destinati a usi scientifici?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000017/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE e utilizzo di animali per le ricerche su sostanze d'abuso

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici è stata correttamente recepita in gran parte degli Stati membri dell'UE

L'Italia ha approvato un testo che fra le altre cose vieta l'utilizzo di animali per le ricerche su sostanze d'abuso.

Tale norma porterebbe a abbandonare specificamente la ricerca sui meccanismi d'azione delle sostanze d'abuso sempre più numerose e devastanti e sui danni permanenti da esse causati (ad esempio, la sindrome di astinenza neonatale). In generale sarebbero a rischio le ricerche condotte su disturbi alimentari quali la bulimia e l'anoressia.

La ricerca su alcune sostanze d'abuso, quali la nicotina, sta producendo ricadute importanti sulla ricerca legata al potenziale sviluppo di terapie per malattie neurodegenerative gravi, quali l'Alzheimer.

Reputa la Commissione che tale recepimento restrittivo della direttiva possa comportare seri danni alla ricerca e ai numerosi pazienti in attesa di terapie antitumorali più efficaci e di cellule, tessuti e organi necessari per la medicina rigenerativa?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000018/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) e Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE

La direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici sostituisce la precedente direttiva 86/609/CEE che aveva lo scopo di eliminare le disparità tra le disposizioni legislative, regolamentari e amministrative degli Stati membri relative alla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini sperimentali o altri fini scientifici, in quanto di ostacolo al funzionamento del mercato interno.

Nel recepire la direttiva, l'Italia ha approvato un provvedimento che pone dei limiti molto stretti alla ricerca scientifica italiana.

Lo schema di decreto legislativo vieta infatti esplicitamente l'allevamento di animali per usi scientifici sul territorio italiano, mina la formazione di intere categorie di futuri scienziati a cui viene impedita la possibilità di apprendere metodiche e tecniche essenziali per compiere sperimentazioni su animali in laboratorio e crea una serie di condizioni che svantaggiano il campo della ricerca italiana rispetto ad altri Stati membri, con il rischio che in futuro l'Italia non riesca nemmeno a accedere ai finanziamenti UE, rendendo vano quanto già stanziato fino ad oggi.

Alla luce di quanto esposto, potrebbe la Commissione riferire in merito alla conformità dello schema di decreto legislativo italiano (atto del governo n. 50) recante recepimento della direttiva 2010/63/UE sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(14 febbraio 2014)

L'Italia non ha ancora recepito nel diritto nazionale la direttiva 2010/63/UE ([1]) sulla protezione degli animali utilizzati a fini scientifici. È per questo motivo che il 23 gennaio 2014 la Commissione europea ha deciso di deferire l'Italia alla Corte di giustizia dell'UE per non aver garantito il recepimento della direttiva nei termini prescritti, ossia entro il 10 novembre 2012.

([1]) GU L 276 del 20.10.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000014/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2010/63/EU and repercussions for the training of entire categories of future researchers, including biologists, pharmacists and biotechnologists

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes has been correctly transposed in the majority of EU Member States.

Italy has taken the provisions of the directive even further by passing a law that prohibits the use of animals in all university courses other than those for medical and veterinary students.

If biologists, pharmacists and biotechnologists are forced to conduct laboratory research without using animals, university will not provide them with proper training. This provision will therefore prove severely detrimental to the practical training of every single one of tomorrow's researchers, and will place them at a competitive disadvantage in relation to their counterparts in other Member States, who will enjoy more, and better, job opportunities.

In light of the above, does the Commission think that, by undermining the quality of the training received by students enrolled on scientific courses and the arrangements for conducting research at Italian universities when compared with those offered by universities in other Member States, this restrictive transposition of the directive may lead to distortions in the EU single market?

Question for written answer E-000015/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2010/63/EU and ban on the use of animals for xenotransplants

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes has been correctly transposed in the majority of EU Member States.

Italy has passed a law that prohibits the use of animals for xenotransplants, i.e. transplants of cells, tissue or organs from one species to another, which are widely used in experimental treatments of very serious illnesses.

Research has shown that it is possible to grow a 'foreign' organ in a host animal by injecting induced pluripotent stem cells.

If these experiments continue to give promising results, this method could one day make it possible to 'generate' in a host animal organs that are perfectly compatible with the human recipient. In addition, xenotransplants play a vital role in the testing of the latest antineoplastic drugs. The Italian legislation referred to above will make it impossible to continue with this line of research, however.

Does the Commission believe that this restrictive transposition of the directive could prove seriously detrimental not only to research but also to the many patients awaiting more effective forms of cancer treatment and the cells, tissue and organs needed for regenerative medical procedures?

Question for written answer E-000016/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2010/63/EU and deterioration in the way animals are treated

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes has been correctly transposed in the majority of EU Member States.

Italy has passed a law that prohibits the breeding of dogs, cats and monkeys in Italy for research purposes, but does not ban the use of these animals for such purposes.

As a consequence of this law every breeding centre in Italy (most of which are attached to universities) will have to be shut down and animals to be used in experiments will have to be purchased from abroad, and this will in turn lead to a marked deterioration in the way such animals are treated, as they will be forced to undergo long and stressful journeys when being transported to Italian research centres.

Does the Commission believe that such treatment could violate the fundamental principles underpinning Directive 2010/63/EU, which stipulates that animals intended for scientific use must be properly cared for and must not under any circumstances be treated cruelly?

Question for written answer E-000017/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2010/63/EU and use of animals in research into harmful substances

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes has been correctly transposed in the majority of EU Member States.

Italy has passed a law that, among other things, bans the use of animals in research into harmful substances.

This law will specifically put an end to any research into the action mechanisms of harmful substances, which are becoming increasingly numerous and devastating, and into the permanent damage that they cause (for example through neonatal abstinence syndrome). More generally, research into eating disorders, such as bulimia and anorexia, will be put at risk.

The research currently being carried out into a number of harmful substances, including nicotine, is producing significant findings which are feeding into the search for new forms of treatment for severe neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease.

Does the Commission believe that this restrictive transposition of the directive could prove seriously detrimental not only to research but also to the many patients awaiting more effective forms of cancer treatment and the cells, tissue and organs needed for regenerative medical procedures?

Question for written answer E-000018/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE) and Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Directive 2010/63/EU

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes replaces the previous Directive 86/609/EEC, the purpose of which was to do away with any disparities between the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes that could hamper the functioning of the internal market.

The measures being taken to transpose Directive 2010/63/EU in Italy will place very severe restrictions on Italian scientific research.

The draft legislative decree explicitly prohibits the breeding of animals for scientific purposes in Italy, jeopardises the training available to future generations of scientists, who will no longer be able to learn methods and techniques essential for performing laboratory experiments on animals, and lays down a number of conditions that will place Italian research at a disadvantage with respect to other Member States, with the risk that in future Italy may no longer even receive EU funding, nullifying the impact of the sums allocated to date.

Could the Commission say whether it regards the draft Italian legislative decree (government act No 50) as an appropriate means of transposing Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

Italy has not yet transposed Directive 2010/63/EU ([1]) on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes into national law. This is why, on 23 January 2014, the European Commission decided to take Italy to the EU Court of Justice for having failed to ensure transposition of the directive within the prescribed deadline — by 10 November 2012 at the latest.

([1]) OJ L 276, 20.10.2010.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000019/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Cosmetici cinesi

Con riferimento all'interrogazione della sottoscritta E-003740/2013, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti sui risultati delle azioni illustrate nella sua risposta?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2014)

Per quanto concerne l'interrogazione scritta E-003740/2013, l'Onorevole deputata troverà qui un aggiornamento sull'impatto delle misure adottate dalla Commissione.

— Per quanto concerne le misure alle frontiere, conformemente alla relazione 2012 sugli interventi delle dogane dell'UE a tutela dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale (DPI) il numero di blocchi di cosmetici provenienti dalla Cina ha raggiunto un valore di 38.411.744 euro (768.741 articoli bloccati e 1912 procedimenti).

La Commissione ha negoziato il rinnovo del piano d'azione bilaterale concernente la cooperazione doganale UE-Cina in tema di DPI. La firma del nuovo piano d'azione dovrebbe avvenire nella primavera del 2014.

— Per quanto concerne la protezione dei consumatori e il sistema RAPEX ([1]), nel 2013 le autorità nazionali di vigilanza del mercato hanno adottato 2364 misure contro prodotti non a norma e pericolosi e hanno allertato la Commissione e gli altri Stati membri.

Nel quadro di un memorandum di intesa la Commissione ha fornito alle autorità cinesi, per il tramite del Sistema «RAPEX-CHINA» ([2]) informazioni specifiche sui prodotti di consumo originari della Cina che sono stati riscontrati pericolosi e quindi vietati o ritirati dal mercato europeo. Le competenti autorità cinesi indagano tutte le notifiche ricevute e, se del caso, adottano misure per prevenire o limitare l'ulteriore esportazione dei prodotti pericolosi specifici verso l'UE.

La proposta della Commissione in merito a un regolamento sulla sicurezza dei prodotti di consumo sia per i prodotti fabbricati nell'UE che per quelli importati sta seguendo il processo legislativo.

— Per quanto concerne la cooperazione tecnica UE-Cina sui DPI, nel gennaio 2014 è stato avviato un nuovo programma denominato «IP KEY». Il programma dovrebbe durare tre anni e ha una dotazione 7,5 milioni di euro. Il suo intento è assicurare una cooperazione con le autorità cinesi al fine di migliorare la normativa e le prassi relative ai DPI.

([1]) RAPEX è il sistema d'allarme rapido dell'UE che agevola lo scambio rapido di informazioni tra gli Stati membri e la Commissione sulle misure adottate per prevenire o limitare la commercializzazione o l'uso di prodotti che presentino un grave rischio per la salute e la sicurezza dei consumatori.

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/rapex_china_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000019/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Chinese cosmetics

With reference to my earlier question (E-003740/2013), can the Commission provide an update on the impact the measures cited in its answer have had?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

With reference to Written Question E-003740/2013, the Honourable Member of Parliament will find an update on the impact of the measures taken by the Commission.

— With regard to border measures, according to the 2012 Report on EU Customs enforcement of IPR the number of detentions of cosmetics with provenance China accounted for EUR 38 411 744 (768 741 articles detained and 1912 detention cases).

The Commission has negotiated the renewal of the bilateral Action Plan regarding EU-China customs cooperation on IPR. The signing of the new Action Plan should take place in Spring 2014.

— With regard to the protection of consumers and the RAPEX ([1]) system, in 2013, national market surveillance authorities have taken 2364 measures against non-compliant and risky products, alerting the Commission and other Member States.

In the framework of a memorandum of understanding, the Commission provides the Chinese authorities via the 'RAPEX-CHINA' system ([2]) with specific information on consumer products originating from China that have been identified as dangerous and consequently banned or withdrawn from the European market. The competent Chinese authorities investigate all notifications received and, when necessary, adopts measures to prevent or restrict further export of the specific hazardous products to the EU.

The Commission proposal for a regulation on Consumer Product Safety for both products manufactured in the EU and imported ones is under legislative progress.

— With regard to the EU-China technical cooperation on IPR a new programme called 'IP KEY' has been launched on January 2014. It intends to last 3 years with a budget of EUR 7.5 million. Its aim is to cooperate with Chinese authorities to improve IPR laws and practices.

([1]) RAPEX is established as the EU rapid alert system that facilitates the rapid exchange of information between Member States and the Commission on measures taken to prevent or restrict the marketing or use of products posing a serious risk to the health and safety of consumers.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/safety/rapex/rapex_china_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000020/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Incidenti stradali in Europa

Con riferimento all'interrogazione E-011477/2011, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti sui risultati delle azioni e sull'effettiva attuazione delle proposte illustrate nella sua risposta?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2014)

Le misure annunciate in tema di installazione obbligatoria di dispositivi avanzati di frenata d'emergenza (AEBS) nei veicoli commerciali sono state attuate tramite un regolamento specifico della Commissione ([1]). Tale regolamento delinea i requisiti tecnici e i metodi di prova per l'approvazione dei sistemi AEBS da installarsi nei veicoli in questione.

Tali misure sono entrate in vigore per l'omologazione di nuovi tipi di veicoli il 1° novembre 2013 e dovranno essere applicate per tutti i nuovi veicoli a decorrere dal 1° novembre 2015. È pertanto troppo presto per valutare l'impatto reale di tali misure ai fini della riduzione del numero delle vittime, mortali o no, degli incidenti stradali.

Tra le altre iniziative, la possibilità di estendere l'attuazione dei sistemi avanzati di assistenza al conducente ai veicoli commerciali e/o privati esistenti è stata dibattuta durante una riunione degli stakeholder organizzata dalla Commissione l'8 marzo 2013. Nel 2014 la Commissione preparerà anche una relazione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio contenente un'ampia rassegna di questa legislazione per la sicurezza attiva e passiva dei veicoli in cui si valuteranno diverse tecnologie installate sui veicoli. Questo riesame, che sarà corroborato da uno studio avviato alla fine del 2013, esaminerà le nuove eventuali misure per migliorare la sicurezza dei veicoli, le quali costituiranno la base di intervento per le iniziative future in tema di omologazione dei veicoli.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 347/2012 della Commissione, del 16 aprile 2012, che attua il regolamento (CE) n. 661/2009 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio per quanto riguarda i requisiti per l'omologazione di talune categorie di veicoli a motore relativamente ai dispositivi avanzati di frenata d'emergenza, GU L 109 del 21.4.2012, pagg. 1-17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000020/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Traffic accidents in Europe

With reference to Question E-011477/2011, can the Commission provide an update on the impact the measures cited in its answer have had and state whether the proposals referred to have in fact been implemented?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The announced measures for the mandatory fitting of advanced emergency breaking systems (AEBS) in commercial vehicles have been implemented by means of a specific Commission Regulation ([1]). This regulation specifies the technical requirements and test methods for the approval of the AEBS systems to be fitted in the vehicles covered.

These measures have entered into force for the approval of new vehicle types as from 1 November 2013 and will have to be applied for all new vehicles as from 1 November 2015. It is therefore too early to assess the real impact these measures will have in contributing to the reduction of road accident fatilities and injuries.

Among other initiatives, the possibility of extending the implementation of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems to existing commercial and/or private vehicles was debated during a stakeholder meeting organised by the Commission on 8 March 2013. In 2014 the Commission shall also prepare a report to the European Parliament and to the Council carrying out a comprehensive review of its vehicle active- and passive-safety legislation, assessing various in-vehicle technologies. This review, which will be informed by a study launched at the end of 2013, investigating new possible measures to improve vehicle safety, will constitute the basis for intervention for future initiatives on the type-approval of vehicles.

([1]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 347/2012 of 16 April 2012 implementing Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council with respect to type-approval requirements for certain categories of motor vehicles with regard to advanced emergency braking systems, OJ L 109, 21.4.2012, p. 1-17.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000021/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Emergenza lavoro minorile

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-005113/2012, può la Commissione fornire dati aggiornati sui risultati delle proposte illustrate nella sua risposta?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(18 febbraio 2014)

Le stime 2013 dell'Organizzazione internazionale del lavoro (OIL) indicano un calo globale del lavoro minorile tra il 2000 e il 2012 da 245 milioni a 168 milioni. Nello stesso periodo il numero di bambini che effettuano lavori pericolosi è calato, passando da 170 milioni a 85 milioni. L'UE continua a adoperarsi per eliminare il lavoro minorile promuovendo un approccio olistico e usando un'ampia panoplia di strumenti.

Nel 2013 la Commissione ha pubblicato tre documenti pertinenti. Il documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione sul commercio e le forme peggiori di lavoro minorile ([1]) offre un quadro più approfondito sulla correlazione tra gli scambi internazionali e le forme peggiori di lavoro minorile. La guida sui diritti umani all'indirizzo delle PMI ([2]) nonché gli orientamenti alle imprese in tre settori industriali (agenzie di lavoro e di reclutamento, tecnologie dell'informazione e della comunicazione nonché petrolio e gas) ([3]) incoraggia le imprese unionali a far prova di diligenza dovuta, sulla base del rischio, anche lungo la loro filiera delle forniture, per evitare qualsiasi forma di violazione dei diritti umani, compreso il lavoro minorile.

Il piano d'azione dell'UE sui diritti umani 2012-14 comprende azioni volte a promuovere l'implementazione della convenzione 182 dell'OIL. In proposito, si rinvia alla relazione annuale dell'UE sui diritti umani e la democrazia nel mondo nel 2012 ([4]) e all'imminente edizione 2013.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/may/tradoc_151114.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/files/csr-sme/human-rights-sme-guide-final_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/human-rights/index_en.htm
([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%209431%202013%20INIT&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst09%2Fst09431.en13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000021/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Child labour crisis

With reference to my earlier question (E-005113/2012), can the Commission provide an update on the impact the proposals cited in its answer have had?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

2013 International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates show a decrease in child labour globally between 2000 and 2012 from 245 million to 168 million. During the same period the number of children in hazardous work has dropped from 170 million to 85 million. The EU continues to work for elimination of child labour promoting a holistic approach and using a broad spectrum of instruments.

In 2013, the Commission published three relevant documents. The Staff Working Document on Trade and the Worst Forms of Child Labour ([1]) provides a deeper look at the link between international trade and the worst forms of child labour. The human rights guide for SMEs ([2]) as well as guidance for enterprises in three industrial sectors (employment and recruitment agencies; information and communications technologies; oil and gas) ([3]) encourage EU companies to carry out risk-based due diligence, including through their supply chains, in order to avoid any forms of human rights violations, including child labour.

The EU's Human Rights Action Plan 2012-14 contains actions to promote the implementation of ILO Convention 182. In this regard, reference is made to the Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2012 ([4]) and the forthcoming 2013 edition.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/may/tradoc_151114.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/files/csr-sme/human-rights-sme-guide-final_en.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/human-rights/index_en.htm
([4]) http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%209431%202013%20INIT&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst09%2Fst09431.en13.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000022/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Misure protezionistiche applicate dalle economie emergenti

Con riferimento alla mia interrogazione E-007259/2012, può la Commissione fornire aggiornamenti sui risultati delle azioni illustrate nella sua risposta?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(21 febbraio 2014)

Informazioni sugli effetti prodotti dalle azioni della Commissione per affrontare gli ostacoli agli scambi creati dai principali partner commerciali dell'UE sono reperibili nella relazione 2013 sugli ostacoli agli scambi e agli investimenti ([1]). Una nuova versione sarà disponibile nel marzo 2014.

Più specificamente, nell'ambito della strategia di accesso ai mercati portata avanti dall'UE, a decorrere dall'ottobre 2012, su un totale di 220 importanti ostacoli si sono registrati risultati positivi in 70 casi in seguito all'intervento dell'UE. I vantaggi complessivi per l'UE in termini di flussi commerciali generati ammontano a circa 2 miliardi di euro all'anno.

L'UE difende anche attivamente i propri diritti nell'ambito del OMC. A tutto il 2013 l'UE era impegnata in posizione d'attacco in 21 casi innanzi ad un aumento delle pratiche illecite da parte delle grandi economie emergenti.

Le condizioni commerciali dovrebbero migliorare in seguito all'attuazione del «Pacchetto di Bali», concordato nel dicembre 2013, che contiene nuove regole in particolare per quanto concerne l'agevolazione degli scambi. A livello plurilaterale sono in corso negoziati su un accordo in materia di servizi nonché sull'espansione del campo di applicazione dell'accordo sulle tecnologie dell'informazione (anche se i negoziati relativi a quest'ultimo sono stati sospesi nel novembre 2011). Inoltre, 14 membri del OMC, tra cui l'UE, hanno annunciato di recente a Davos l'avvio di negoziati sui beni ecologici.

Parallelamente, l'UE è impegnata in negoziati ALS per aprire i mercati di paesi emergenti come Mercosur, India, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailandia e Marocco. L'UE sta esaminando anche le potenzialità di ALS con l'Indonesia e le Filippine.

Infine, la comunicazione «Piccole imprese, grande mondo» è in via di attuazione. È stata realizzata la mappatura delle strutture unionali di sostegno alle imprese all'estero e nell'UE che verrà pubblicata online in un «Portale per l'internazionalizzazione delle PMI».

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150742.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000022/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Protectionist measures taken by emerging economies

With reference to my earlier question (E-007259/2012), can the Commission provide an update on the impact the measures cited in its answer have had?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

Information on the effect of the Commission's actions to tackle the trade barriers erected by the EU's key trading partners is available in the Trade and Investment Barriers Report of 2013 ([1]). A new version will be available in March 2014.

More specifically, under the EU Market Access Strategy, as of October 2012, on a total of 220 key barriers, positive outcomes were noted in 70 cases as a result of EU action. The overall benefits for the EU in terms of trade flows generated amount to ca. EUR 2 billion annually.

The EU is also actively defending its rights in the WTO. As of the end of 2013, the EU was engaged offensively in 21 cases, with more challenges of illegal practices by large emerging economies.

Trading conditions should improve after the implementation of the 'Bali Package' agreed in December 2013 with new disciplines in particular on trade facilitation. At the plurilateral level, negotiations are ongoing on a Services Agreement as well as on the expansion of the scope of the Information Technology Agreement (although the latter were suspended in November 2011). In addition, 14 WTO Members, including the EU, announced recently in Davos the launching of negotiations on green goods.

In parallel, the EU is engaged in FTA negotiations to open up the markets of emerging countries such as Mercosur, India, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Morocco. The EU is also exploring the potential for FTAs with Indonesia and the Philippines.

Finally, the implementation of the communication 'Small Business, Big World' is also ongoing. The mapping of EU business support structures abroad and in the EU was achieved and will be published online in a 'SME Internationalisation Portal'.

([1]) http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/march/tradoc_150742.pdf

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000023/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Spesa pubblica in Europa

Con riferimento alle interrogazioni della sottoscritta E-006272/2012 ed E-006811/2012, può la Commissione fornire dati aggiornati sui risultati delle azioni illustrate nella sua risposta?

Risposta di Olli Rehn a nome della Commissione
(24 febbraio 2014)

Dopo la precedente risposta alle interrogazioni E-006272 e E-006811 del 2012, la Commissione ha continuato a sorvegliare la qualità della spesa pubblica negli Stati membri dell'UE, anche in ordine all'efficienza nella fornitura di beni e servizi pubblici. In particolare, a seguito di una richiesta del Consiglio europeo, nel dicembre 2012 i servizi della Commissione hanno pubblicato una relazione dal titolo «Qualità della spesa pubblica nell'UE», comprendente una sezione relativa alla revisione della spesa e alla strutturazione del bilancio in base ai risultati a partire da una selezione di casi tipo. Su queste basi il Consiglio «Economia e finanzia» di marzo 2013 ha adottato conclusioni in materia, sottolineando la necessità di rafforzare il dialogo tra gli Stati membri su specifiche voci della spesa pubblica.

Nelle raccomandazioni specifiche per paese formulate dall'UE nel quadro del processo annuale di sorveglianza delle politiche e delle riforme degli Stati membri (il semestre europeo) l'efficienza della pubblica amministrazione è sempre più spesso annoverata tra gli aspetti su cui è necessario compiere ulteriori progressi. Sulla scorta delle conclusioni del Consiglio summenzionate è inoltre in programma, in seno al comitato dell'UE competente, un esercizio di inventario delle esperienze nazionali e delle migliori pratiche in materia di revisione della spesa, che prevede anche l'elaborazione di una relazione da parte dei servizi della Commissione. Va tuttavia sottolineato che in questo ambito la sovranità spetta in ultima istanza alle autorità nazionali e che il ruolo dell'UE non può spingersi oltre la formulazione di raccomandazioni specifiche e la creazione di opportunità di dialogo e di apprendimento reciproco.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000023/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Public expenditure in Europe

With reference to my earlier questions (E-006272/2012 and E-006811/2012), can the Commission provide an update on the impact the measures cited in its answer have had?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

Since our previous reply to questions E-006272 and E-006811/2012, the Commission has continued to monitor the quality of public expenditure in the EU Member States, including in relation to efficiency in the provision of public goods and services. Specifically, following a request of the European Council, the Commission services report on 'Quality of public expenditure in the EU' was published in December 2012, including a section on performance-based budgeting and spending reviews, based on a selected number of case studies. On that basis the Ecofin Council of March 2013 adopted conclusions on this matter and underlined the need for enhanced dialogue among Member States on specific categories of public spending.

The efficiency of public administration is increasingly mentioned as an area where further progress is needed in the Country-Specific-Recommendations issued by the EU within the annual surveillance process of Member States policies and reforms (the European Semester). Spurred by the abovementioned Council conclusions, a stock-taking exercise on national experiences and best practices with respect to spending reviews is also scheduled to take place in the relevant EU Committee, including a report to be submitted by Commission services. However it should still be underlined that sovereignty on this matter ultimately rests with national authorities and that the role of the EU cannot go beyond providing specific recommendations and offering opportunities for dialogue and mutual learning.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000024/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Individuata la causa del fenomeno delle «mozzarelle blu», legata all'uso di antiparassitari in agricoltura

Il gruppo di ricerca dell'area di «Ispezione degli alimenti di origine animale» del Dipartimento di Biomedicina Comparata e Alimentazione (BCA) dell'Università degli Studi di Padova ha reso noti in data 11 dicembre 2013 gli esiti della ricerca svolta sul fenomeno delle cosiddette «mozzarelle blu» .

I ricercatori rivelano di aver identificato il ceppo batterico responsabile della colorazione: trattasi di un gruppo geneticamente ben distinto della specie Pseudomonas fluorescens, strettamente correlato a un ceppo che viene usato in agricoltura come antiparassitario nella lotta biologica sia negli Stati Uniti d'America che in Canada. I batteri che danno il colore blu alle mozzarelle sono stati in parte raccolti con la collaborazione dell'Istituto zooprofilattico sperimentale delle Venezie.

Lo studio sarà pubblicato sulla rivista scientifica «Food Microbiology» di cui il caporedattore è anche, responsabile del dipartimento di microbiologia degli alimenti della Food and Drug Administration (FDA) statunitense. Per facilitare l'applicazione della metodica a tutti i laboratori di analisi interessati è stato anche aperto un database on-line che contiene tutte le informazioni utili e nel quale tutti i dati relativi ai diversi ceppi batterici potranno essere depositati e condivisi, grazie alla rete internet, dalla comunità scientifica e dagli operatori del settore.

Tutto ciò premesso, la Commissione

1. È al corrente del fenomeno e dei suesposti risultati della ricerca svolta a riguardo?

2. Può riferire se l'EFSA o altro organismo comunitario stia compiendo studi analoghi sul fenomeno e, in caso affermativo, a quali risultati siano già pervenuti questi ultimi?

3. Può chiarire se e dove venga usato l'antiparassitario in questione nel territorio dell'Unione europea e, in caso affermativo, può chiarire inoltre se e quali iniziative intende intraprendere in merito all'uso del medesimo?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dei casi di «mozzarella blu» poiché ha diramato le informazioni pertinenti per il tramite del Sistema di allarme rapido per gli alimenti e i mangimi (RASFF) nel giugno 2010. Verso la fine del 2010 le autorità italiane sono giunte alla conclusione che la variazione di colore era dovuta a contaminazione da Pseudomonas fluorescens e che non configurava un rischio potenziale per la salute pubblica.

In quanto prodotto medicinale veterinario, come risulta dalle informazioni che figurano nelle banche dati pertinenti, la *Pseudomonas fluorescens* non risulta aver ricevuto un'autorizzazione alla commercializzazione sulla base di una procedura decentrata di riconoscimento reciproco o di una procedura centralizzata di autorizzazione alla commercializzazione nell'UE. Inoltre, nell'UE non sono autorizzati additivi per mangimi contenenti Pseudomonas da usarsi nell'alimentazione animale.

Per quanto concerne i prodotti fitosanitari, finora nell'UE sono autorizzati due ceppi di Pseudomonas quali sostanze attive: *Pseudomonas chlororaphis* del ceppo MA342 e *Pseudomonas* sp. del ceppo DSMZ 13134. Conformemente alle disposizioni giuridiche del regolamento (CE) n. 1107/2009 ([1]) gli Stati membri, in coordinamento con l'Autorità europea per la sicurezza alimentare, possono concedere un'autorizzazione in base a una valutazione del rischio eseguita nel contesto di un esame tra pari (sintetizzata sotto forma di conclusioni dell'EFSA), da cui risulti che non si prevedono effetti nocivi per la salute umana alle condizioni d'uso indicate nella notifica.

Per quanto concerne i prodotti biocidi, la *Pseudomonas fluorescens* non figura sull'elenco delle sostanze attive approvate per l'uso nei prodotti biocidi stabilito dal regolamento (UE) n. 528/2012 ([2]), né nel programma di riesame delle sostanze attive esistenti stabilito dal regolamento (CE) n. 1451/2007 ([3]). Di conseguenza, essa non può essere immessa sul mercato o utilizzata quale prodotto biocida.

([1]) GU L 309 del 24.11.2009, pag. 1.
([2]) GUL 167 del 27.6.2012, pag. 1.
([3]) GU L 325 dell'11.12.2007, pag. 3.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000024/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Cause of the 'blue mozzarella' scandal traced back to the use of anti-parasitic agents in farming

On 11 December 2013, the results of an investigation into the 'blue mozzarella' scandal were published by the 'Inspection of foodstuffs of animal origin' research group of the Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Science (BCA) at the University of Padua.

The researchers confirmed that they had identified the bacterial strain responsible for the blue taint: it is genetically distinct from the species *Pseudomonas fluorescens* and closely related to a strain used as an anti-parasitic agent by farmers in both the United States and Canada. The bacteria that cause mozzarella cheese to turn blue were harvested partly in collaboration with the Istituto zooprofilattico sperimentale delle Venezie (Venice-Region Experimental Zooprophylactic Institute).

The study will be published in the scientific journal 'Food Microbiology', the editor-in-chief of which is Head of the Food Technology Branch of the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). An online database has also been set up containing all the relevant information, to help make the method available to all interested testing laboratories. All data relating to the various bacterial strains can be filed in this database and shared, over the Internet, by the scientific community and people working in the industry.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the case and the research findings outlined above?

2. Could the Commission clarify whether or not the EFSA or another Community body is carrying out similar studies into the case and, if so, what results have emerged to date?

3. Could the Commission state whether or not the anti-parasitic agent in question is used in the European Union, and if so where, and what action, if any, it intends to take regarding the use of that agent?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the cases of 'blue mozzarella' as it distributed the relevant information via the Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food (RASFF) in June 2010. Later in 2010, the Italian authorities concluded that the change of colour was due to a contamination with Pseudomonas fluorescens and that it was not hazardous to public health.

As a veterinary medicinal product — based on the information in the relevant databases -Pseudomonas *fluorescens* appears not to have been granted a marketing authorisation by a decentralised, mutual recognition or centralised marketing authorisation procedure in the EU. Furthermore there are no feed additives containing Pseudomonas authorised in the EU for use in animal nutrition.

For plant protection products, so far two strains of Pseudomonas are approved in the EU as active substances: *Pseudomonas chlororaphis* strain MA342 and *Pseudomonas* sp. strain DSMZ 13134. According to the legal requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 ([1]), an approval is granted based on a peer reviewed risk assessment done by Members States under coordination of the European Food Safety Authority (summarised in an EFSA Conclusion), which demonstrates that no harmful effects on human health are expected under the conditions of use stated in the notification.

As regards to biocidal products, *Pseudomonas fluorescens* is not within the list of approved active substances for use in biocidal products established by Regulation (EU) n° 528/2012 ([2]), nor in the review programme of existing active substances laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1451/2007 ([3]). Consequently, it cannot be made available on the market or used as a biocidal product.

([1]) OJ L 309/1, 24.11.2009.
([2]) OJ L 167, 27.6.2012, p. 1.
([3]) OJ L 325, 11.12.2007, p. 3.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000025/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Operazione in territorio croato di trattamento a fini di smaltimento di armi chimiche provenienti dalla Siria, sotto la regia dell'ONU e degli Stati Uniti d'America

Il governo croato, nella persona del premier Zoran Milanović, ha reso noto che sarà effettuata in territorio croato un'operazione di trattamento a fini di smaltimento di armi chimiche provenienti dalla Siria (circa 1.300 tonnellate di sostanze pericolose), sotto la regia dell'Organizzazione delle Nazioni Unite e degli Stati Uniti d'America.

La stampa, in merito ai dettagli dell'operazione, riporta che i materiali da smaltire consisterebbero nei cosiddetti «precursori», ossia sostanze altamente tossiche tra le quali si annoverano l'iprite e il sarin. Tali materiali dovrebbero venire collocati in contenitori isotermici per essere successivamente imbarcati in un cargo che lascerà il porto siriano di Latakia per far rotta verso Cipro, per poi attraversare il Canale d'Otranto ed entrare in acque territoriali croate, con destinazione il porto della città di Fiume. Qui il carico dovrebbe essere trasbordato su una nave militare statunitense, che dovrebbe quindi salpare dallo scalo per raggiungere l'Oceano Atlantico dove in un punto assolutamente segreto le sostanze chimiche dovrebbero essere filtrate e incenerite a una temperatura di 800-1.000 gradi celsius.

L'intera operazione dovrebbe durare dalle 24 alle 48 ore, sotto la strettissima sorveglianza degli ispettori ONU dell'Organizzazione per il controllo delle armi chimiche. Non è stato reso noto, tuttavia, come le ceneri residue dovrebbero venire successivamente smaltite.

Libero Kocjan, esperto croato di operazioni di movimentazione di sostanze attive, ha dichiarato sempre alla stampa che, se tutto avvenisse secondo le norme di sicurezza internazionali, non ci dovrebbe essere alcun pericolo per la vita delle persone ovvero per l'ambiente ([1]).

1. Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione riferire se è a conoscenza dell'operazione e, in caso affermativo, può chiarire quando e come verrà effettuata?

2. Sempre nel caso in cui la Commissione fosse a conoscenza dell'operazione, può altresì chiarire in che modo verranno scongiurati eventuali rischi sanitari e ambientali e come verranno smaltite le ceneri residue?

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

1. Il piano di distruzione delle armi chimiche siriane è stato predisposto sotto la supervisione dell'OPCW e dell'ONU. A quanto ci risulta, gli Stati contraenti e l'UNEP sono stati consultati sui suoi aspetti pertinenti. Gli elementi più recenti del piano sono ripresi nelle decisioni del consiglio esecutivo dell'OPCW. Stando alle informazioni di cui disponiamo, la Croazia ha presentato un'offerta alternativa che è stata accettata.

L'UE ha erogato 12 milioni di EUR a favore del fondo fiduciario speciale per la fase di distruzione e 4,5 milioni di EUR per il fondo fiduciario dell'OPCW e si è impegnata con l'OPCW su queste basi.

2. Diversi Stati membri forniscono attualmente importanti contributi finanziari e in natura a sostegno del piano e si sono offerti di acconsentire alla distruzione dei materiali di scarto sul loro territorio. Le istituzioni che partecipano alla stesura del piano di distruzione e offrono consulenza in merito, compreso l'UNEP, e gli Stati contraenti saranno informati delle loro responsabilità a norma del diritto internazionale e gli Stati membri che si offrono di fornire un'assistenza specifica in natura terranno conto anche dei loro obblighi a norma del diritto dell'Unione e della legislazione nazionale.

Secondo la programmazione dell'OPCW/ONU, l'idrolisi avverrà probabilmente a bordo di una nave statunitense appositamente selezionata nel Mediterraneo e non sono previsti scarichi di materiali nel Mediterraneo. La nave statunitense fungerà soltanto da piattaforma per l'idrolisi. I materiali di scarto saranno probabilmente smaltiti dagli operatori commerciali che partecipano alla gara d'appalto bandita dall'OPCW il 20 dicembre 2013.

([1]) Cfr. Articolo del quotidiano locale «Il Piccolo» di Trieste del 13.12.2013: http://ricerca.gelocal.it/ilpiccolo/archivio/ilpiccolo/2013/12/13/PR_15_02.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000025/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Operation on Croatian territory to dispose of Syrian chemical weapons, under the supervision of the UN and the United States

Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanović has confirmed that his country will host an operation to destroy Syrian chemical weapons (around 1300 tonnes of hazardous substances), under the supervision of the UN and the United States.

According to press reports, the materials to be destroyed are 'precursors', highly toxic substances including mustard gas and sarin. These materials are to be placed in isothermal containers and then loaded on to a freighter that will leave the Syrian port of Latakia bound for Cyprus, before passing through the Strait of Otranto to reach Croatian territorial waters and, ultimately the port of Rijeka. From there the cargo is to be transferred to a US military vessel that will then set sail for the Atlantic Ocean, where, at an absolutely secret location, the chemical agents will be filtered out and incinerated at a temperature of between 800 and 1000 degrees Celsius.

The entire operation should take between 24 and 48 hours, under the strict supervision of UN inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. How the waste material from the incineration will itself be disposed of has yet to be disclosed, however.

Libero Kocjan, a Croatian expert in the shipment of active substances, has told the press that if international safety standards are adhered to at all times, there should be no danger to life or the environment ([1]).

1. In light of the above, could the Commission state whether or not it is aware of the operation and, if so, how and when it will take place?

2. Could the Commission also — again, if it is aware of the operation — provide details as to how any risks to health and the environment will be prevented and how the incineration waste will be disposed of?

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

1. The plan for the destruction of Syria chemical weapons has been drawn up under the oversight of the OPCW and the UN and we understand that the States Parties and UNEP have been consulted on relevant aspects of the plan. The most recent aspects of the plan are set out in the Executive Council Decisions of OPCW. We understand that an alternative offer to that made by Croatia has been accepted.

The EU has provided EUR 12 million for the Special Trust Fund for the destruction phase and EUR 4.5 million for the OPCW Trust Fund and has engaged with OPCW on that basis.

2. Several Member States are making important financial contributions and contributions in kind to support the plan and have offered to accept the destruction of waste materials on their territory. The institutions involved in drawing up and advising on the destruction plan, including UNEP, as well as the States Parties will be aware of their responsibilities under international law, and those Member States offering to provide specific assistance in kind will also have considered relevant EU and national obligations when offering support.

OPCW/UN planning indicates that hydrolysis is likely to take place on a US vessel designed for the purpose in the Mediterranean and that there is no intention to jettison any of the material into the Mediterranean. The US vessel is simply being used as a platform for hydrolysis to take place. The waste material will probably be disposed of by commercial operators responding to the OPCW tender launched on 20 December 2013.

([1]) Cf. Article from Trieste local newspaper 'Il Piccolo' dated 13.12.2013: http://ricerca.gelocal.it/ilpiccolo/archivio/ilpiccolo/2013/12/13/PR_15_02.html

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000026/14
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 januari 2014)

Betreft: Kosten nieuwjaarsborrel(s)

Kan de Commissie mij, zoveel mogelijk gespecificeerd, aangeven hoeveel de uitgaven zijn/waren voor eventuele nieuwjaarsborrel(s) van de Commissie? Te denken valt daarbij aan nieuwjaarsfestiviteiten zoals borrel(s) c.q. receptie(s) van de voorzitter en/of leden van de Commissie, topambtenaren in dienst van de Commissie, hoge vertegenwoordiger, stafleden enz.

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(6 maart 2014)

Zoals elk jaar heeft de voorzitter in januari 2014 een receptie georganiseerd voor het corps diplomatique in België. Daarbij gaat het om 900 mensen en ongeveer 25 000 euro.

Andere diensten van de Commissie organiseren diverse nieuwjaarsevenementen voor het personeel, maar de Commissie houdt daarvan geen overzicht bij, aangezien deze doorgaans worden betaald door de deelnemende personeelsleden zelf.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000026/14
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Costs of New Year celebrations

Can the Commission provide me with information, if possible in the form of an itemised list, on the amount of money which has been spent on any New Year celebrations organised by the Commission, such as social gatherings and receptions held by the President and/or members of the Commission, top-ranking officials working for the Commission, high-level representatives, management staff, etc.?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(6 March 2014)

In January 2014, as every year, the President organises yearly reception for the diplomatic corps in Belgium. It involved the participation of 900 people at a cost of around EUR 25 000.

Other Commission services organise various events for staff to celebrate the New Year but the Commission does not keep any specific record of these events, which are generally financed by contributions from participating staff.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000027/14
do Komisji
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(3 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Walka z bezrobociem wśród młodych

W ramach walki z bezrobociem większość krajów członkowskich już wdrożyła lub jest w trakcie wdrażania różnych form pomocy osobom młodym. Instrumenty pomocowe obejmują zarówno pomoc doraźną jaką są gwarancje dla młodych, jak i działania długofalowe takie jak reformy systemów edukacyjnych.

W moim sprawozdaniu o możliwych rozwiązaniach walki z bezrobociem wśród młodych podkreśliłam, że ze względu na specyfikę modelu zatrudniania, różną kulturę pracy oraz uwarunkowania geograficzno-gospodarcze rozwiązania zastosowane w poszczególnych krajach muszą być różnorodne i dostosowane do specyficznej sytuacji danego kraju lub nawet regionu.

W celu osiągnięcia skutecznej poprawy sytuacji niezbędne jest monitorowanie zastosowywanych rozwiązań, ich analiza a także gromadzenie danych statystycznych odnośnie osiąganych rezultatów tak, aby możliwe było opracowanie zbioru najefektywniejszych rozwiązań oraz opracowanie zbioru najlepszych praktyk.

W związku z tym chciałabym zapytać:

1. Jakie kroki podjęła Komisja w celu ustanowienia instrumentu monitorowania wdrażanych rozwiązań i badania ich skuteczności?

2. Czy Komisja ma zamiar przygotować szczególny program w celu gromadzenia danych statystycznych odnośnie rozwiązań wspierających zatrudnianie młodych, które są stosowane w politykach zatrudniania w poszczególnych państwach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(3 marca 2014 r.)

Rekomendacja Rady w sprawie ustanowienia gwarancji dla młodzieży stanowi, że państwa członkowskie powinny „monitorować i oceniać wszystkie działania i programy gwarancji dla młodzieży", tak aby polityka oparta na faktach i interwencje mogły się rozwijać. We współpracy z europejską siecią publicznych służb zatrudnienia (PSZ) Komisja będzie w dalszym ciągu monitorować i składać sprawozdania w sprawie wyników wdrożenia systemów „gwarancji dla młodzieży" mających znaczenie dla PSZ.

Ponadto Komisja została wezwana do „monitorowania wdrażania niniejszego zalecenia, oraz ustanowienia za pośrednictwem Komitetu Zatrudnienia wielostronnego nadzoru". W tym podgrupa ds. wskaźników Komitetu Zatrudnienia (EMCO) analizuje wymogi dotyczące danych w sprawie monitorowania „gwarancji dla młodzieży" i na podstawie wniosku Komisji, przedstawi zalecenia dotyczące gromadzenia informacji na szczeblu UE.

Ponadto aby zapewnić bardziej ścisłą kontrolę i właściwą ocenę wyników inicjatywy na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych, która będzie również wspierać „gwarancję dla młodzieży", nowe rozporządzenie w sprawie Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego określa szczegółowe ustalenia dotyczące monitorowania i oceny, w tym wykaz wspólnych wskaźników wyników mających zastosowanie do wszystkich działań wspieranych w ramach inicjatywy na rzecz zatrudnienia ludzi młodych. Zachęca się państwa członkowskie do stosowania, w stopniu, w którym mają one zastosowanie, tych lub podobnych wskaźników dla inicjatyw młodzieżowych, które nie są finansowane przez Europejski Fundusz Społeczny.

Wymienia się także najlepsze praktyki w zakresie środków zatrudniania młodzieży w ramach europejskiego programu wzajemnego uczenia się i „Strategicznych ram europejskiej współpracy w dziedzinie kształcenia i szkolenia" (ET 2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000027/14
to the Commission
Joanna Katarzyna Skrzydlewska (PPE)
(3 January 2014)

Subject: Tackling youth unemployment

In tacking unemployment, one measure that most Member States have already introduced or are in the process of introducing is various forms of youth aid. These aid instruments include both short-term aid, such as guarantees for young people, and long-term action, such as reform of the education system.

In my report on possible measures for tackling youth unemployment, I emphasised that, owing to the differences between the Member States in terms of employment model, work culture and geographical and economic conditions, the measures introduced need to be tailored to the specific situation in each country or region.

If there is to be a real improvement in the situation, whatever measures are applied will need to be monitored and analysed, and statistics on the results obtained will need to be collected with a view to drawing up a list of the most effective measures and a set of best practices.

I would therefore like to ask:

1. What arrangements has the Commission made for monitoring the measures introduced and determining their effectiveness?

2. Does the Commission intend to put in place a special programme for collecting statistics on measures to promote youth employment that already form part of Member State employment policies?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

The Council Recommendation on Establishing a Youth Guarantee sets out that Member States should 'monitor and evaluate all Youth Guarantee actions and programmes', so that more evidence-based policies and interventions can be developed. In cooperation with the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES) the Commission will continue to monitor and report on the PES-relevant results of the implementation Youth Guarantee schemes.

In addition, the Commission is called upon to 'monitor the implementation of this recommendation, and establish through the Employment Committee a multilateral surveillance'. In that context the EMCO (European Employment Committee) Indicators Sub-Group is looking at the data requirements for monitoring the Youth Guarantee, and on the basis of a proposal from the Commission, will come forward with recommendations on the collection of information at EU level.

In addition, in order to ensure a closer monitoring and proper assessment of the results of the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) which will also support the Youth Guarantee, the new ESF regulation sets out specific monitoring and evaluation arrangements, including a list of common result indicators applicable to all actions supported under the YEI. Member States are encouraged to use, to the extent they are applicable, these or similar indicators also for youth initiatives that are not financed by the ESF (European Social Fund).

Best practices in terms of youth employment measures are also shared through the European Mutual Learning Programme and the 'Strategic framework for European cooperation in Education and Training' (ET2020).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000029/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU funding for Palestinian Authority TV station

Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) and the Commentator website blog have reported that in October 2013 a Palestinian TV station broadcast an episode of the programme 'Sights of Jerusalem' using deeply offensive language about Jewish people and that producers of this programme are co-funded by the EU.

According to the PMW statement, the PA TV broadcast spoke about 'crows' while showing visuals of religious Jews, and stated that 'the rats are armed' while showing visuals of Israeli soldiers.

PMW added: 'The programme was co-produced by PA TV and PYALARA, a Palestinian NGO for youth. PYALARA is funded by NDC (NGO Development Centre). NDC's donors include: the European Union, the World Bank, the French government's Agence Française de Développement, and a donor consortium of Switzerland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden'.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of this regrettable situation and alleged use of highly inflammatory language by PA TV? Has she raised the matter with the authorities in charge of broadcasting within the PA? If not, will she do so and will she ask them to issue an apology for using such terms, which seek to demonise Israeli people, and to pledge not to use such language in future as a condition for continued EU funding for PYALARA?

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

The HR/VP is aware of the report mentioned by the Honourable Member on the Sight of Jerusalem programme aired by the Palestine Public Broadcasting Corporation.

In accordance with objectives set out in the Commission and the EU-PA Action Plan, the HR/VP continues to advance democratic principles, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including through the funding of NGO projects.

EU funds are provided to entities and NGOs only in the framework of specific projects that fulfil these objectives. In this case, any EU funding received by NDC is used solely for capacity building of civil society networks, advancing some of the EU's main objectives with regards to the MEPP. Therefore, no EU funds were used in the production of the programme referred to by the Honourable Member.

In various Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, the EU has called on the parties to prevent actions that undermine the current peace negotiations, including incitement. Furthermore, within the aforementioned EU-PA Action Plan, the need to fight incitement is one of the primary objectives. The matter is also regularly raised in the framework the EU-Palestinian dialogue on human rights issues.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000031/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Preoccupanti livelli di torio 232 nell'area del poligono militare di Cordenons, San Quirino, Vivaro e San Giorgio della Richinvelda, in provincia di Pordenone

Nel territorio dei comuni di Cordenons, San Quirino, Vivaro e San Giorgio della Richinvelda, in provincia di Pordenone, nel comprensorio dei fiumi Cellina e Meduna, si trova un poligono militare dell'Esercito italiano, ove si svolgono esercitazioni che sono state fonte di contaminazione radioattiva dell'area. Come reso noto dalla stampa, il dipartimento provinciale dell'ARPA (Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione Ambientale) del Friuli-Venezia Giulia ha comunicato a fine dicembre del 2013 al Comando della 132° Brigata Ariete di Cordenons, al Comando dell'Esercito, alla regione del Friuli Venezia Giulia, alla provincia di Pordenone, alla prefettura di Pordenone, ai comuni succitati e infine all'ASS (Azienda per i Servizi Sanitari) n. 6 l'esito delle analisi effettuate in proposito, dalle quali emerge l'allarmante presenza di torio 232 nell'area. Il torio 232 è notoriamente un metallo radioattivo, che emette particelle sei volte più pericolose per la salute umana rispetto a quelle rilasciate dall'uranio impoverito. Esso raggiunge il massimo della tossicità circa 20-25 anni dopo il suo utilizzo. Più nello specifico, in quattro degli otto bersagli (carcasse di carri armati utilizzati per l'addestramento a fuoco) analizzati dall'ARPA è stata riscontrata una presenza di torio 232 notevolmente superiore al livello normalmente presente in natura, avente origine artificiale e presumibilmente collegata alle attività di addestramento militare. Si tratta probabilmente dell'eredità lasciata dalle esercitazioni svoltesi tra gli anni ottanta e novanta nel sito: tra il 1986 e il 2003, infatti, le compagnie dell'Esercito italiano avevano in dotazione missili anticarro spalleggiabili «Milan», che emettevano torio 232 ([1]). L'ARPA ha precisato che a breve effettuerà analisi più estese sull'area. Si ricorda che la zona per propria natura geologica, tende a percolare il materiale negli strati più bassi, circostanza questa che sembra rendere difficile la futura bonifica. Si rischia così di devastare l'area dei «Magredi», costituita da terre sassose che ne rappresentano la peculiarità, tutelata altresì quale SIC-ZPS ai sensi delle direttive Habitat 92/43/CEE e Uccelli 2009/147/CEE, in ragione della grande varietà della flora e della fauna ivi presenti ([2]).

Alla luce di quanto sopra, la Commissione:

1. è a conoscenza della situazione di contaminazione descritta sopra?

2. Può riferire se si siano verificati casi analoghi nel territorio dell'UE, come siano stati affrontati e se le aree siano state bonificate?

3. Quali iniziative intende intraprendere per prevenire il verificarsi di simili episodi nel territorio dell'UE, in particolare al fine di evitare la contaminazione delle falde acquifere?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2014)

1. La Commissione è consapevole del fatto che questo tipo di contaminazione da metalli può aver luogo nei poligoni di tiro quando si utilizzano munizioni contenenti metalli pesanti. Tuttavia, la Commissione non ha ricevuto informazioni su casi specifici giacché le attività militari non sono coperte dagli obblighi di comunicazione di cui agli articoli 35 e 36 del trattato Euratom ([3]).

Il monitoraggio del grado di radioattività dell'atmosfera, delle acque e del suolo è una responsabilità nazionale. Compete inoltre allo Stato membro interessato garantire il rispetto delle norme di sicurezza applicabili, compresi i limiti di dose per la popolazione. Sulla base delle informazioni inviate dagli Stati membri a norma dell'articolo 36 del trattato Euratom, la Commissione non dispone di dati che attestino la contaminazione della zona circostante la zona militare a cui si riferisce l'onorevole deputato.

2. Vi sono molti poligoni di tiro militari simili in Europa. Tuttavia, alla Commissione non risulta che siano in corso campagne di risanamento su vasta scala per il ripristino di queste aree.

3. Come indicato in precedenza, poiché la competenza della Commissione a norma del trattato Euratom non si estende alle attività militari, essa non può adottare iniziative relative a siti militari. Al di fuori delle zone militari si applicano gli obblighi in materia di monitoraggio di cui all'articolo 35 del trattato Euratom e la direttiva sulle norme fondamentali di sicurezza ([4]).

([1]) Gli stessi utilizzati nel poligono interforze di Quirra, in Sardegna, tristemente noto per gli effetti prodotti dalla contaminazione da torio 232.
([2]) SIC IT3310009 «Magredi del Cellina», ZPS IT 3311001 «Magredi di Pordenone».
([3]) La Corte di giustizia ha precisato, nella causa Commissione/Regno Unito (causa C-61/03, Racc. (2005) pag. I-2477), che il trattato Euratom e la relativa legislazione derivata non si applicano alle attività o pratiche di natura militare.
([4]) Direttiva 96/29/Euratom del Consiglio, del 13 maggio 1996, che stabilisce le norme fondamentali di sicurezza relative alla protezione sanitaria della popolazione e dei lavoratori contro i pericoli derivanti dalle radiazioni ionizzanti, GU L 159 del 29.6.1996.

Per quanto riguarda l'impatto sulle acque sotterranee, la direttiva quadro sulle acque ([5]) prevede disposizioni volte a prevenire l'inquinamento ([6]) e la Commissione sorveglia attentamente la loro attuazione. Inoltre, la recente direttiva 2013/51/Euratom ([7]) impone agli Stati membri di monitorare le sostanze radioattive presenti nelle acque destinate al consumo umano, al fine di mantenere i rischi da radiazioni ionizzanti al livello più basso ragionevolmente ottenibile.

([5]) Direttiva 2000/60/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2000, che istituisce un quadro per l'azione comunitaria in materia di acque, GU L 327 del 22.12.2000.

([6]) Come regola generale, la direttiva impone agli Stati membri di attuare le misure necessarie per prevenire o limitare le immissioni di inquinanti nelle acque sotterranee e per impedire il deterioramento dello stato di tutti i corpi idrici sotterranei. Inoltre, gli Stati membri sono tenuti a proteggere, migliorare e ripristinare le acque sotterranee al fine di conseguire un buono stato chimico e quantitativo entro il 2015.

([7]) Direttiva 2013/51/Euratom del Consiglio, del 22 ottobre 2013, che stabilisce requisiti per la tutela della salute della popolazione relativamente alle sostanze radioattive presenti nelle acque destinate al consumo umano, GU L 296 del 7.11.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000031/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Alarming levels of thorium-232 at the military firing range lying between Cordenons, San Quirino, Vivaro and San Giorgio della Richinvelda, in the province of Pordenone

The Italian Army operates a military firing range lying between the districts of Cordenons, San Quirino, Vivaro and San Giorgio della Richinvelda in the province of Pordenone, in the vicinity of the River Cellina and the River Meduna, and the drills carried out at this firing range have led to the area becoming radioactively contaminated. As has been reported by the press, in late December 2013 the Commander of the 132nd *Ariete* Armoured Division in Cordenons, the Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Army, the offices of the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the province of Pordenone and the affected districts, the prefect of Pordenone, and lastly Local Health Authority (ASS) No 6, were all sent the results of tests that had been carried out by the Friuli-Venezia Giulia provincial department of the Italian Regional Environmental Protection Agency (ARPA), which showed alarming levels of thorium-232 in the area. Thorium-232 is a notoriously radioactive metal, which emits particles that are six times more hazardous to human health than those released by depleted uranium. It is at its most toxic between around 20 and 25 years after use. More specifically, out of the eight targets (the shells of armoured tanks used for firing practice) tested by the ARPA, four were found to contain thorium-232 at markedly higher levels than those that generally occur naturally; these levels were therefore unnatural, and presumably attributable to military firing operations. In all likelihood, such levels are the legacy left behind by the drills carried out at the site in the 1980s and 1990s: between 1986 and 2003, the Italian Army's units were equipped with 'Milan' shoulder-fired anti-tank missiles, which emitted thorium-232 ([1]). The ARPA has indicated that it will shortly carry out more extensive tests in the area. It is recalled that, as a result of the area's geological make-up, materials tend to trickle down to the lowest layers, which makes their future recovery appear rather difficult. Consequently, there is an acute risk that the 'Magredi' region, and the rocky terrain that makes it so distinctive, will be devastated; what is more, the area is protected as both a site of Community importance and a Special Protection Area within the meaning of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), due to the wide variety of flora and fauna present there ([2]).

1. Is the Commission aware of this contamination?

2. Can it report whether any similar cases have occurred in the EU, how they were tackled and whether the areas affected were restored to their original state?

3. What initiatives does it intend to implement in order to prevent similar episodes from occurring in the EU, and in particular to prevent the contamination of aquifers?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

1. The Commission is aware that this type of metal contamination may take place in firing ranges when ammunition containing heavy metals is used. However, the Commission received no information on specific cases since military activities are not covered by the reporting obligations under Articles 35 and 36 of the Euratom Treaty ([3]).

The monitoring of the level of radioactivity in the air, water and soil is a national responsibility. It is also the responsibility of the Member State concerned to ensure compliance with the applicable safety standards, including dose limits for members of the public. The Commission has no evidence that the area surrounding the military zone referred to by the Honourable Member is contaminated, according to the information it receives from Member States under Article 36 of the Euratom Treaty.

2. There are many similar military firing ranges in Europe. However, the Commission is not aware of any large scale remediation campaigns to restore these areas.

3. As indicated above, as the Commission's competence under the Euratom Treaty does not extend to military activities, it cannot take any initiatives on military sites. Outside military areas, the monitoring requirements laid down in Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty and the Basic Safety Standards Directive apply ([4]).

([1]) The same missiles were also used at the inter-force firing range in Quirra (Sardinia), which is sadly famous for the effects resulting from thorium-232 contamination.
([2]) SCI IT3310009 'Magredi del Cellina', SPA IT3311001 'Magredi di Pordenone'.
([3]) The Court of Justice has ruled, in Commission v UK (Case C-61/03, ECR (2005) I-2477), that the Euratom Treaty and its secondary legislation do not apply to activities or practices of a military nature.
([4]) Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13 May 1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation, OJ L 159, 29.6.1996.

As regards the impact on groundwater, the Water Framework Directive ([5]) includes provisions aimed at preventing pollution ([6]) and the Commission monitors closely their implementation. Furthermore, the recently adopted Directive 2013/51/Euratom ([7]) requires Member States to monitor radioactive substances in water intended for human consumption in order to keep the risk from ionising radiation as low as reasonably achievable.

([5]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

([6]) As a general rule, the directive requires Member States to implement the measures necessary to prevent or limit inputs of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent the deterioration of the status of all groundwater bodies. Moreover, Member States are required to protect, enhance and restore all groundwater bodies with a view to achieving good chemical and quantitative status by 2015.

([7]) Council Directive 2013/51/Euratom of 22 October 2013 laying down requirements for the protection of the health of the general public with regard to radioactive substances in water intended for human consumption, OJ L 296, 7.11.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000032/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Violazione delle direttive 92/43/CEE e 2009/147/CEE per modifica delle rotte di migrazione di piano faunistico venatorio provinciale, dopo la valutazione di incidenza, senza suo rinnovo

Con deliberazione consiliare n.79 del 10 luglio 2013, la Provincia di Bergamo, dove si trovano numerosissime ZPS e IBA, ha adottato il «Nuovo Piano Faunistico Venatorio» senza però sottoporre a valutazione di incidenza le modifiche introdotte da emendamenti peggiorativi approvati in sede di deliberativa. La proposta di piano provinciale veniva sottoposta a valutazione d'incidenza prima delle modifiche censurate, e appunto prima delle stesse otteneva parere di incidenza favorevole dalla Regione Lombardia, in quanto prevedeva oasi di protezione lungo le rotte di migrazione caratterizzate da confini estesi e divieto totale di caccia nelle stesse, per evitare disturbo all'avifauna migratoria. La proposta di piano era frutto di una serie di sentenze ottenute dal WWF Italia che aveva impugnato i precedenti piani, non rispettosi della protezione comunitaria dell'avifauna migratoria.

Dopo la valutazione di incidenza la proposta di piano veniva però modificata dal Consiglio provinciale, che in sede di approvazione cancellava 14 Oasi di protezione, rendeva discontinua la protezione lungo le rotte migratorie restringendone i confini ed eliminava il divieto totale di caccia nelle stesse. Ciò nonostante il parere negativo del dirigente provinciale.

Tali emendamenti determinano quindi uno «stravolgimento» complessivo del piano e necessitano di una procedura di valutazione autonoma, invece omessa, con violazione dell'articolo 6, paragrafo 3, della direttiva 92/43/CEE, secondo cui qualsiasi piano o progetto che possa avere incidenze significative sul sito, forma oggetto di un'opportuna valutazione di incidenza, nonché della direttiva 2009/147/CEE, in quanto le modifiche rendono impossibile per l'avifauna protetta trovare un luogo di ristoro e adatto alla riproduzione lungo le rotte di migrazione, discontinue e in cui è possibile lo sparo.

Alla luce di quanto descritto, può la Commissione far sapere se è a conoscenza della situazione riguardante la Provincia di Bergamo e la Regione Lombardia e del grave danno che la pianificazione in esame implica sull'avifauna venatoria, patrimonio indisponibile ed oggetto di tutela della normativa comunitaria, avviando verifiche sulla sussistenza delle violazioni del diritto UE?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(3 marzo 2014)

La Commissione non è a conoscenza del nuovo Nuovo Piano Faunistico Venatorio della provincia di Bergamo in Italia. La responsabilità di attuare e far rispettare la normativa ambientale dell'UE incombe in primo luogo agli Stati membri e alle loro autorità amministrative e giudiziarie. A norma del trattato la Commissione non ha il potere di intervenire nelle attività di pianificazione e nelle decisioni delle autorità degli Stati membri.

La direttiva «habitat» ([1]) prevede che le autorità nazionali competenti garantiscano che qualsiasi piano o progetto che possa avere incidenze significative sui siti designati Natura 2000, anche in relazione alle attività venatorie, sia oggetto di un'opportuna valutazione. Le autorità nazionali dovrebbero autorizzare tali piani e progetti unicamente dopo essersi accertati che non abbiano incidenze negative sull'integrità dei siti interessati o se soddisfano le condizioni della deroga di cui all'articolo 6, paragrafo 4, della direttiva «habitat».

La Commissione non può identificare alcuna infrazione potenziale delle disposizioni succitate che giustifichi un'indagine.

([1]) Direttiva 92/43/CEE, GU L 206 del 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000032/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Breach of Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC owing to the change of migratory routes resulting from a regional wildlife hunting plan, the impact of which was not reassessed following amendments made thereto

By way of Council Decision No 79 of 10 July 2013, the Province of Bergamo, which is home to a great many Special Protection Areas and Important Bird Areas, adopted the 'New Wildlife Hunting Plan' without however having assessed the impact of the changes introduced by damaging amendments that had been approved during the discussion phase. The impact of the proposed regional plan had been assessed before the much maligned changes were introduced, and specifically before they could be approved by the Lombardy Region. The original plan made provision for protective sanctuaries to be established along bird migratory routes, which would cover vast areas and have a blanket ban on hunting, in order to prevent any disturbances to migratory birds. It had been drawn up following much input from WWF Italia, which had challenged the previous plans as they did not comply with Community legislation on the protection of migratory birds.

However, after its impact had been assessed, the proposed plan was then amended by the Provincial Council, which during the approval phase removed 14 protective sanctuaries, decreased the coverage of protection along the migratory routes (thereby making it more sporadic) and lifted the blanket ban on hunting in these areas, and did so in spite of the disapproval of its leader.

These amendments therefore constituted a complete 'distortion' of the plan and should have been subject to an independent assessment; the fact that they were not constitutes a breach of Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC, which stipulates that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a site shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site, and also of Directive 2009/147/EC, since the amendments, in making the coverage of protection more sporadic along the migratory routes, have effectively made it impossible for protected birds to find a safe haven in which they can rest and reproduce without the risk of being shot.

In light of what has been described above, can the Commission point out whether it is aware of the situation concerning the Province of Bergamo and the Lombardy Region and of the severe threat that the plan in question poses to migratory birds — a vital natural asset protected by Community legislation — and also launch an investigation into whether EC law has been breached?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

The Commission is not aware of the new Wildlife Hunting Plan of the Bergamo Province in Italy. Responsibility for implementing and enforcing EU environmental legislation lies primarily with Member States and their administrative and judicial authorities. Under the Treaty, the Commission has no power to intervene in the planning activities and decisions of Member States' authorities.

The 'Habitats' Directive ([1]) requires the relevant national authorities to ensure that any plan or project likely to have significant effects on designated Natura 2000 sites, including in relation to hunting activities, is subject to an appropriate assessment. National authorities should only authorise such plans and projects once certain that they will not adversely affect the integrity of the concerned sites, or if they meet the derogation conditions set out in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

The Commission cannot identify any potential breach of the abovementioned provisions which would warrant an investigation.

([1]) Directive 92/43/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000033/14
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: UK road user charge

Road user charges for HGVs whose weight exceeds 12 tonnes will come into force in the UK in April 2014. British hauliers, however, will receive a rebate on those charges when they pay their road tax. This in effect means that hauliers from the UK will have a competitive advantage over hauliers from other Member States.

This poses a particular problem for Irish road hauliers, many of whom must travel through the UK to reach European markets. It also presents significant difficulties for hauliers from the Republic on the island of Ireland, given that those operating in the border area may have to make short trips into Northern Ireland. This will put hauliers from the Republic of Ireland at a significant disadvantage as far as their cost base is concerned, and will partly undermine at least the principle of the open and free market.

Can the Commission say what steps it intends to take to ensure that no unfair competition results from the UK Government's proposals, and that Irish hauliers and their British counterparts will be operating on a level playing field?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

One of the main purposes of the so-called 'Eurovignette' Directive 1999/62/EC ([1]) is to eliminate distortions of competition between transport undertakings. To this end, Annex 1 of the directive specifies minimum tax rates to be applied by all Member States to heavy goods vehicles.

The directive also contains a number of provisions, which are intended to avoid discrimination of certain users.

The Commission has not been formally notified, and therefore has not carried out a formal assessment, of the planned Road User Charge for Heavy Goods Vehicles in the UK.

The Commission will however assess the planned Road User Charge for Heavy Goods Vehicles in the UK to ensure that the measure does not breach EU rules.

([1]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000034/14
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

Can the Commission say whether the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreement as currently proposed provides for the 'investor-state dispute settlement' mechanism?

Does the Commission propose to include this mechanism in any agreement with the United States, and is this mechanism included in any trade agreements that were concluded during the current mandate? If so could the Commission list the trade agreements in question?

Can the Commission outline what safeguards it has put in place and intends to put in place in any new trade agreement to ensure that companies cannot sue states party to the trade agreement where the state is enacting legislation to, for example, 'ban hydraulic fracturing' or 'enact tough anti-smoking laws', i.e. laws that protect citizens or the environment?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission has since 2010 been working on a new EU wide policy on investment protection and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS), based on lessons learnt from the 1400 EU Member State Bilateral Investment Treaties. The new EU investment policy seeks to ensure clear investment protection provisions and state-of-the art ISDS provisions, so as to achieve a balance between the protection of investors and the states' right to regulate. The Council has authorised the Commission to negotiate on investment protection, including ISDS, in the Free Trade Agreement negotiations with Canada, India, Singapore, Japan, the US, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt and all the ASEAN countries. In addition, the Council has authorised the Commission to negotiate an investment agreement with China, including ISDS.

EU Member States have continued to regulate for the public good although foreign investors have since 1959 had the possibility to bring ISDS claims under their 1400 Bilateral Investment Treaties. In the Union's trade agreements the sovereign right of states to regulate is and will be explicitly protected. The Commission is carefully drafting the provisions to clarify the substantive standards to ensure that genuine regulatory action cannot be successfully challenged. Any regulation 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 simple fact that a regulatory measure has an impact would not, on its own, give rise to compensation. The Commission is also bringing improvements to the ISDS provisions to increase transparency and avoid the risk of abuse.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000035/14
to the Commission
Marian Harkin (ALDE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: EU funding to Irish semi-state companies

The Commission is asked to state whether any Irish semi-state companies are in receipt of EU funding in relation to the following development project elements:

Gridwest: 120 km of 400 kV line from Flagford, County Leitrim, to Moygownagh, County Mayo (Eirgrid),

Oweninny: 371 MW wind farm, County Mayo (EBS and Bord na Móna),

Cluddaun: 150 MW wind Farm, County Mayo (Coillte).

If so, will the Commission require the developers to publish a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis for the project?

Answer given by Mr Lewandowski on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The Commission is not aware of any EU funding paid in relation to the development projects mentioned in the question of the Honourable Member.

The Commission would like to point out at the same time that, in the shared management domain, the Irish Authorities are responsible for the selection, management and payments regarding projects. As regards payments made by the Commission directly, information on identified beneficiaries of funding from the EU budget from 2007 onwards is available at the Commission's website established for the Financial Transparency System (FTS) ([1]), which enables the user to perform searches in the database on the basis of several criteria.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/fts/index_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000036/14
à la Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(6 janvier 2014)

Objet: Protection du lynx dans les Vosges (France)

Le lynx boréal est une espèce protégée dans l'Union européenne au titre des annexes II, III et IV de la directive «Habitats». Au niveau français, le lynx boréal est protégé par la loi du 10 juillet 1976 sur la protection de la nature et par l'arrêté ministériel du 17 avril 1981 relatif aux mammifères (mis à jour le 23 avril 2007). Pourtant sur la Liste rouge des espèces menacées en France de l'Union internationale pour la conservation de la nature, l'espèce est classée «en danger». Les associations de protection de l'environnement observent notamment que la présence du lynx dans le noyau vosgien est en régression tandis que la population du noyau jurassien tend à stagner (Source: Réseau loup/lynx de l'Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS)). Selon le réseau loup/lynx de l'ONCFS, un seul lynx a été identifié dans les Vosges durant le suivi hivernal de 2013.

Au regard de ces éléments, l'avenir du lynx en France n'apparaît pas pleinement assuré et impose une grande vigilance. Malgré les appels des associations de conservation de la nature et des scientifiques en ce sens, le lynx ne bénéficie d'aucun plan de conservation à l'échelle nationale, à la différence par exemple du loup ou de l'ours (plan de conservation et de restauration de l'ours brun dans les Pyrénées jusqu'en 2009).

La Commission a-t-elle connaissance des menaces qui pèsent sur la préservation du lynx boréal en Europe et plus particulièrement en France?

Selon elle, quelles mesures de protection nationales pourraient être prises? Juge-t-elle que la mise en place d'un plan national de conservation du lynx par l'État français puisse permettre de mieux protéger cette espèce d'intérêt communautaire?

Réponse donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(21 février 2014)

Le lynx boréal *(Lynx lynx)* est repris aux annexes II et IV de la directive «Habitats» ([1]). L'espèce est strictement protégée en France ainsi que dans la plupart des États membres et nécessite la désignation de sites Natura 2000 dans son aire de répartition naturelle. La Commission a connaissance de la situation du lynx en France et en Europe en se fondant principalement sur des rapports spécifiques concernant le statut des grands carnivores en Europe ([2]) et sur des rapports présentés par les États membres en application de l'article 17 de la directive «Habitats».

La France a désigné 59 sites Natura 2000 pour la préservation du lynx qui font déjà ou feront l'objet de plans de gestion («documents d'objectifs» (DOCOB)) visant à mettre en œuvre les mesures de conservation nécessaires à l'espèce et à son habitat. Par ailleurs, d'autres zones protégées telles que des réserves naturelles et des parcs nationaux ou régionaux sont favorables à l'espèce. Il incombe aux autorités françaises de décider des mesures de gestion (plan d'action national ou tout autre type de mesure) nécessaires pour obtenir un statut de conservation favorable. Les meilleures pratiques en matière de gestion des grands carnivores peuvent être consultées sur le site internet de la Commission ([3]).

De plus, le cadre juridique actuel et à venir relatif à la politique de développement rural soutient l'élaboration et la mise à jour de plans de protection et de gestion liés aux sites Natura 2000 et à d'autres zones de haute valeur naturelle.

([1]) concernant la conservation des habitats naturels ainsi que de la faune et de la flore sauvages, JO L 206 du 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/conservation_status.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/promoting_best_practices.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000036/14
to the Commission
Sandrine Bélier (Verts/ALE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Protection of the lynx in the Vosges (France)

In the European Union, the Eurasian lynx is a protected species under Annexes II, III and IV to the Habitats Directive. In France, it is protected by the law of 10 July 1976 on nature protection and by the ministerial decree of 17 April 1981 on mammals (updated on 23 April 2007). However, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Animals classifies the species as 'endangered' in France. Environmental protection associations have observed a decrease in lynx numbers in the Vosges, whilst the size of the population in the Jura seems to be stagnating (source: wolf/lynx network at the National Board for Hunting and Wild Fauna (ONCFS)). According to the ONCFS wolf/lynx network, only one lynx was spotted in the Vosges during the 2013 winter monitoring exercise.

The future of the lynx in France is thus uncertain and calls for great vigilance. Despite appeals by nature conservation associations and scientists, the lynx has not been made the subject of any national conservation plan, unlike the wolf or the bear, for example (a conservation and restoration plan for the brown bear was implemented in the Pyrenees until 2009).

Is the Commission aware of the threats to the Eurasian lynx in Europe, and in France in particular?

What national protection measures could be taken? Would a national conservation plan afford this species of Community interest better protection?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) is listed in Annex II and IV of the Habitats Directive ([1]). The species is strictly protected in France and most Member States and requires the designation of Natura 2000 sites in its natural range. The Commission is aware of the situation of the Lynx in France and in Europe, mainly through specific reports on the status of large carnivores in Europe ([2]) and reports submitted by Member States under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.

France designated 59 Natura sites for the Lynx which are already or will be covered by management plans (DOCOB) aimed at implementing the necessary conservation measures for the species and its habitat. Furthermore other protected areas such as nature reserves and national or regional parks benefit the species. It is the responsibility of the French authorities to decide on the appropriate management measure (national action plan or any other type of measure) needed to reach favourable conservation status. Large carnivore management best practices are available on the Commission's website ([3]).

In addition, the current and future legal framework for the Rural Development Policy provides support for the drawing up and updating of protection and management plans relating to Natura 2000 sites and other areas of high nature value.

([1]) On the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/conservation_status.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/carnivores/promoting_best_practices.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000041/14
aan de Commissie
Laurence J. A. J. Stassen (NI)
(6 januari 2014)

Betreft: Turkije publiceert eigen voortgangsverslag

Op 31 december 2013 heeft Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, de Turkse minister van EU-zaken en toetredingsonderhandelaar, zijn eigen voortgangsverslag inzake de toetredingsonderhandelingen gepubliceerd.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met genoemd voortgangsverslag ([1])?

2. Hoe oordeelt de Commissie over het verslag? Is de Commissie van mening dat het wel of niet strookt met haar eigen voortgangsverslag d.d. 16 oktober 2013 ([2])? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het Turkse verslag louter ervoor bedoeld is de werkelijkheid rooskleuriger voor te stellen dan zij is? Zo neen, welk doel, anders dan dat van haar eigen verslag, dient het Turkse verslag naar het oordeel van de Commissie dan wel?

3. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het feit dat Turkije überhaupt zélf over zijn eigen „voortgang" inzake de toetredingsonderhandelingen rapporteert gelijkstaat aan „de slager die zijn eigen vlees keurt"? Zo neen, hoe verklaart de Commissie dan het niet-objectieve karakter van het verslag resp. het uitblijven van elke kritische noot in het verslag?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat het bijzonder kwalijk is dat in het verslag níet gesproken wordt over, bijvoorbeeld, de stelselmatige inperking van de vrijheid van meningsuiting in Turkije resp. de tientallen journalisten die nog altijd, louter vanwege het uitvoeren van hun journalistieke werk, in de gevangenis zitten? Zo ja, welke gevolgen heeft dit verzwijgen van de realiteit voor de toetredingsonderhandelingen?

5. Hoe beoordeelt de Commissie het dat in het verslag met geen woord wordt gerept over het omvangrijke corruptieschandaal binnen de Turkse regering dat medio december 2013 aan het licht kwam? Sterker nog: hoe ervaart de Commissie het, in het licht van genoemd corruptieschandaal, dat in het verslag juist wordt gesteld dat „Turkije content is dat het land progressie heeft gemaakt in de corruptieperceptie-index van Transparancy International en dat het land het daarmee, wat corruptie betreft, beter doet dan vele EU-lidstaten" ([3])? Deelt de Commissie de mening dat Turkije hiermee louter tracht het corruptieschandaal te verdoezelen, en dat dat, voor een kandidaat-EU-lidstaat!, ronduit stuitend is en, terecht, wantrouwen wekt?

Antwoord van de heer Füle namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2014)

De Commissie is bekend met het voortgangsverslag van de Turkse minister van EU-zaken waarnaar het geachte Parlementslid verwijst. Dit verslag valt onder de exclusieve verantwoordelijkheid van de Turkse regering en werd bijgevolg niet met de Europese Commissie besproken.

De Commissie verwijst het geachte Parlementslid naar haar eigen voortgangsverslag van 2013 ([4]) voor een evaluatie van de toestand inzake de vrije meningsuiting. De Commissie heeft in het verleden uiting gegeven aan haar bezorgdheid en zal dit ook blijven doen bij elke passende gelegenheid, inclusief de jaarlijkse voortgangsverslagen.

Sinds de start van het onderzoek naar corruptie op 17 december 2013, en in het licht van de reactie van de Turkse regering, heeft de Commissie de Turkse autoriteiten bij elke mogelijke gelegenheid in kennis gesteld van haar bezorgdheid en voortdurend gewezen op de noodzaak om elke beschuldiging van corruptie op een transparante en onpartijdige wijze te behandelen. Alle belangrijke ontwikkelingen in verband met de rechtsstaat zullen door de Commissie in haar volgende voortgangsverslag worden geëvalueerd.

([1]) http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ilerlemeRaporlariTR/2013_ilerleme_raporu_03_01_2014.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf
([3]) Blz. 31.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000041/14
to the Commission
Laurence J.A.J. Stassen (NI)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Turkey publishes its own progress report

On 31 December 2013, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs and accession negotiator, published his own report on the progress of the accession negotiations.

1. Is the Commission aware of the aforementioned progress report ([1])?

2. How does the Commission assess the report? Does the Commission believe that it tallies with its own progress report of 16 October 2013 ([2])? Does the Commission share the view that the Turkish report is simply intended to portray the situation in a more favourable light than is actually the case? If not, what purpose does the Commission believe is served by the Turkish report that was not served by the Commission's own report?

3. Does the Commission share the view that any report by Turkey on its own 'progress' in the accession negotiations will necessarily be self-congratulatory? If not, then how does the Commission explain the subjective nature of the report and the absence of any self-criticism?

4. Does the Commission share the view that it is particularly concerning that the report does not mention, for example, the systematic curtailment of freedom of speech in Turkey and the many journalists who are still imprisoned there solely because of their work? If so, what does this concealment of the truth mean for the accession negotiations?

5. How does the Commission assess the fact that not a single word is mentioned in the report on the extensive corruption scandal within the Turkish government which was revealed in the middle of December 2013? And what is the Commission's view, in light of the aforementioned corruption scandal, of the report stating that Turkey is happy with the progress it has made in Transparency International's corruption perception index and that, in terms of corruption, it is therefore doing better than many EU Member States ([3])? Does the Commission share the view that Turkey is merely attempting to gloss over the corruption scandal and that this is absolutely unacceptable for a candidate EU Member State and justifiably arouses suspicion?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the progress report issued by the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs to which the Honourable Member refers. The report is the sole responsibility of the Turkish Government and has therefore not been discussed with the European Commission.

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its 2013 Progress Report ([4]) for an assessment regarding the area of freedom of speech. The Commission has raised and will consistently continue to raise its concerns on all appropriate occasions, including in the annual progress reports.

Since the start of investigations into corruption allegations on 17 December 2013, and in light of the response of the Turkish Government, the Commission has shared its concerns with the Turkish authorities on every possible occasion and has consistently stressed the need to address any allegation of corruption in a transparent and impartial way. All major developments in the rule of law area will be assessed in the Commission's next Progress Report.

([1]) http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ilerlemeRaporlariTR/2013_ilerleme_raporu_03_01_2014.pdf
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/tr_rapport_2013.pdf
([3]) Page 31.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/brochures/turkey_2013.pdf

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-000042/14
komissiolle
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(6. tammikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Karbapeneemiresistentin enterobakteerin esiintyminen EU:ssa

Tutkimukset ovat osoittaneet ihmisissä ja eläimissä esiintyvän karbapeneemiresistentin enterobakteerin (CRE) mahdolliset vaarat. Jos CRE leviää laajalle, sen aiheuttaman kuolleisuuden odotetaan olevan paljon korkeampi kuin vuosina 2007 ja 2011 levinneen kolibakteerin. Vaarallisimmaksi patogeeniksi on identifioitu NDM-1, joka on resistenssi kaikille antibiooteille.

Onko komissiolla ajantasaista tietoa CRE:n ja erityisesti NDM-1:n esiintyvyydestä EU:n alueella?

Uskooko komissio, että nykyinen tartuntatautien riskinarviointimekanismi on riittävän nopea ja tehokas CRE:n aiheuttamien mahdollisten epidemioiden jäljittämiseksi? Onko komissiolla käytössään erityistoimenpiteitä CRE:n puhkeamisen ennaltaehkäisemiseksi?

Lihan tarkastusta koskevia sääntöjä tarkistetaan jatkuvasti tarkastusmenetelmien teknisen kehityksen vaatimusten täyttämiseksi. Onko komissio näitä sääntöjä tarkistaessaan ottanut huomioon CRE:n havaitsemista varten saatavilla olevat menetelmät, joihin kuuluu viljelypohjaisten näytteiden tai molekyylinäytteiden ottaminen rutiinitesteissä?

Patogeenia NDM-1 esiintyy eläimillä varsinkin Kiinassa, missä viimeisimmät tapaukset osoittavat salmonellan sisältävän sitä. Miten komissio varmistaa, että CRE ei tule EU:n elintarvikeketjuun kolmansista maista peräisin olevien tuotteiden kautta? Aikooko komissio ottaa käyttöön kolmansista maista peräisin olevia tuotteita koskevia pakollisia tarkastuksia ja kiellon karbapeneemia tuottaville aineille?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(5. maaliskuuta 2014)

Komissio (tai tarkemmin Tautien ehkäisyn ja valvonnan eurooppalainen keskus ([1])) on tietoinen karbapeneemiresistentin enterobakteerin esiintyvyydestä ihmisillä samoin kuin NDM:ää tuottavasta enterobakteerista. ([2])

EU:n nykyinen tartuntatautien riskinarviointimekanismi on riittävä mahdollisten karbapeneemiresistenttien enterobakteerien aiheuttamien epidemioiden jäljittämiseksi. Jäsenvaltiot ilmoittavat karbapeneemiresistentin enterobakteerin aiheuttamat tautitapaukset varhaisvaroitus- ja reagointijärjestelmään ([3]). Ne voivat myös käyttää mikrobilääkeresistenssia ja hoitoon liittyviä infektioita koskevien epidemiatietojen järjestelmää (Epidemic Intelligence Information System) tietojen vaihtamiseen. Riskinarvionnit laaditaan ja julkaistaan komission pyynnöstä. ([4]) Karbapeneemiresistentin enterobakteerin aiheuttamien tautitapausten ennaltaehkäisy on jäsenvaltioiden vastuulla.

Lihan tarkastusta koskevien sääntöjen tarkastelussaan Euroopan EFSA ([5]) kartoitti lihaan liittyviä kansanterveydellisiä vaaroja. Nykyisillä tarkastusmenetelmillä biologisia vaaratekijöitä ei kyetä havaitsemaan. Elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen suosittaa vahvistamaan elintarvikeketjua koskevia tietoja osana ante mortem -tarkastusta sekä parantamaan teurastushygieniaa. Karbapeneemiresistenssin esiintymisestä elintarvikkeissa ja elintarviketuotantoon käytettävissä eläimissä ei ole olemassa vahvistettuja tietoja. ([6]) Yhdenmukaistettuun zoonoottisten ja indikaattoribakteerien mikrobilääkeresistenssin seurantaohjelmaan ([7]) kuuluu vuodesta 2015 alkaen myös karbapenemaasia tuottavien bakteerien seuranta.

EU:n nykyinen lainsäädäntö kattaa kaikkia salmonellakantoja koskevat vaatimukset asianomaisissa elintarvikkeissa, ja sitä sovelletaan myös unionin ulkopuolelta tuotaviin elintarvikkeisiin.

([1]) Tautien ehkäisyn ja valvonnan eurooppalainen keskus (ECDC).
([2]) Tautien ehkäisyn ja valvonnan eurooppalainen keskus julkaisi 15. marraskuuta 2013 viimeisimmät tiedot karbapeneemiresistenteistä enterobakteereista Euroopassa. http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/antimicrobial-resistance-carbapenemase-producing-bacteria-europe.pdf
([3]) Varhaisvaroitus- ja reagointijärjestelmä.
([4]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston päätös N:o 1082/2013/EU, annettu 22 päivänä lokakuuta 2013, valtioiden rajat ylittävistä vakavista terveysuhkista ja päätöksen N:o 2119/98/EY kumoamisesta (EUVL L 293, 5.11.2013, s. 1).
([5]) Euroopan elintarviketurvallisuusviranomainen.
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3501.htm
([7]) Komission täytäntöönpanopäätös 2013/652/EU, annettu 12 päivänä marraskuuta 2013, zoonoottisten ja indikaattoribakteerien mikrobilääkeresistenssin seurannasta ja raportoinnista EUVL L 303, 14.11.2013, s.26).

Euroopan komission toimintasuunnitelmassa mikrobilääkeresistenssin torjumiseksi ([8]) etusijalle asetetaan kansainvälinen yhteistyö. Toimintaohjelmassa on otettu huomioon resistenttien bakteerien elintarvikeketjuun leviämisen torjumiseen liittyvät toimenpiteet EU:n ulkopuolisista maista tulevan tuonnin yhteydessä.

([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/antimicrobial_resistance/policy/index_fi.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000042/14
to the Commission
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Appearance of carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteria in the EU

Research has provided evidence of the possible threats posed by carbapenem-resistant nterobacteria (CRE) in humans and animals. If spread on a large scale, the mortality rate caused by CRE is expected to be much higher than that resulting from Escherichia coli, breakouts of which occurred in 2007 and 2011. The most dangerous associated pathogen to have been identified is NDM-1, which is resistant to all antibiotics.

Does the Commission possess up-to-date data on the prevalence of the CRE — in particular that of NDM-1 — in the EU?

Does the Commission believe that its current risk assessment mechanism for communicable diseases is sufficiently rapid and efficient to track potential epidemics caused by CRE? Does the Commission have any special measures in place to prevent an outbreak of CRE?

Meat inspection rules are continually revised in order to meet the demands of the technical developments in inspection methods. Has the Commission taken into account the detection methods in place for CRE — which involves culture-based or molecular samples being taken in routine testing — when revising these rules?

NDM-1 is prevalent in animals, especially in China, where the latest cases show evidence of Salmonella bearing NDM-1. How will the Commission ensure that CRE do not enter the food chain in the EU via products from third countries? Does the Commission plan to introduce mandatory inspections and a ban on carbapenem-producing substances for foodstuffs originating in third countries?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission, though the ECDC ([1]), is aware of the prevalence of carbapenem-resistant enterobacteria in humans, including information about NDM-producing Enterobacteriaceae. ([2])

The existing EU risk assessment mechanism for communicable diseases is sufficient to track potential epidemics caused by carbapenem-resistant enterobacteria. MS report outbreaks of carbapenem-resistant enterobacteria to the EWRS ([3]) and can use the Epidemic Intelligence Information System for antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections to exchange information. Risk assessments are prepared and published upon request by the Commission. ([4]) The prevention of outbreaks of carbapenem-resistant enterobacteria is the responsibility of each Member State.

In a review of the rules on meat inspection, EFSA ([5]) identified public health hazards in meat. Current inspection methods do not enable the detection of biological hazards. The agency recommends to strengthen food chain information as part of the ante-mortem inspection and to improve slaughter hygiene. No validated data on the occurrence of carbapenem-resistance in food and food-producing animals exist ([6]). The harmonised monitoring programme for antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and commensal bacteria will include specific monitoring of carbapenemase-producing bacteria as of 2015 ([7]).

Current EU legislation covers food safety criteria for all Salmonella strains in relevant food, applying also to food imported from third countries.

The EC action plan against antimicrobial resistance ([8]) prioritises international cooperation and takes into account measures for the control of the spread of resistant bacteria in the food chain linked to import from third countries.

([1]) European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).
([2]) On 15 November 2013, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) released the latest data on carbapenemase-resistant Enterobacteriaceae in Europe. http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/antimicrobial-resistance-carbapenemase-producing-bacteria-europe.pdf
([3]) Early Warning and Response System.
([4]) Decision 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013 on serious cross border threats to health and repealing Decision No 2119/98/EC (OJ L 293, 5.11.2013, p. 1).
([5]) The European Food Safety Authority.
([6]) http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3501.htm
([7]) Commission Implementing Decision (2013/652/EU) of 12 November 2013 on the monitoring and reporting of antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and commensal bacteria (OJ L 303, 14.11.2013, p26).
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/antimicrobial_resistance/policy/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000044/14
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR) oraz Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(6 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja polskich producentów tradycyjnych produktów wędzonych w związku z wejściem rozporządzenia Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r.

W 2014 r. przewidziane jest wejście w życie rozporządzenia Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r. zmieniającego rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 odnośnie najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w środkach spożywczych.

Spowoduje to, że przedsiębiorcy, którzy produkują żywność tradycyjną wędzoną drewnem będą musieli zaprzestać takiej działalności. Będzie to wielki cios w polskich producentów produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych produkujących tą metodą.

Czy Komisja jest poinformowana o tej sprawie? W jaki sposób Komisja zamierza rozwiązać problem polskich producentów produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych? ([1])

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2014 r.)

Kwestia ta jest znana Komisji.

Rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 ([2]) przyjęto w dniu 19 sierpnia 2011 r. Przewidziano w nim 3-letni okres przejściowy upływający dnia 1 września 2014 r., kiedy to zaczną obowiązywać niższe poziomy dla wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych (WWA) w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych.

Kiedy przyjmowano to rozporządzenie, właściwe organy państw członkowskich, w tym organy Polski, ani europejska organizacja zrzeszająca zainteresowane strony – CLITRAVI ([3]), reprezentująca sektor mięsa przetworzonego, nie zgłosiły wątpliwości dotyczących wędzenia mięsa i produktów mięsnych.

Nie jest prawdą, że przedsiębiorstwa, które produkują środki spożywcze przy wykorzystaniu tradycyjnego wędzenia drewnem, będą musiały zaprzestać tego typu działalności. Przy zastosowaniu dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych osiągnięcie obniżonych dopuszczalnych poziomów WWA w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych możliwe jest również w przypadku tradycyjnego wędzenia drewnem. Wspomniane dobre praktyki zawarte są w kodeksie postępowania w zakresie redukcji zanieczyszczenia żywności wielopierścieniowymi węglowodorami aromatycznymi (WWA) w procesie wędzenia i suszenia bezpośredniego (CAC/RCP 68-2009) ([4]).

Na wniosek właściwych organów Komisja mogłaby służyć pomocą w zakresie stosowania dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych.

([1]) Polska wpisała na listę produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych ogólnie 1190 produktów; http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/

([2]) Rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 odnośnie do najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w środkach spożywczych (Dz.U. L 215 z 20.8.2011, s. 4).

([3]) Centrum Łącznikowe przemysłu przetwórstwa mięsnego w UE.

([4]) http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/11257/CXP_068e.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000044/14
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR) and Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Situation of Polish producers of traditional smoked products in connection with the entry into force of Commission Regulation (EC) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011

Commission Regulation (EC) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011, amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in foodstuffs, is to come into force in 2014.

As a consequence, food firms that use traditional wood-smoking will be forced to stop doing so. This will be a tremendous blow for Polish producers of traditional and regional products who use this method.

Is the Commission aware of this situation? How does it propose to solve the problem facing Polish producers of traditional and regional products ([1])?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the situation.

Commission Regulation (EU) 835/2011 ([2]) was adopted on 19 August 2011, providing for a 3 year transition period before the lower levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) in smoked meat and smoked meat products shall apply as from 1 September 2014 onwards.

At the time of the adoption no concerns as regards the smoking of meat and meat products were raised by the competent authorities of the Member States, including Poland, neither by the European stakeholder organisation CLITRAVI ([3]), representing the processed meat sector.

It is not correct to say that companies which produce foodstuffs using traditional wood-smoking will have to cease doing so. By applying good smoking practices, also with traditional wood-smoking, the lower maximum levels for PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products are achievable. These good practices are provided for in the Codex Code of Practice for the Reduction of Contamination of Food with Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) from Smoking and Direct Drying Processes (CAC/RCP 68-2009) ([4]).

The Commission is considering providing assistance, if requested by the competent authority, for the application of the good smoking practices.

([1]) Poland has entered a total of 1190 products on the list of traditional and regional products: http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/

([2]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (OJ L 215, 20.8.2011, p. 4).

([3]) Liaison Center for the Meat Processing Industry in the EU.

([4]) http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/11257/CXP_068e.pdf

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000045/14
do Komisji
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(6 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowe zasady regulujące sposoby wędzenia

Rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 z 19 sierpnia 2011 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 odnośnie do najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w środkach spożywczych w obecnym brzmieniu zobowiązuje m.in. europejskich właścicieli zakładów specjalizujących się w produkcji wyrobów wędzonych tradycyjnymi metodami, czyli w komorach opalanych drewnem, do zmniejszenia zawarcia benzo(a)pirenu począwszy od 1 września 2014 r. z 5,0 mikrogramów na kilogram do 2,0 mikrogramów na kilogram w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych.

1. Czy Komisja przewiduje wyłączenie lub specjalne traktowanie dla produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych, w tym tych wpisanych na unijną listę, przy spełnianiu wymogów nowego rozporządzenia?

2. Czy alternatywne metody wędzenia nie będą w porównywalnym stopniu szkodzić zdrowiu konsumentów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(4 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie pisemne nr E-000044/2014 ([1]).

Z wymienionych w niej powodów Komisja nie widzi obecnie potrzeby wprowadzania zwolnień dla produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych ani ich specjalnego traktowania.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=PL

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000045/14
to the Commission
Bogusław Sonik (PPE)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: New rules governing the methods used to produce smoked foodstuffs

As it stands, Commission Regulation (EC) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011, amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in foodstuffs requires, *inter alia*, European owners of plants specialising in the production of foodstuffs smoked using traditional methods, i.e. in wood burning chambers, to reduce the benzo(a)pyrene content in smoked meat and smoked meat products from 5.0 micrograms per kilogram to 2.0 micrograms per kilogram as from 1 September 2014.

1. Does the Commission envisage applying exemptions or special treatment for traditional and regional products, including those on the EU list, under the new regulation?

2. Will alternative smoking methods not be just as harmful to consumers' health?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000044/2014 ([1]).

The Commission therefore does not see for the time being the need to envisage an exemption or special treatment for traditional or regional products.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000046/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-Faqar enerġetiku

Il-Faqar enerġetiku, iddefinit bħala sitwazzjoni fejn familja ma jkunx jista' jkollha aċċess għal livelli soċjali u materjali meħtieġa ta' servizzi tal-enerġija fid-dar, qiegħed jiżdied, b'mod partikolari wara l-bidu tal-kriżi ekonomika. Diversi punti relatati ma' dan is-suġġett ġew inkorporati fid-Direttivi 2009/72/KE u 2009/73/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill, li jikkonċernaw ir-regoli komuni għas-suq intern dwar l-elettriku u l-gass naturali rispettivament. Fost affarijiet oħra, id-direttivi jeħtieġu li l-Istati Membri jadottaw definizzjoni għal "konsumaturi vulnerabbli".

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi data dwar in-numru ta' nies ikkunsidrati li qed jgħixu f'sitwazzjoni ta' faqar enerġetiku f'kull Stat Membru wara ż-żidiet fil-kontijiet?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tgħid liema huma dawk l-Istati Membri li jistgħu jilħqu l-miri tal-enerġija stabbiliti għall-2020?

3. Il-Kummissjoni x'azzjoni biħsiebha tieħu sabiex telgħeb il-faqar enerġetiku fl-UE u sabiex tiżgura li ċ-ċittadini kollha jkollhom aċċess bażiku għas-servizzi tal-enerġija?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Oettinger f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' Frar 2014)

1. Fil-livell tal-UE ma teżistix dejta dwar l-għadd ta' persuni meqjusa li huma f'sitwazzjoni ta' faqar enerġetiku.. Filwaqt li l-Istati Membri huma obbligati mit-Tielet Pakkett tal-Enerġija ([1]) li jiddefinixxu l-kunċett ta' klijenti vulnerabbli u li jipproteġuhom, m'hemm l-ebda obbligu fuq l-Istati Membri li jiġbru u jirrappurtaw dejta armonizzata dwar il-vulnerabilità tal-konsumaturi tal-enerġija u l-faqar enerġetiku.

2. Il-Kummissjoni tirreferi lill-Onorevoli Membru għall-Valutazzjoni tal-Impatt li takkumpanja l-Komunikazzjoni tagħha adottata dan l-aħħar intitolata "Qafas ta' politika għall-klima u l-enerġija fil-perjodu mill-2020 sal-2030" ([2])

3. Il-Kummissjoni qed twettaq kontrolli tal-konformità mad-Direttivi dwar it-Tielet Pakkett tal-Enerġija biex tiżgura traspożizzjoni sħiħa fl-Istati Membri. Fejn jiġi identifikat nuqqas ta' konformità tal-leġiżlazzjoni tal-Istati Membri mal-acquis tal-UE, jitniedu proċeduri ta' ksur meta dan ikun iġġustifikat. Fl-2012, il-Kummissjoni waqqfet grupp ta' esperti dwar il-konsumaturi vulnerabbli fl-enerġija. Ir-rapport komplut mill-grupp lejn tmiem l-2013 ġie ppubblikat bħala dokument ta' gwida ([3]) f'Jannar 2014 bil-għan li jassisti lill-Istati Membri jirrispettaw l-obbligi tagħhom dwar il-klijenti vulnerabbli u l-faqar enerġetiku skont il-leġiżlazzjoni dwar l-enerġija tal-UE.

Billi l-vulnerabbiltà hija fenomenu li jolqot is-setturi kollha, il-Kummissjoni issa qed twettaq studju biex tidentifika l-mudelli ta' vulnerabbiltà fis-swieq ewlenin tal-konsumatur, inkluża l-enerġija. Is-sejbiet tal-istudju, li se jiġu ppubblikati fl-2015, għandhom jgħinu biex jiġu identifikati azzjonijiet possibbli futuri ta' politika li jnaqqsu l-vulnerabbiltà.

([1]) L-Artikolu 3 tad-Direttiva 2009/72/KE, ĠU L 211, 14.8.2009 u tad-Direttiva 2009/73/KE, ĠU L 211, 14.8.2009.
([2]) […](2014) XXX draft: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_impact_assessment.pdf
([3]) Vulnerable Consumer Working Group Guidance Document, ippubblikat fis-6 ta' Jannar 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000046/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Energy poverty

Energy poverty, defined as a situation where a household is unable to access a socially and materially necessary level of energy services at home, has been on the rise, in particular since the start of the economic crisis. Several points relating to this were incorporated into Directives 2009/72/EC and 2009/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, which concern common rules for the internal market in electricity and natural gas, respectively. Among other things, the directives require the Member States to adopt a definition of 'vulnerable customers'.

1. Can the Commission provide data on the number of people considered to be in a situation of energy poverty in each Member State following utility price increases?

2. Can the Commission say which Member States are in line to reach the energy targets set for 2020?

3. What action does the Commission intend to take to overcome energy poverty in the EU and ensure that all citizens have access to basic energy services?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

1. Data on the number of people considered to be in a situation of energy poverty are not available at EU level. While Member States are obliged under the 3rd Energy Package ([1]) to define the concept of vulnerable customers and to protect them, there is no obligation for Member States to collect and report harmonised data on energy consumer vulnerability and energy poverty.

2. The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the impact assessment accompanying its recently adopted Communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 up to 2030' ([2])

3. The Commission is conducting compliance checks of the 3rd Energy Package Directives to ensure full transposition in the Member States. Where non-conformity of Member States' legislation with the EU *acquis* is identified, infringement proceedings will be launched when justified. In 2012, the Commission set up an expert group on vulnerable consumers in energy. The report completed by the group in late-2013 was published as a guidance document ([3]) in January 2014 with the aim of assisting Member States to meet their obligations on vulnerable customers and energy poverty under EU energy legislation.

As vulnerability is a phenomenon that cuts across sectors, the Commission is now conducting a study to identify vulnerability patterns across key consumer markets, including energy. The study findings, to be published in 2015, should help identify possible future policy actions to mitigate vulnerability.

([1]) Article 3 of Directive 2009/72/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009 and of Directive 2009/73/EC, OJ L 211, 14.8.2009.
([2]) […](2014) XXX draft: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/2030/20140122_impact_assessment.pdf
([3]) Vulnerable Consumer Working Group Guidance Document, published 6 January 2014: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000048/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Ir-riskju tal-faqar u l-esklużjoni soċjali

Skont il-Eurostat, fl-2012 124.5 miljun persuna, jiġifieri 24.8 % tal-popolazzjoni tal-UE, kienu f'riskju ta' faqar jew esklużjoni soċjali, meta mqabbla ma' 24.3 % fl-2011 u 23.7 % fl-2008. Dan ifisser li dawn iċ-ċittadini kienu f'minn tal-inqas waħda minn dawn it-tliet sitwazzjonijiet: fir-riskju tal-faqar, imċaħħda severament minn affarijiet materjali jew jagħmlu parti minn familji b'intensità ta' xogħol baxxa ħafna. It-tnaqqis fin-numru ta' nies f'riskju ta' faqar jew esklużjoni soċjali fl-UE hu wieħed mill-miri ewlenin tal-Istrateġija Ewropa 2020.

1. Il-Kummissjoni x'fehmiet għandha fir-rigward taż-żieda fir-rata ta' dawk f'riskju ta' faqar u esklużjoni soċjali?

2. Il-Kummissjoni kif biħsiebha tgħin lil dawk in-nies li huma f'riskju ta' faqar jew esklużjoni soċjali, u twaqqaf figuri bħal dawn milli jibqgħu jogħlew?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(27 ta' Frar 2014)

Minkejja sinjali ċari ta' rkupru bil-mod, il-qagħda soċjali fl-Unjoni Ewropea għadha sors ta' tħassib għall-Kummissjoni. L-aħħar ċifri juru li mill-2008 'il hawn in-nies li jgħixu fil-faqar jew fl-esklużjoni soċjali żdiedu b'6.6 miljun, total ta' 123 miljun persuna jew kważi 1 minn kull 4 Ewropej fl-2012. L-esklużjoni soċjali u l-faqar żdied f'aktar minn terz tal-Istati Membri kemm fl-2011 kif ukoll fl-2012. It-tfal u ż-żgħażagħ ġew affettwati b'mod partikolari. Abbażi ta' dawn ix-xejriet u mingħajr sforzi kbar mill-Istati Membri, huwa improbabbli li jintlaħaq l-għan tal-2020 għat-tnaqqis tal-faqar.

Il-Kummissjoni ħarġet gwida komprensiva li tittratta bosta aspetti tal-politika soċjali u tal-impjiegi. Permezz tas-Semestru Ewropew u l-Pakkett ta' Investiment Soċjali, il-Kummissjoni tistabbilixxi l-prijoritajiet baġitarji, ekonomiċi u soċjali, u tagħti gwida politika biex tistimula t-tkabbir, l-impjiegi u l-koeżjoni soċjali skont l-istrateġija ta' tkabbir fit-tul tal-UE. Il-proċess tas-Semestru jippermetti għall-ħruġ ta' rakkomandazzjonijiet konkreti fil-qasam soċjali. Il-Fondi tal-UE (speċjalment l-FSE, il-FEŻR, il-Programm għall-Bidla Soċjali u l-Innovazzjoni u l-Fond għal dawk l-Aktar fil-Bżonn) jintużaw biex jikkontribwixxu għall-irkupru ekonomiku, biex jipprovdu aktar appoġġ lil dawk bla xogħol, liż-żgħażagħ u l-persuni żvantaġġati, u biex jittaffew il-konsegwenzi soċjali tal-kriżi. Permezz tal-metodu soċjali miftuħ ta' koordinazzjoni, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja l-Kumitat tal-Protezzjoni Soċjali fil-mobilizzazzjoni ta' diversi strumenti biex tindirizza l-faqar u l-esklużjoni soċjali. Hija tippromwovi l-kooperazzjoni bejn l-Istati Membri permezz ta' qafas stabbilit għal sorveljanza multilaterali u tematika tar-riformi ta' ħarsien soċjali tal-pajjiżi tal-UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000048/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Risk of poverty and social exclusion

According to Eurostat, in 2012 124.5 million people, i.e. 24.8% of the EU's population, were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared with 24.3% in 2011 and 23.7% in 2008. This means that these citizens were in at least one of the following three situations: at risk of poverty, severely materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity. A reduction in the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU is one of the key targets of the Europe 2020 strategy.

1. What are the Commission's views with respect to the increase in the rate of those at risk of poverty and social exclusion?

2. How exactly does the Commission intend to help people who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, and to put an end to these rising figures?

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

Despite the clear signals of a slow recovery, the social situation in the European Union continues to be source of concerns for the Commission. The latest figures show that there are 6.6 million more people living in poverty or social exclusion since 2008, a total of 123 million people or close to 1 in 4 Europeans in 2012. Poverty and social exclusion has increased in more than 1/3 of the Member States in both 2011 and 2012. Children and young people have been particularly affected. Based on these trends and without major efforts by the Member States, it is unlikely that the 2020 goal on poverty reduction will be met.

The Commission has issued comprehensive guidance across employment and social policies. Through the European Semester and the Social Investment Package, the Commission sets overall budgetary, economic and social priorities, and gives policy guidance to boost growth, employment and social cohesion in line with the EU's long-term growth strategy. The Semester process allows for issuing concrete recommendations in the social field. EU Funds (notably ESF, ERDF, the Programme for Social Change and Innovation and the Fund for the Most Deprived) are mobilised to contribute to economic recovery, to provide increased support to the unemployed, youth and disadvantaged persons, and to alleviate the social consequences of the crisis. Under the social open method of coordination, the Commission supports the Social Protection Committee in mobilising various instruments to tackle poverty and social exclusion. It promotes cooperation among Member States through an established framework for thematic and multilateral surveillance of EU countries' social protection reforms.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000049/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-volontarjat fl-UE

Skont studju li sar fl-2011 dwar il-volontarjat fl-UE mill-Aġenzija Eżekuttiva għall-Edukazzjoni, l-Awdjoviżiv u l-Kultura (EACEA), madwar 92 sa 94 miljun adulti huma involuti fis-settur tal-volontarjat. Dan ifisser li madwar 22% sa 23% tal-Ewropej li għandhom aktar minn 15-il sena huma involuti f'xogħol volontarju.

Stħarriġ uffiċjali ppubblikat f'Malta f'Diċembru 2013 jagħti x'nifhmu li fl-2012 kważi 30 000 persuna tal-età ta' 12-il sena jew aktar kienu involuti f'attivitajiet ta' volontarjat.

Ir-realtà hija li x-xogħol volontarju kull ma jmur qed isir aktar popolari f'ċerti Stati Membri (bħal Malta), filwaqt li fi Stati Membri oħra dan il-qasam għadu jibda u qed jiżviluppa. Minkejja l-fatt li l-UE ilha li rrikonoxxiet l-importanza tal-volontarjat, f'dan ir-rigward għad hemm nuqqas ta' approċċ sistematiku u strutturat fuq il-livell tal-UE.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi dejta statistika dwar in-numru ta' persuni involuti fix-xogħol volontarju fit-28 Stat Membru, maqsuma skont il-pajjiż u l-grupp ta' età?

2. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni dwar ir-rwol tax-xogħol volontarju fl-UE? Taqbel mal-fatt li x-xogħol volontarju għandu jiġi promoss?

3. Il-Kummissjoni adottat xi strateġiji biex tippromwovi l-iskambju ta' prattiki tajbin marbuta mal-volontarjat fost it-28 Stat Membru?

4. X'azzjoni qed tieħu l-Kummissjoni biex iżżid is-sensibilizzazzjoni u tippromwovi aktar l-volontarjat fl-Istati Membri?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Vassiliou f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni tħaddan il-fehmiet tal-Onorevoli Parlamentari dwar l-importanza tal-volontarjat għas-soċjetà Ewropea.

M'għandhiex statistika iktar riċenti minn dik meħuda minn studju kkummissjonat fil-kuntest tas-Sena Ewropea tal-Volontarjat (2011) ([1]). Minkejja li l-Eurostat ma jiġborx regolarment informazzjoni dwar l-istatistika dwar il-volontarjat, teżisti xi dejta fir-riżultati ta' investigazzjonijiet fuq suġġetti oħra, bħal dak dwar it-"Time Use" ([2]).

Il-Kummissjoni hija konxja li l-volontarjat joħloq kapital uman u soċjali, jiffavorixxi l-impjieg u l-koeżjoni soċjali, filwaqt li jsaħħaħ il-valuri tas-solidarjetà u taċ-ċittadinanza. Hija saħqet fuq l-importanza tal-volontarjat għall-Ewropa f'Komunikazzjoni tal-2011 dwar il-politiki tal-UE u l-volontarjat ([3]), li identifikat l-azzjonijiet konkreti mmirati lejn ir-rikonoxximent u l-promozzjoni tal-volontarjat fil-livell tal-UE.

Diversi programmi tal-UE jindirizzaw lill-voluntiera u jippromwovu l-volontarjat transkonfinali. Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni pproponiet ir-rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill u tal-Parlament Ewropew dwar il-validazzjoni tat-tagħlim mhux formali jew informali, inkluż ir-rikonoxxenza tal-kompetenzi akkwistati permezz tal-volontarjat ([4]).

Hu maħsub li jsiru skambji ta' prattiki tajbin dwar il-volontarjat permezz tal-kuntest imġedded għall-kooperazzjoni Ewropea fil-qasam taż-żgħażagħ (2010-2018) ([5]), bil-volontarjat bħala wieħed mit-tmien kampi ta' applikazzjoni. Ġew appoġġjati proġetti pilota biex jiġi stabbilit korp ta' voluntiera umanitarji tal-UE ([6]). Bħalissa, il-proposta tar-Regolament għal dan il-korp qiegħed jiġi nnegozjat mill-koleġiżlaturi.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1311_mt.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:MT:PDF
([5]) ĠU C 311 tad-19.12.2009, p. 1.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000049/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Volunteering in the EU

According to a study on volunteering in the EU carried out in 2011 by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), approximately 92 to 94 million adults are involved in the volunteering sector. This means that around 22-23% of Europeans aged 15 or over are engaged in voluntary work.

Official statistics published in Malta in December 2013 suggest that in 2012 nearly 30 000 people aged 12 or over were involved in voluntary activities.

The reality is that voluntary work is becoming increasingly popular in certain Member States (such as Malta), while in other Member States this sector is still emerging and developing. Although the importance of volunteering has long been acknowledged by the EU, a systematic and structured EU approach to volunteering is lacking.

1. Can the Commission provide updated statistical data on the number of people engaged in voluntary work in the 28 Member States, broken down by country and age group?

2. What are the Commission's views on the role of voluntary work in the EU? Does it agree that voluntary work should be promoted?

3. Has the Commission adopted any strategies to promote the exchange of good practices in relation to volunteering among the 28 Member States?

4. What action is the Commission taking to raise awareness and further promote volunteering in the Member States?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Vassiliou au nom de la Commission
(4 mars 2014)

La Commission partage les vues de l'Honorable Parlementaire quant à l'importance du volontariat pour la société européenne.

Elle ne dispose pas de statistiques plus récentes que celles reprises dans une étude commanditée dans le contexte de l'Année européenne du volontariat (2011) ([1]). Bien qu'Eurostat ne collecte pas régulièrement d'informations statistiques sur le volontariat, certaines données sont disponibles dans les résultats d'enquêtes portant sur d'autres sujets, comme celle sur le «Time Use» ([2]).

La Commission est consciente que le volontariat est générateur de capital humain et social, qu'il favorise l'emploi et la cohésion sociale, tout en concrétisant les valeurs de solidarité et de citoyenneté. Elle a souligné l'importance du volontariat pour l'Europe dans une communication de 2011 sur les politiques de l'UE et le volontariat ([3]), qui identifiait des actions concrètes visant la reconnaissance et la promotion du volontariat au niveau de l'UE.

Divers programmes de l'UE ciblent les volontaires et promeuvent le volontariat transfrontalier. Par ailleurs, la Commission a proposé la recommandation du Conseil et du Parlement européen sur la validation de l'apprentissage non formel et informel, y compris la reconnaissance de compétences acquises via le volontariat ([4]).

Des échanges de bonnes pratiques en matière de volontariat sont envisagés par le cadre renouvelé pour la coopération européenne dans le domaine de la jeunesse (2010-2018) ([5]), dont le volontariat est un des huit champs d'action. Des projets pilotes ont été soutenus pour établir un corps de volontaires humanitaires de l'UE ([6]). La proposition de règlement pour ce corps est en ce moment négociée par les co-législateurs.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1311_fr.pdf
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2012:398:0001:0005:FR:PDF
([5]) JOUE C 311 du 19.12.2009, p. 1.
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_fr.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000050/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Id-disturbi marbuta mal-ikel fost l-irġiel Ewropej

Minkejja l-fatt li d-disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari huma aktar komuni fost in-nisa milli fost l-irġiel, jeżistu l-eċċezzjonijiet, bħall-konsum frenetiku tal-ikel, li jidher li jaħkem kważi l-istess numru ta' irġiel u nisa. Parti mill-isfida biex tiġi indirizzata l-prevalenza tad-disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari fost l-irġiel hija n-nuqqas ta' riċerka u stħarriġ aġġornati. Dan minħabba l-fatt li l-każijiet ta' disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari fost l-irġiel jew mhumiex irrapportati biżżejjed jew huma djanjostikati ħażin.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi dejta statistika dwar l-inċidenza tad-disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari fost l-irġiel fit-28 Stat Membru?

2. X'azzjoni qed tittieħed biex tittejjeb id-djanjożi tad-disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari fl-irġiel?

3. Il-Kummissjoni x'inizjattivi qed tieħu bl-għan li tħeġġeġ riċerka ulterjuri u tgħin biex tiddetermina l-fatturi ġenetiċi, fiżiċi, psikoloġiċi u soċjali li joħolqu disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari fost l-irġiel?

4. Xi strateġija qed tiġi adottata biex tingħata għajnuna lill-irġiel li jbatu minn disturbi fid-drawwiet alimentari biex jagħrfu l-marda li qed taħkimhom u jfittxu għajnuna professjonali biex jeħlbuha?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(26 ta' Frar 2014)

1. Il-Kummissjoni ma tiġborx dejta dwar disturbi alimentari.

Madankollu, il-Kummissjoni tiġbor dejta rrappurtata mill-persuni stess dwar il-Body-Mass-Index skont is-sess fl-Istħarriġ dwar is-Saħħa Ewropea permezz ta' Intervisti li jwettaq il-Eurostat (il-Eurostat European Health Interview Survey). Id-dejta rilevanti tinsab fir-rapport "Health at a Glance 2012 ([1])", l-Ewrobarometru Nru 329 dwar il-Fatturi Determinanti tas-Saħħa mill-2009 lil hawn (Health Determinants from 2009), u r-rapport dwar l-istat tas-saħħa tal-bniedem fl-Ewropa (The State of Men's Health in Europe) ([2]).

2. L-azzjonijiet marbuta mad-dijanjożi medika, inklużi dawk dwar disturbi alimentari, jaqgħu taħt ir-responsabbiltà tal-Istati Membri.

3. Skont is-Seba' Programm Kwadru dwar ir-Riċerka ([3]), il-Kummissjoni appoġġjat għadd ta' proġetti ta' riċerka rilevanti. Dawn jinkludu proġetti dwar il-fatturi determinanti tal-għażla tal-ikel u t-tendenzi alimentari (I.Family ([4])), il-mogħdijiet newroloġiċi li jirregolaw il-ġuħ/is-sens ta' xaba' (Full4Health ([5])), l-istress, il-vizzji u l-imġiba alimentari (NeuroFAST ([6])), teknoloġiji ġodda għall-istudju tal-funzjoni tal-moħħ b'rabta mal-imġiba alimentari (Nudge-it ([7])), l-impatt tal-ikel, l-imġiba nutrittiva, l-istil ta' ħajja u l-ambjent soċjoekonomiku dwar id-depressjoni (MooDFOOD ([8])), u r-regolamentazzjoni tas-sistemi tal-moħħ stess għal disturbi mentali inklużi disturbi alimentari ta' ikel bla kontroll (BRAINDRAIN).

Il-Programm Orizzont 2020 se joffri aktar opportunitajiet ta' riċerka dwar l-isfidi tas-soċjetà "Is-saħħa, il-bidla demografika u l-benesseri" u "Is-sigurtà fl-ikel, l-agrikoltura u l-forestrija sostenibbli, ir-riċerka dwar l-ilmijiet marini marittimi u dawk interni, u l-Bijoekonomija". L-informazzjoni dwar it-talbiet attwali għall-finanzjament tista' tinkiseb permezz tal-Portal tal-Parteċipant dwar ir-Riċerka u l-Innovazzjoni tal-KE ([9]).

4. Il-proġett PROYOUTH (2011-2014) ([10]) fil-qafas tal-Programm dwar is-Saħħa fl-UE joffri informazzjoni dwar disturbi alimentari fiż-żgħażagħ permezz tas-sit elettroniku tiegħu. Dan jiffaċilita l-aċċess, jekk ikun meħtieġ, tal-utenti regolari tas-sistemi tal-kura tas-saħħa mentali. Il-proġett għandu ż-żewġ sessi fil-mira tiegħu.

([1]) OECD (2012), Health at a Glance: Europe 2012; sorsi: OECD, Eurstat, WHO).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/men_health_report_en.pdf
([3]) Is-Seba' Programm Kwadru dwar ir-Riċerka, l-Iżvilupp Teknoloġiku u Attivitajiet ta' Dimostrazzjoni (FP7, 2007-2013).
([4]) http://www.ifamilystudy.eu
([5]) http://www.full4health.eu/project
([6]) http://www.neurofast.eu
([7]) http://www.nudge-it.eu
([8]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/110836_en.html
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([10]) http://www.pro-youth.eu/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000050/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Eating disorders among European men

Although eating disorders are more common among women than men, there are exceptions, such as the binge eating disorder, which appears to affect almost as many men as women. Part of the challenge in addressing the prevalence of eating disorders among men is the lack of up-to-date research and statistics. This is due to the fact that cases of eating disorders among men are either underreported or misdiagnosed.

1. Can the Commission provide statistical data on the incidence of eating disorders among men in the 28 Member States?

2. What action is being taken to improve the diagnosis of eating disorders in men?

3. What initiatives is the Commission considering with a view to encouraging further research and helping to determine the genetic, physical, psychological and social factors that contribute to eating disorders among men?

4. What strategy is being adopted to help men suffering from eating disorders to recognise their illness and seek professional help to overcome it?

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

1. The Commission does not collect data on eating disorders.

However, the Commission collects self-reported data on the Body-Mass-Index by sex in the Eurostat European Health Interview Survey. Relevant data can be found in 'Health at a Glance 2012 ([1])', the Eurobarometer No 329 on Health Determinants from 2009, and the report on 'The State of Men's Health in Europe' ([2]).

2. Actions related to medical diagnoses, including that of eating disorders, fall under the responsibility of Member States.

3. Under the 7th Framework Programme for Research ([3]), the Commission supported a number of relevant research projects. These include projects on the determinants of food choice and eating habits (I.Family ([4])), neurological pathways regulating hunger/satiety (Full4Health ([5])), stress, addiction and eating behaviour (NeuroFAST ([6])), new technologies to study brain function in relation to eating behaviour (Nudge-it ([7])), the impact of food, nutritional behaviour, lifestyle and the socioeconomic environment on depression (MooDFOOD ([8])), and the self-regulation of brain systems for mental disorders including binge-eating disorder (BRAINDRAIN).

Horizon 2020 will offer further research opportunities through the societal challenges 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' and 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the Bioeconomy'. Information on current funding calls can be obtained through the EC Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([9]).

4. The project PROYOUTH (2011-2014) ([10]) under the EU Health Programme provides information about eating disorders to young people via its website. It facilitates the access of users to the regular mental healthcare systems, if necessary. The project targets both genders.

([1]) OECD (2012), Health at a Glance: Europe 2012; sources: OECD, Eurstat, WHO).
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/population_groups/docs/men_health_report_en.pdf
([3]) Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013).
([4]) http://www.ifamilystudy.eu
([5]) http://www.full4health.eu/project
([6]) http://www.neurofast.eu
([7]) http://www.nudge-it.eu
([8]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/110836_en.html
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([10]) http://www.pro-youth.eu/

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000051/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Is-sindromu ta' Down

Fit-18 ta' April 2012 il-Parlament adotta dikjarazzjoni bil-miktub dwar it-tfal bis-sindromu ta' Down. F'din id-dikjarazzjoni l-Parlament irrikonoxxa s-sindromu ta' Down bħala wieħed mill-aktar kawżi ġenetiċi komuni tad-diżabilitajiet relatati mat-tagħlim. Il-Parlament irrikonoxxa wkoll id-dritt tal-persuni b'diżabilità li jgawdu minn miżuri maħsuba biex jagħtuhom garanzija ta' indipendenza, integrazzjoni soċjali u okkupazzjonali u parteċipazzjoni fil-ħajja tal-komunità.

Fid-dikjarazzjoni, il-Parlament jistieden lill-Kummissjoni, il-Kunsill u l-Istati Membri jgħinu jtejbu l-proċess ta' inklużjoni soċjali tat-tfal bis-sindromu ta' Down permezz ta' kampanji ta' sensibilizzazzjoni fuq livell nazzjonali u Ewropew, jippromwovu r-riċerka pan-Ewropea dwar it-trattament ta' din il-kondizzjoni u jfasslu strateġija li tinkludi l-Ewropa kollha biex jitħarsu d-drittijiet tat-tfal bis-sindromu ta' Down fl-UE.

1. X'azzjonijiet ħadet il-Kummissjoni bħala segwitu għal din id-dikjarazzjoni bil-miktub?

2. X'approċċi ta' tagħlim qed jiġu adottati sabiex jiġu indirizzati d-diversi rekwiżiti ta' dawk bis-sindromu ta' Down fix-xenarji edukattivi ġenerali?

3. Il-Kummissjoni se tikkunsidra tistabbilixxi netwerk bejn l-Istati Membri biex jiġu kondiviżi l-għarfien u l-aqwa prattiki fl-għoti ta' appoġġ fuq kull livell, inkluża l-kollaborazzjoni bejn l-iskejjel flimkien ma' persuni bis-sindromu Down?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Reding f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(7 ta' Marzu 2014)

L-Istati Membri huma responsabbli għall-organizzazzjoni u għall-kontenut tas-sistemi tagħhom tal-edukazzjoni, inklużi d-dispożizzjonijiet dwar l-edukazzjoni u t-taħriġ tan-nies bi bżonnijiet speċjali, u r-rwol tal-Kummissjoni huwa li tappoġġhom fl-isforzi tagħhom biex itejbu s-sistemi tagħhom.

Il-politika tal-Kummissjoni biex tħeġġeġ edukazzjoni inklussiva hija deskritta fl-*Istrateġija Ewropea tad-Diżabilità 2010-2020* ([1]). Il-Kummissjoni ratifikat ukoll l-*Konvenzjoni dwar id-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità tan-Nazzjonijiet Magħquda* ([2]) li tinkludi impenn għall-prinċipji u l-prattiċi tal-edukazzjoni inklussiva.

Fil-kuntest tal-qafas strateġiku għall-kooperazzjoni Ewropea fl-edukazzjoni u fit-taħriġ (ET2020) ([3]), il-prijoritajiet miftiehma mal-Istati Membri jinkludu appoġġ imtejjeb mas-sistema skolarja ġenerali għall-istudenti bi bżonnijiet speċjali.

Fil-perjodu 2007-2013, il-*Programm ta' Tagħlim Tul il-Ħajja* offra opportunitajiet ta' finanzjament għall-atturi attivi fil-qasam usa' tal-bżonnijiet speċjali fl-edukazzjoni. Fil-perjodu 2014-2020, il-programm *Erasmus+* se jipprovdi opportunitajiet ta' finanzjament lil firxa wiesgħa ta' atturi li jaħdmu fis-sħubija biex jittejbu s-sistemi tal-edukazzjoni, inkluża s-sitwazzjoni tal-edukazzjoni għall-istudenti bi bżonnijiet speċjali, u għal titjib strateġiku għal sistemi tal-edukazzjoni aktar inklussivi. Dawn l-opportunitajiet ġew integrati fil-partijiet kollha tal-programm Erasmus+ ([4]).

Rigward l-istabbiliment ta' netwerk fost l-Istati Membri biex jaqsmu l-għarfien u l-aħjar prattiċi, il-Kummissjoni diġà qed taħdem mil-qrib u ssostni finanzjarjament l-Aġenzija Ewropea għall-Bżonnijiet Speċjali u l-Edukazzjoni Inklussiva (AEBSEI) ([5]). L-AEBSEI tipprovdi analiżi, tqabbil, evidenza u tagħrif dwar ir-realtà tal-edukazzjoni inklussiva madwar l-Ewropa, rakkomandazzjonijiet għall-politika u għall-prattika, kif ukoll għodda għall-evalwazzjoni u għall-monitoraġġ tal-progress f'dan il-qasam.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 finali.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/ef0016_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([5]) http://www.european-agency.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000051/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Down's syndrome

On 18 April 2012 Parliament adopted a written declaration on children with Down's syndrome. In this declaration Parliament recognised Down's syndrome as one of the most common genetic causes of learning disabilities. It also recognised the right of people with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to guarantee their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in community life.

In the declaration Parliament called on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to help improve social inclusion of children with Down's syndrome by means of awareness-raising campaigns at national and European level, to promote pan-European research into the treatment of this condition and to draw up a Europe-wide strategy to protect the rights of children with Down's syndrome in the EU.

1. How has the Commission followed up on this written declaration?

2. What learning approaches are being adopted to respond to the different requirements of those with Down's syndrome in mainstream educational settings?

3. Will the Commission consider setting up a network among Member States to share knowledge and best practice in providing support at all levels, including school-to-school collaboration with people with Down's syndrome?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

Member States are responsible for the organisation and content of their education systems, including provisions for the education and training of people with special needs, and the role of the Commission is to support them in their efforts to improve their systems.

The Commission policy to promote inclusive education is outlined in the *European Disability Strategy 2010-2020* ([1]). Also, the Commission has ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* ([2]) which includes a commitment to the principles and practice of inclusive education.

In the context of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) ([3]), the priorities agreed by Member States include improved support within mainstream schooling for learners with special needs.

In 2007-2013, the *Lifelong Learning Programme* offered funding opportunities for actors active in the wider field of special educational needs. In 2014-2020, the *Erasmus+* programme will provide funding opportunities to a broad range of actors working in partnership to improve education systems, including the educational situation of learners with special needs, and for strategic improvements for more inclusive education systems. These opportunities are mainstreamed in all parts of the Erasmus+ programme ([4]).

With regard to setting up a network among Member States to share knowledge and best practice, the Commission already works closely with and supports financially the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education ([5]). EASNIE provides analysis, comparison, evidence and information about the reality of inclusive education across Europe, recommendations for policy and practice as well as tools to evaluate and monitor progress in this field.

([1]) COM(2010) 636 final.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/convention/index_en.htm
([3]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/ef0016_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([5]) http://www.european-agency.org/.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000052/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: L-edukazzjoni sesswali fl-iskejjel

Madwar l-Unjoni Ewropea, il-politiki dwar l-edukazzjoni sesswali fl-iskejjel ivarjaw b'mod konsiderevoli. F'xi Stati Membri l-edukazzjoni sesswali mhix mandatorja, waqt li f'oħrajn titmexxa fil-kurrikulu sħiħ għat-tfal kollha ta' età skolastika, u tibda minn età bikrija.

Minkejja l-kompetenzi limitati tal-UE f'dan il-qasam, fil-fatt tikkontribwixxi permezz ta' proġetti taħt il-programm għas-saħħa, bħal Safe II u l-proġett "Boys and Girls".

1. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi l-aħħar data statistika dwar l-inċidenza tat-tqala fl-adolexxenti fit-28 Stat Membru?

2. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi l-aħħar data statistika dwar mard trażmess sesswalment fost l-adolexxenti fit-28 Stat Membru?

3. Tista' l-Kummissjoni tiddikjara sa liema punt l-edukazzjoni sesswali relatata ma' kwistjonijiet LGBT qed tiġi inkorporata fil-proġetti ffinanzjati mill-UE?

4. X'tip ta' inizjattivi qed tieħu l-UE biex tippromwovi l-edukazzjoni sesswali f'dawk l-Istati Membri li għadhom jikkunsidraw li din il-forma ta' edukazzjoni hi anqas importanti minn forom oħra ta' edukazzjoni?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(21 ta' Frar 2014)

Is-sistema ta' Indikaturi Prinċipali tas-Saħħa Ewropea (ECHI) tinkludi indikatur dwar id-distribuzzjoni tal-ommijiet skont l-età fit-taqsima ta' fatturi demografiċi u soċjoekonomiċi ([1]). Dan jipprovdi l-persentaġġ ta' twelid ħaj għal ommijiet iżgħar minn 20 sena. Is-sors tad-dejta huwa l-Eurostat ([2]) u l-istatistika l-aktar riċenti dwar l-għadd ta' tqala fl-adolexxenza fl-UE tinsab fl-Anness.

Iċ-Ċentru Ewropew għall-Prevenzjoni u l-Kontroll tal-Mard (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control — ECDC) ġabar dejta ta' sorveljanza dwar mard u kundizzjonijiet speċifiċi kif definit mid-Deċiżjoni 2119/98/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-24 ta' Settembru 1998 ([3]). Din il-lista tinkludi l-infezzjoni *Chlamydia trachomatis*, il-gonorrea, u s-sifilide li huma infezzjonijiet trażmessi sesswalment. L-aħħar dejta dwar dan il-mard għal żgħażagħ bejn il-15 u d-19-il sena tinsab fit-tabelli minn 2 sa 4 tal-anness.

Ir-Riżoluzzjoni tal-Parlament Ewropew dwar is-saħħa u d-drittijiet sesswali u riproduttivi tal-4 ta' Diċembru 2013 ([4]) tgħid li "l-formolazzjoni u l-implimentazzjoni ta' politiki dwar is-Saħħa u d-Drittijiet Sesswali u Riproduttivi u dwar l-edukazzjoni sesswali fl-iskejjel hija kompetenza tal-Istati Membri". Ir-Riżoluzzjoni tisħaq ukoll li l-UE tista' tikkontribwixxi għall-promozzjoni tal-aħjar prattiki fost l-Istati Membri. Diversi proġetti ffinanzjati mill-Programm tal-UE dwar is-Saħħa ([5]) jagħmlu dan, bħalma huwa l-proġett SAFESEX ([6]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_fagec&lang=en
([3]) Id-Deċiżjoni Nru 2119/98/KE tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tal-24 ta' Settembru 1998 dwar l-istabbiliment ta' network għas-sorveljanza epidemoloġika u kontroll ta' mard li jinxtered fil-Komunità. 1998, Il-Ġurnal Uffiċjali tal-Unjoni Ewropea. p. L 268.
([4]) A7-0426/2013, ir-rapport tal-MEP Edite Estrela — "Sexual and reproductive health and rights", 2013/2040(INI).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091217

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000052/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Sexual education in schools

Across the European Union, policies on sexual education in schools differ considerably. In some Member States sexual education is not mandatory, whereas in others it is run across the school-age curriculum for all children, starting at an early age.

Despite the EU's limited competences in this field, it does contribute through projects under the health programme, such as Safe II and the 'Boys and Girls Project'.

1. Can the Commission provide the latest statistical data on the incidence of teenage pregnancies in the 28 Member States?

2. Can the Commission provide the latest statistical data on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among teenagers in the 28 Member States?

3. Can the Commission state to what extent LGBT sexual education is being incorporated into EU-funded projects?

4. What kind of initiatives is the EU taking to promote sexual education in those Member States which still consider this form of education to be less important than other forms of education?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The system of European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) includes an indicator on mothers' age distribution in the section of demographic and socioeconomic factors ([1]). It provides the percentage of live births in mothers younger than 20 years. The source of data is Eurostat ([2]) and most recent statistics for numbers of teenage pregnancies in the EU can be found in annex.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) collected surveillance data on the specified diseases and conditions as defined by the decision 2119/98/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 1998 ([3]). This list includes the sexually transmitted infections *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection, gonorrhoea, and syphilis. The latest data for teenagers aged 15-19 for these diseases (2012) are provided in the tables 2 to 4 in annex.

The European Parliament Resolution on sexual and reproductive health and rights of 4 December 2013 ([4]) notes that 'the formulation and implementation of policies on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and on sexual education in schools is a competence of the Member States'. The Resolution also states that the EU can contribute to the promotion of best practices among Member States. Several projects financed by the EU Health Programme ([5]) do this, such as the SAFESEX project ([6]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_fagec&lang=en
([3]) Decision 2119/98/EC of the Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 1998 setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community. 1998, *Official Journal of the European Union*. p. L 268.
([4]) A7-0426/2013, Report MEP Edite Estrela — 'Sexual and reproductive health and rights', 2013/2040(INI).
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/index_en.htm
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091217

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000053/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-proċeduri ta' ksur kurrenti

Waħda mill-għodod kruċjali li l-Unjoni Ewropea tuża biex tinforza l-leġiżlazzjoni tal-UE hija l-proċeduri ta' ksur. Madankollu, hemm it-tendenza li t-tagħrif rigward il-proċeduri ta' dan it-tip tkun insuffiċjenti u frammentata, u ta' spiss lanqas lill-Membri tal-PE ma tilħaq, aħseb u ara lill-kostitwenti tagħhom.

Peress li l-websajt relatat mat-tali proċeduri ([1]) mhix faċli biex tintuża u ma tinkludi l-ebda informazzjoni dettaljata rilevanti, tista' l-Kummissjoni tipprovdi lista eżawrjenti tal-proċeduri ta' ksur kurrenti, imqassma skont l-Istat Membru u l-qasam, b'mod partikolari għall-Malta għall-perjodu 2009-2013?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barroso f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(20 ta' Frar 2014)

Il-Kummissjoni tiġbed l-attenzjoni tal-Onorevoli Parlamentari dwar il-fatt li l-websajt imsemmija ([2]) hija ddedikata għad-deċiżjonijiet tal-Kummissjoni rigward ksur, imqassmin skont id-data mill-20 ta' Marzu 2002 'l quddiem.

Kif jingħad hemmhekk, "Sakemm ma tiddeċidix mod ieħor, il-Kummissjoni Ewropea tinforma dwar il-progress tal-fajls fil-kuntest ta' proċedimenti ta' ksur mill-istadju tal-ittra ta' avviż formali 'l hemm.Informazzjoni simili tingħata, għal darb' oħra mill-istadju tal-ittra ta' avviż formali 'l hemm, fir-rigward ta' deċiżjonijiet dwar nuqqas ta' konformità mas-sentenzi tal-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-Unjoni Ewropea, sakemm il-Kummissjoni ma tiddeċidix mod'ieħor.Il-Kummissjoni tagħti wkoll informazzjoni dwar deċiżjonijiet li tagħlaq każijiet li jinvolvu ksur stabbilit".

L-informazzjoni li tidher fuq din il-websajt hija mqassma skont l-Istati Membri u ġġib in-numru ta' ksur ikkonċernat, il-qasam milqut u l-bażi ġuridika kkonċernata.

Fejn tidħol l-informazzjoni mixtieqa, il-Kummissjoni tistieden lill-Onorevoli Parlamentari li tirreferi għad-diversi rapporti annwali dwar il-kontroll tal-applikazzjoni tal-liġi tal-Unjoni Ewropea (UE) ([3]) u għar-rapporti annwali dwar l-attivitajiet tal-Qorti tal-Ġustizzja tal-UE (QĠ), li permezz tagħhom tkun tista' tiġbor l-informazzjoni statistika dwar il-proċeduri minħabba ksur miftuħa kontra l-Istati Membri kollha.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_decisions_mt.htm mhix faċli biex tintuża u ma tinkludix l-informazzjoni rilevanti dettaljata.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_decisions_mt.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_annual_report_mt.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000053/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Ongoing infringement procedures

One of the key tools the European Union uses to enforce EU legislation is infringement procedures. However, information regarding such procedures tends to be scant and fragmented, often not reaching MEPs, much less their constituents.

Given that the website relating to such procedures ([1]) is not user-friendly and does not contain the relevant detailed information, can the Commission provide an exhaustive list of current infringement procedures, broken down by Member State and field, in particular for Malta for the 2009-2013 period?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barroso au nom de la Commission
(20 février 2014)

La Commission attire l'attention de l'Honorable Parlementaire sur le fait que le site en question ([2]) est consacré aux décisions de la Commission — classées par dates depuis le 20 mars 2002 — en matière d'infractions.

Comme y indiqué, «[s]auf *décision contraire de la Commission européenne, elle informe sur le stade atteint par un dossier dans le cadre d'une procédure d'infraction à partir du stade de la mise en demeure. Une information semblable est donnée à partir du stade de la mise en demeure en ce qui concerne les décisions prises dans les cas de non-exécution des arrêts de la Cour de justice, sauf décision contraire de la Commission européenne. La Commission informe également sur les décisions de classement des infractions constatées*».

Les informations visualisables sur ce site sont rangées par État membre et portent sur le numéro d'infraction en question, le domaine considéré et la base légale visée.

En ce qui concerne les informations recherchées, la Commission prie l'Honorable Parlementaire de se référer aux différents rapports annuels sur le contrôle de l'application du droit de l'Union européenne (UE) ([3]) et aux rapports annuels sur les activités de la Cour de justice de l'UE (CJ), lesquels permettent de récolter des informations statistiques sur les procédures d'infractions ouvertes à l'encontre de tous les États membres.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/community_law/infringements/infringements_decisions_en.htm is not user friendly and does not contain detailed relevant information.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_decisions_fr.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/eu_law/infringements/infringements_annual_report_fr.htm

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000054/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: It-tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti fl-UE

Diversi studji juru li l-iżvantaġġ soċjoekonomiku, l-istruttura mħarbta tal-familja u edukazzjoni limitata huma marbuta b'mod konsistenti ma' tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti. Ħafna fatturi ta' stil ta' ħajja li jikkompromettu s-saħħa (pereżempju imġiba sesswali riskjuża, użu tad-droga jew tat-tabakk) diġà urew li hemm xi rabta mat-tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti, u għandhom tendenza li jseħħu b'mod simultanju.

Madankollu, rapport tar-Reprostat 2 tal-2007 ("Fatturi Assoċjati ma' Tqala fost it-Tfajliet Adolexxenti fil-Pajjiżi tal-UE: Analiżi Sistematika") wera li r-relazzjoni bejn l-għarfien tas-saħħa sesswali u l-orjentazzjonijiet, l-aċċessibbiltà tas-servizzi u r-rati aktar baxxi tat-tqala fost it-tfaljiet adolexxenti hija kumplessa u tibqa' mhux ċara, li tindika li l-aċċess għal servizzi mtejba, minnu nnifsu, jista' ma jkunx biżżejjed biex jitnaqqas l-għadd ta' tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi informazzjoni reċenti dwar tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti fit-28 Stat Membru?

2. X'inhuma l-fehmiet tal-Kummissjoni rigward il-kontroversja evidenti fuq fatturi li jikkontribwixxu għal, u soluzzjonijiet għat-tnaqqis tat-tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti?

3. Rigward il-miri tal-Ewropa 2020 relatati mat-tluq bikri mill-iskola, il-Kummissjoni tqis li dan huwa fattur importanti li jikkontribwixxi għal tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti?

4. Xi programmi ta' sensibilizzazzjoni għandha l-Kummissjoni biex teduka l-adolexxenti dwar mard trażmess sesswalment?

5. Il-Kummissjoni beħsiebha tiffinanzja studji ġodda, inkluż fl-Istati Membri ġodda, biex tikkwantifika l-problema tat-tqala fost it-tfajliet adolexxenti fl-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Borg f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Marzu 2014)

Is-sistema tal-Indikaturi Prinċipali tas-Saħħa Ewropej ([1]) tipprovdi l-perċentwali tat-twelid ħaj fl-ommijiet li għandhom inqas minn 20 sena. L-aktar statistika riċenti tinsab fl-Anness ([2]).

Xi fatturi assoċjati mal-istil tal-ħajja jistgħu jkunu relatati mat-tqala fi tfajliet adolexxenti. Sabiex tħeġġeġ liż-żgħażagħ jadottaw stili ta' ħajja tajbin għas-saħħa minn kmieni f'ħajjithom, il-Kummissjoni qed tieħu azzjoni dwar it-tabakk, l-alkoħol, il-prevenzjoni ta' drogi u korrimenti, in-nutrizzjoni, l-attività fiżika, is-saħħa mentali, l-ambjenti tajbin għas-saħħa u l-inugwaljanzi fis-saħħa.

Fl-UE, it-tqala fl-adolexxenti mhix fattur ewlieni li jikkontribwixxi għat-tluq bikri mill-iskola. Ir-Rakkomandazzjoni tal-Kunsill tal-2011 tistieden lill-Istati Membri sabiex jadottaw strateġiji komprensivi bbażati fuq l-evidenza u li jinkludu miżuri ta' prevenzjoni, intervent u kumpens fil-ġlieda kontra t-tluq bikri mill-iskola. Il-Kummissjoni tissorvelja l-iżviluppi fl-Istati Membri, u tirrapporta permezz tar-rapporti tal-Istħarriġ Annwali tat-Tkabbir u tal-Edukazzjoni u t-Taħriġ 2020.

Ir-Riżoluzzjoni tal-Parlament Ewropew tal-10 ta' Diċembru 2013 dwar is-saħħa u d-drittijiet sesswali u riproduttivi ([3]) tgħid li "l-formolazzjoni u l-implimentazzjoni ta' politiki dwar is-Saħħa u d-Drittijiet Sesswali u Riproduttivi u dwar l-edukazzjoni sesswali fl-iskejjel hija kompetenza tal-Istati Membri". Ir-Riżoluzzjoni tisħaq ukoll li l-UE tista' tikkontribwixxi għall-promozzjoni tal-aħjar prattiki fost l-Istati Membri. Diversi proġetti ffinanzjati mill-Programm dwar is-Saħħa ([4]) jagħmlu dan, fosthom il-proġett SAFESEX ([5]).

L-Ewwel u t-Tieni Programm dwar is-Saħħa ffinanzjaw proġetti fil-qasam tal-informazzjoni dwar is-saħħa sesswali u riproduttiva. Kull sena se jiġu deċiżi l-azzjonijiet għall-Programm dwar is-Saħħa li jkun imiss abbażi ta' programm ta' ħidma annwali.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_fagec&lang=en
([3]) A7-0426/2013 — "Is-saħħa u d-drittijiet Sesswali u Riproduttivi", 2013/2040(INI).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091217

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000054/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Teenage pregnancies in the EU

Several studies have shown that socioeconomic disadvantage, a disrupted family structure and limited education are consistently linked to teenage pregnancy. Many health-compromising lifestyle factors (e.g. risky sexual behaviour and alcohol, drug or tobacco use) have also been shown to have some link to teenage pregnancy, and tend to occur simultaneously.

However, a 2007 Reprostat 2 report ('Factors Associated with Teenage Pregnancy in the EU Countries: a Systematic Review') showed that the relationship between sexual health knowledge and attitudes, the accessibility of services and lower teenage pregnancy rates is complex and remains unclear, indicating that access to improved services may not be sufficient in itself to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies.

1. Can the Commission provide recent data on teenage pregnancies in the 28 Member States?

2. What are the Commission's views regarding the apparent controversy over contributory factors in, and solutions for reducing, teenage pregnancy?

3. With regard to the Europe 2020 targets relating to early school-leaving, has the Commission taken teenage pregnancy into consideration as an important contributory factor?

4. What awareness-raising programmes does the Commission have in place to educate teenagers about sexually transmitted diseases?

5. Does the Commission intend to fund new studies, including in the new Member States, to quantify the problem of teenage pregnancy in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The system of European Core Health Indicators ([1]) provides the percentage of live births in mothers younger than 20 years. The most recent statistics can be found in Annex ([2]).

Factors related with lifestyles can be linked to teenage pregnancies. To encourage young people to adopt healthy lifestyles early in life, the Commission is taking action on tobacco, alcohol, drugs and injury prevention, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, healthy environments and health inequalities.

Within the EU, teenage pregnancy is not a major contributory factor in early school leaving. A 2011 Council Recommendation asks Member States to adopt evidence-based, comprehensive strategies to combat early school leaving, encompassing prevention, intervention and compensation measures. The Commission monitors developments in Member States, and reports through the Annual Growth Survey and Education and Training 2020 reports.

The European Parliament Resolution on sexual and reproductive health and rights of 10 December 2013 ([3]) notes that 'the formulation and implementation of policies on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and on sexual education in schools is a competence of the Member States'. The Resolution also states that the EU can contribute to the promotion of best practices among Member States. Several projects financed by the Health Programme ([4]) do this, such as the SAFESEX project ([5]).

The First and Second Health Programmes have financed projects in the area of information on sexual and reproductive health. Regarding the next Health Programme actions will be decided every year on the basis of an annual work programme.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list/index_en.htm
([2]) http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=demo_fagec&lang=en
([3]) A7-0426/2013 — 'Sexual and reproductive health and rights', 2013/2040(INI).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/2008-2013/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html?prjno=20091217

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000055/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Azzjoni dwar it-tixjiħ

L-adozzjoni tad-Dikjarazzjoni Politika u l-Pjan Internazzjonali ta' Madrid dwar it-Tixjiħ fit-Tieni Assemblea Dinjija dwar it-Tixjiħ fl-2002 kienet l-ewwel darba li l-gvernijiet qablu li jorbtu l-kwistjonijiet relatati mat-tixjiħ ma' oqfsa oħra għall-iżvilupp soċjali u ekonomiku u d-drittijiet tal-bniedem. L-attenzjoni kienet iffokata fuq tliet oqsma prijoritarji: il-persuni ta' età avvanzata u l-iżvilupp, il-promozzjoni tas-saħħa u l-benessri fix-xjuħija u l-għoti ta' ambjenti li jappoġġawhom u jiffaċilitawlhom il-ħajja.

Kważi kwart tal-popolazzjoni ta' Malta fl-2012 kellha 60 sena jew aktar, u tbassar li fil-25 sena li ġejjin, l-għadd ta' persuni b'età ta' 75 sena jew aktar se jirdoppja minn 28 500 għal 57 100.

Fid-dawl ta' dan, tista' l-Kummissjoni:

1. tipprovdi l-projezzjonijiet statistiċi għall-għadd ta' persuni li se jkun ta' età ta' 60 sena jew aktar sal-2020 fl-Istati Membri?

2. tiddikjara l-fehmiet tagħha dwar il-Pjan ta' Azzjoni ta' Madrid u kif bi ħsiebha tagħti segwitu għall-konklużjonijiet tal-pjan?

3. tgħid xi pjanijiet u proġetti għandha implimentati biex tgħin fit-titjib tas-saħħa u l-benessri tal-persuni anzjani u tiggarantilhom ambjent li jappoġġahom?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(28 ta' Frar 2014)

Il-Eurostat jippubblika l-projezzjonijiet tal-istruttura tal-età tal-popolazzjoni kull tliet snin. Ir-riżultati l-iktar riċenti ([1]) huma disponibbli fil-bażi ta' dejta onlajn tiegħu ([2]); Bħalissa, il-Eurostat qed jiżviluppa sett ġdid ta' projezzjonijiet għall-popolazzjoni ([3]) .

Fid-dawl tal-Pjan ta' Azzjoni Internazzjonali ta' Madrid dwar it-Tixjiħ (MIPAA) tal-2002, il-Kummissjoni adottat Komunikazzjoni speċjali ([4]).

Is-Sena Ewropea tal-2012 għat-Tixjiħ Attiv u s-Solidarjetà bejn il-Ġenerazzjonijiet ([5]) ħabtet mal-10 anniversarju tal-MIPAA. Is-Sena mmobilizzat il-partijiet interessati biex joħolqu opportunitajiet aħjar għat-tixjiħ attiv u wasslet għall-adozzjoni ta' Prinċipji ta' Gwida għal Xjuħija Attiva ([6]).

F'Settembru 2012, il-Kummissarju għall-Impjiegi, l-Affarijiet Soċjali u l-Inklużjoni pparteċipa fil-Konferenza Ministerjali ta' Vjenna dwar it-Tixjiħ li kkonkludiet it-tieni Ċiklu ta' Reviżjoni u Evalwazzjoni tal-MIPAA u l-Istrateġija Reġjonali ta' Implimentazzjoni tal-UNECE tiegħu ([7]).

Il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja lill-Istati Membri fl-isforzi tagħhom biex itejbu l-kondizzjonijiet għal nies ta' età akbar f'ħafna oqsma ta' politika ([8]). Dawn jiġu espressi fil-White Paper tal-2012 dwar il-pensjonijiet ([9]) u fil-Pakkett ta' Investiment Soċjali tal-2013 ([10]). Dan tal-aħħar ipprovda gwida dwar l-adozzjoni ta' politiki soċjali marbuta mal-isfidi tat-tixjiħ.

Is-Sħubija Ewropea għall-Innovazzjoni dwar it-Tixjiħ Attiv u b'Saħħtu ([11]) tippromwovi l-kollaborazzjoni għal soluzzjonijiet innovattivi bil-għan li jiġu żviluppati postijiet ta' għajxien li huma aktar favur l-età.

L-Istati Membri huma mistiedna jużaw il-Fondi Ewropej Strutturali u ta' Investiment, pereżempju għall-bini mill-ġdid ta' servizzi pubbliċi u l-adattament ta' postijiet tax-xogħol biex dawn jindirizzaw l-isfidi demografiċi fil-perjodu 2014-2020.

([1]) EUROPOP2010.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database, data code proj_10c2150p; Selezzjoni minn din l-informazzjoni ssibha fil-pubblikazzjoni Statistics in Focus 23/11, li tinsab hawn http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-11-023/EN/KS-SF-11-023-EN.PDF
([3]) EUROPOP2013.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2002:0143:FIN:MT:PDF
([5]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/
([6]) Ara l-Anness tad-Dikjarazzjoni tal-Kunsill dwar is-Sena Ewropea għat-Tixjiħ Attiv u s-Solidarjetà bejn il-Ġenerazzjonijiet (2012): It-Triq 'il Quddiem, fis-sit elettroniku: http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&catId=970&newsId=1743&
([7]) http://www.unece.org/pau/ageing/ministerial_conference_2012.html
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6920&type=2&furtherPubs=yes
([9]) COM(2012) 55 finali tas-16 ta' Frar 2012; fis-sit elettroniku http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=752&langId=en
([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing&pg=home

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000055/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Action on ageing

The adoption of the Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 was the first time governments had agreed to link ageing-related issues to other frameworks for social and economic development and human rights. The focus was on three priority areas: older people and development, advancing health and well-being into old age, and providing supportive and enabling environments.

Almost a quarter of Malta's population was aged 60 or over in 2012, and it has been forecast that in the next 25 years the number of people aged 75 or over will double from 28 500 to 57 100.

In light of this, can the Commission:

1. provide projected statistics for the number of people who will be aged 60 or over by 2020 in the Member States?

2. state its views on the Madrid Plan of Action, and how it intends to follow up on the plan's conclusions?

3. say what plans and projects it has in place to help improve the health and welfare of elderly people and guarantee them a supportive environment?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

Projections of the age structure of the population are published every three years by Eurostat. The latest results ([1]) are available in its online database ([2]); Eurostat is currently developing a new set of population projections ([3]) .

In view of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), the Commission adopted a special Communication ([4]).

The 2012 European Year on Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations ([5]) coincided with the 10th anniversary of the MIPAA. The Year mobilised stakeholders to create better opportunities for active ageing and lead to the adoption of Guiding Principles for Active Ageing ([6]).

In September 2012, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion participated in the Vienna Ministerial Conference on Ageing which concluded the 2nd Cycle of Review and Appraisal of the MIPAA and its UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy ([7]).

The Commission supports Member States in their efforts to improve conditions for older people in many policy areas ([8]). These are expressed in the 2012 White Paper on pensions ([9]) and the 2013 Social Investment Package ([10]). The latter provided guidance on adapting social policies to the challenges of ageing.

The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing ([11]) promotes the collaboration on innovative solutions with a view to develop living environments that are more age-friendly.

Member States are invited to use the European Structural and Investment Funds, for instance for restructuring public services and adapting workplaces to respond to the demographic challenges in the 2014-2020 period.

([1]) EUROPOP2010.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/population/data/database data code proj_10c2150p; a selection of the information is also available in the publication Statistics in Focus 23/11 available at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-11-023/EN/KS-SF-11-023-EN.PDF
([3]) EUROPOP2013.
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2002:0143:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://europa.eu/ey2012/
([6]) See Annex to the Council Declaration on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012): The Way Forward, at: http://europa.eu/ey2012/ey2012main.jsp?langId=en&catId=970&newsId=1743&
([7]) http://www.unece.org/pau/ageing/ministerial_conference_2012.html
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=6920&type=2&furtherPubs=yes
([9]) COM(2012) 55 final of 16 February 2012; at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=752&langId=en
([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en
([11]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing&pg=home

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-000056/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 ta' Jannar 2014)

Suġġett: Il-ħaddiema domestiċi

Il-ħaddiema domestiċi, jiġifieri dawk in-nies impjegati biex jagħmlu xogħol domestiku, ma għandhomx kundizzjonijiet tax-xogħol ċari. F'ħafna każijiet, l-impjieg tagħhom mhuwiex reġistrat u għalhekk ma jistgħux jeżerċitaw id-drittijiet tagħhom taħt il-liġijiet tal-impjieg. Il-Konvezjoni tal-Organizzazzjoni Internazzjonali tax-Xogħol (ILO) rigward xogħol diċenti għall-ħaddiema domestiċi, li daħlet fis-seħħ fil-5 ta' Settembru 2013, tiġbed l-attenzjoni għad-drittijiet ta' dawn il-ħaddiema, li bħalissa hemm 53 miljun ħaddiem.

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi statistika dwar l-għadd ta' ħaddiema domestiċi f'kull Stat Membru, kategorizzata skont is-sess?

2. Il-Kummissjoni kif se tissorvelja, fil-kompetenzi tagħha, l-implimentazzjoni tal-konvenzjoni tal-ILO msemmija hawn fuq fl-Istati Membri u tipproponi titjib fil-kundizzjonijiet tax-xogħol tal-ħaddiema fl-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(24 ta' Frar 2014)

Skont l-Istħarriġ tal-Forza tax-Xogħol tal-UE tal-Eurostat, fl-2012 madwar 2.6 miljun persuna kienu impjegati bħala ħaddiema domestiċi ([1]) fl-Istati Membri tal-UE-28. Madwar 2.3 miljuni minn dawn il-ħaddiema domestiċi fl-2012 kienu nisa (89 %) u ftit inqas minn 300,000 kienu rġiel (11 %). Il-ħaddiema domestiċi fl-Istati Membri tal-UE-28 kienu kkonċentrati fl-Italja (27.5 %), Spanja (25 %), Franza (23 %), il-Ġermanja (8.5 %) u l-Portugall (5.1 %).

Fit-28 ta' Jannar 2014, il-Kunsill tal-Ministri tal-UE adotta Deċiżjoni li tawtorizza lill-Istati Membri jirratifikaw il-Konvenzjoni tal-Organizzazzjoni Internazzjonali tax-Xogħol (ILO) fir-rigward ta' xogħol diċenti għall-ħaddiema domestiċi (il-Konvenzjoni Nru 189). Id-Deċiżjoni ġiet proposta mill-Kummissjoni f'Marzu 2013, u approvata mill-Parlament Ewropew f'Diċembru 2013.

Permezz tar-ratifika, l-Istati Membri jagħmlu d-dispożizzjonijiet tal-Konvenzjoni tal-ILO infurzabbli bħala parti mill-korp ta' leġiżlazzjoni nazzjonali tagħhom.

Ladarba l-Konvenzjoni tal-ILO tkun ġiet ratifikata, is-sistema superviżorja tal-ILO tibda l-ħidma tagħha biex tiżgura li l-pajjiżi fil-fatt jimplimentawha. Il-Kummissjoni se taqdi bis-sħiħ ir-rwol tagħha meta tipparteċipa fil-laqgħat tal-ILO bħall-Konferenza Internazzjonali dwar ix-Xogħol u l-Korp governattiv tal-ILO, fejn l-implimentazzjoni fil-pajjiżi membri tiġi eżaminata bir-reqqa.

Madankollu bosta kwistjonijiet fil-Konvenzjoni huma diġà koperti mil-liġi tal-UE. L-Istati Membri diġà għandhom l-obbligu li jikkonformaw mad-dispożizzjonijiet korrispondenti, u l-implimentazzjoni tagħhom hija ssorveljata mill-Kummissjoni bħalma jiġri fil-każ tar-regoli kollha tal-UE.

Minbarra r-rwol istituzzjonali tagħha, il-Kummissjoni tikkoopera mal-ILO sabiex iwettqu proġetti speċifiċi mmirati lejn ħaddiema domestiċi migranti u l-familji tagħhom fl-Ewropa.

([1]) Dan ifisser impjegati fin-NACE Rev. 2 Settur 97, jiġifieri "Attivitajiet ta' unitajiet domestiċi bħala impjegaturi ta' persunal domestiku".

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000056/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(6 January 2014)

Subject: Domestic workers

Domestic workers, meaning people employed to do domestic work, do not have clear working conditions. In most cases their employment is not registered and they are therefore unable to exercise their rights under employment laws. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention concerning decent work for domestic workers, which entered into force on 5 September 2013, draws attention to the rights of these employees, of whom there are currently 53 million.

1. Can the Commission provide statistics on the number of domestic workers in each Member State, broken down by gender?

2. How will the Commission, within its competences, monitor the implementation of the aforementioned ILO convention in the Member States and propose improvements in the working conditions of domestic workers in the EU?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

In 2012, according to Eurostat EU-Labour Force Survey, around 2.6 million persons were employed as domestic workers ([1]) in the EU-28 Member States. Around 2.3 million of these domestic workers in 2012 were women (89%) and a bit less than 300 thousand were men (11%). Domestic workers in the EU-28 Member States were concentrated in Italy (27.5%), Spain (25%), France (23%), Germany (8.5%) and Portugal (5.1%).

On 28 January 2014, EU's Council of Ministers adopted a decision authorising Member States to ratify the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention concerning fair and decent work for domestic workers (Convention No 189). The decision was proposed by the Commission in March 2013, and endorsed by the European Parliament in December 2013.

Through ratification, the Member States make the provisions of the ILO Convention enforceable as part of their national body of legislation.

Once an ILO Convention has been ratified, the supervisory system of the ILO starts its work to ensure that countries actually implement it. The Commission will fully play its role when participating in the meetings of the ILO such as the International Labour Conference and the ILO Governing body, where the implementation in Member countries is scrutinised.

However many issues in the Convention are already covered by EC law. Member States already have the obligation to comply with the corresponding provisions, and their implementation is being monitored by the Commission as for all EU rules.

In addition to its institutional role, the Commission cooperates with ILO to carry out specific projects towards migrant domestic workers and their family in Europe.

([1]) i.e. employed in the NACE rev.2 sector 97, namely 'Activities of households as employers of domestic personnel'.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000109/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Bracconaggio in Libano: possibili iniziative comunitarie a tutela dell'avifauna migratoria europea oggetto di autentico massacro

Lo Stato del Libano è ubicato al centro di un'importantissima rotta migratoria per l'avifauna europea, meta prediletta di transito e svernamento per diversi milioni di uccelli.

Proprio in ragione di ciò, l'attività venatoria in Libano è stata formalmente vietata sin dagli anni '90, in seguito alle pressioni esercitate da numerose associazioni internazionali e a accordi intercorsi in proposito con l'Unione europea e le Nazioni unite. BirdLife international, The Global Environment Facility e The United Nations Developement Program, in particolare, hanno recentemente lanciato il progetto Migratory Soaring Birds ([1]) che propone di integrare i progetti di conservazione nelle politiche pubbliche/private di undici nazioni lungo la succitata rotta migratoria.

In data 5 dicembre 2013, inoltre, i rappresentanti dei cacciatori di Libano, Giordania, Siria, Palestina, Egitto, Yemen e Etiopia hanno sottoscritto un atto denominato «Regional Declaration on Responsible Hunting», sotto il patronato del Ministro libanese Nazem El Khoury ([2]). Nonostante quanto appena esposto, prospera in Libano un'intensa e gravissima attività di bracconaggio, come ampiamente descritto e riassunto in un recente rapporto dei membri del CABS (Comittee Against Bird Slaughtery) ([3]) che cita come fonte, tra le altre, la pagina Facebook in cui i bracconieri inseriscono le foto degli uccelli uccisi a guisa di trofei ([4]). Dall'analisi di tali foto, in particolare, i membri del CABS hanno potuto individuare ben 143 diverse specie di uccelli cacciate e uccise, tra cui le specie a rischio del Capovaccaio (*Neophron percnopterus*), della Cicogna bianca (*Ciconia ciconia*), del Re di quaglie (*Crex crex)* ([5]) e molte altre.

Sulla base di quanto esposto puo', la Commissione precisare:

1. può chiarire quali siano gli accordi attualmente vigenti tra Unione europea e Libano in materia di tutela degli uccelli migratori e caccia, cosa prevedano e quali iniziative intende intraprendere in ragione dell'eventuale mancato rispetto degli stessi?

2. Non intende a esempio subordinare la conclusione di accordi commerciali con il Libano al rispetto da parte di quest'ultimo degli impegni presi a livello internazionale e comunitario in merito alla lotta al bracconaggio?

3. Potrebbe altresì valutare la possibilità di intraprendere altre iniziative urgenti per fermare o almeno limitare il massacro di milioni di uccelli migratori europei in atto?

Risposta congiunta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(27 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione è preoccupata per la caccia di uccelli migratori in Libano e in altri paesi del Medio Oriente, poiché essa ha ripercussioni anche sugli uccelli provenienti dall'Europa per i quali il Medio Oriente è un'importante rotta migratoria. Tuttavia, la Commissione non è competente per affrontare questo fenomeno, non dispone di strumenti per rilevare tali pratiche nei paesi terzi, né partecipa al progetto «Migratory Soaring Birds».

L'Unione europea non ha stipulato accordi specifici in materia di caccia con paesi terzi. Il dialogo con le autorità libanesi sull'ambiente avviene in genere nell'ambito dei lavori del sottocomitato per l'energia, l'ambiente e i trasporti. A causa dell'attuale situazione politica nel paese, tali contatti bilaterali hanno subito ritardi, ma la Commissione prevede di affrontare la questione alla prossima occasione.

Il Libano è una delle parti contraenti dell'accordo sulla conservazione degli uccelli migratori dell'Africa-Eurasia (African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement — AEWA) nel quadro della convenzione di Bonn. Pertanto esso è legalmente vincolato al piano d'azione previsto dal suddetto accordo e dai suoi obiettivi di conservazione degli uccelli acquatici migratori in esso previsti ([6]).

([1]) http://migratorysoaringbirds.undp.birdlife.org/en
([2]) http://www.birdlife.org/middle-east/news/prominent-hunters-middle-east-and-africa-sign-declaration-responsible-hunting
([3]) http://goo.gl/uoYvig
([4]) https://www.facebook.com/stophuntinglebanon?fref=ts
([5]) Presenti tutte all'allegato I della direttiva «Uccelli» 2009/147/CE.
([6]) Relazioni più dettagliate per quanto riguarda le specie interessate sono disponibili sul sito web dell'AEWA: http://www.unep-aewa.org/documents/agreement_text/table1-overview.htm

In Europa, la direttiva Uccelli ([7]) disciplina la caccia illegale di uccelli migratori. Sebbene l'applicazione della direttiva competa principalmente agli Stati membri, la Commissione ha anche deciso di affrontare la questione specifica delle uccisioni illegali di uccelli nell'UE in collaborazione con le parti interessate. Ha commissionato uno studio ([8]) e elaborato una tabella di marcia ([9]) che elenca le azioni destinate ad aumentare l'efficacia delle misure volte a eliminare le uccisioni, la cattura e gli scambi illegali di volatili nell'UE. Essa ha inoltre avviato procedure di infrazione nei confronti di Stati membri per inosservanza della direttiva Uccelli, comprese le sue disposizioni in materia di caccia e cattura.

([7]) Direttiva 2009/147/CE (GU L 20 del 26.1.2010).
([8]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000057/14
aan de Commissie
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(7 januari 2014)

Betreft: Bescherming trekvogels — clandestiene jachtpraktijken

Het Europese beleid ter bescherming van trekvogels wordt ondermijnd door clandestiene jachtpraktijken, met name in het Nabije Oosten. Via het Duurzaam Jagen Programma in derde landen rond de Middellandse Zee werd dit probleem tussen 2004 en 2007 ook door de Europese Commissie aangepakt.

Op 5 december 2013 is in Beiroet door verschillende jagersverenigingen uit de regio van de Rode Zee/Riftvallei een regionale verklaring ondertekend met betrekking tot verantwoord jagen. Deze kwam tot stand in het kader van het „Migratory Soaring Birds"-project van het VN-Ontwikkelingsprogramma.

1. Is er volgens de Europese Commissie voldoende vooruitgang in de strijd tegen de illegale jacht op trekvogels in het Nabije Oosten?

2. Welke maatregelen kan de Europese Commissie nemen om de recente inspanningen in het kader van het „Migratory Soaring Birds"-project mee te ondersteunen?

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000425/14
aan de Commissie
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(17 januari 2014)

Betreft: Illegale jacht in Libanon en impact op Europese instandhoudingsdoelstellingen

De laatste tijd krijgen Europarlementsleden regelmatig berichten van bezorgde burgers en ngo's over ongebreidelde jacht in Libanon en worden er (o.a. door lokale vrijwilligers) ook heel wat foto's over gepubliceerd via sociale media. Het gaat daarbij duidelijk ook om broedvogels uit Europa die naar het zuiden trekken om te overwinteren en onderweg Libanon passeren. Bovendien gaat het regelmatig om aandachtsoorten waarvoor Europa heel wat maatregelen en middelen inzet. Dergelijke inspanningen, zowel financieel als de inspanningen van vele professionele en vrijwillige natuurbeschermers en overheden op dit terrein, worden hier tenietgedaan wanneer onnatuurlijk veel vogels de trek niet overleven. Ook de beoogde instandhoudingsdoelstellingen (IHD) die de Europese Unie aan haar lidstaten oplegt, zullen hierdoor voor een aantal soorten moeilijker haalbaar zijn.

Libanon zelf zou wel jachtreglementering hebben, maar toch zou er op grote schaal illegaal gejaagd worden.

Recent werd met betrekking tot een soortgelijk probleem in Egypte, waar met honderden kilometers netten aan de kust miljoenen vogels worden gevangen, een eerste stap gezet naar een oplossing ([1]).

1. Beschikt de Commissie over informatie die bovenstaande veronderstellingen kan bevestigen? Zijn er rapporten met cijfers van soorten en aantallen beschikbaar?

2. Ziet de Commissie dit als een bedreiging voor de eigen instandhoudingsdoelstellingen? De situatie van welke soorten wordt wat dat betreft als het meest kritisch gezien?

3. Over welke middelen beschikt de Commissie om dergelijke problematiek bij derde landen aan te kaarten?

4. Zijn er wat dit betreft al stappen gezet richting de Libanese overheid? Kan de Commissie eventuele correspondentie hierover verstrekken?

5. Welke initiatieven vanuit de Commissie zijn er in de toekomst nog te verwachten?

([1]) Meer hierover is te vinden op http://www.birdlife.org/africa/news/concern-over-migrant-birds-prompts-international-response.

Antwoord van de heer Potočnik namens de Commissie
(27 februari 2014)

De Commissie is verontrust over de jacht op trekvogels in Libanon en andere landen in het Midden-Oosten, aangezien dit ook effect heeft op vogels uit Europa waarvoor het Midden-Oosten een belangrijke trekroute is. De Commissie heeft echter niet de bevoegdheid maatregelen te nemen tegen dergelijke praktijken in derde landen, noch de middelen om het vóórkomen ervan te registreren, en neemt geen deel aan het „Migratory Soaring Birds"-project.

De Europese Unie heeft geen specifieke overeenkomsten gesloten met derde landen wat betreft jagen. De dialoog met de Libanese autoriteiten vindt meestal plaats in het subcomité inzake Energie, Milieu en Vervoer. Vanwege de huidige politieke situatie in Libanon zijn deze bilaterale contacten voorlopig uitgesteld, maar de Commissie zal deze kwestie bij de volgende gelegenheid onder de aandacht brengen.

Libanon is een contractpartij in de overeenkomst inzake Afrikaans-Euraziatische watervogels (AEWA) in het kader van het Verdrag van Bonn. Als zodanig is het juridisch gebonden aan het actieplan van de AEWA en de beschermingsdoelstellen van watertrekvogels in hun hele verspreidingsgebied ([2]).

In Europa bestrijdt de vogelrichtlijn ([3]) de illegale jacht op trekvogels. Hoewel de handhaving daarvan voornamelijk de verantwoordelijkheid van de lidstaten is, heeft de Commissie ook besloten om in samenwerking met de belanghebbenden specifiek aandacht te zullen besteden aan het illegaal doden van vogels in de EU. Zij heeft een onderzoek ([4]) uit laten voeren en een stappenplan ([5]) opgesteld met acties voor doeltreffendere maatregelen ter bestrijding van het illegaal doden, vangen en verhandelen van vogels in de EU. De Commissie is ook inbreukprocedures begonnen tegen lidstaten die zich niet aan de vogelrichtlijn houden, met inbegrip van de bepalingen inzake jacht en vangst.

([2]) Meer gedetailleerde verslagen betreffende de getroffen soorten is beschikbaar op de website van de AEWA: http://www.unep-aewa.org/documents/agreement_text/table1-overview.htm
([3]) Richtlijn 2009/147/EG, PB L 020 van 26.1.2010.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000057/14
to the Commission
Ivo Belet (PPE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Protection of migratory birds — illegal hunting activities

The European policy on the protection of migratory birds is being undermined by illegal hunting activities, particularly in the Middle East. Between 2004 and 2007, the European Commission was involved in solving this problem by means of the Sustainable Hunting Programme in third countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

On 5 December 2013, a number of hunting organisations from the Red Sea/Rift Valley region gathered in Beirut to sign a regional declaration on responsible hunting. This declaration was made possible by the United Nations Development Programme's Migratory Soaring Birds project.

1. Does the Commission believe that sufficient progress has been made in the fight against the illegal hunting of migratory birds in the Middle East?

2. What measures can the Commission take to help support the recent work of the Migratory Soaring Birds project?

Question for written answer E-000109/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Poaching in Lebanon: possible Community measures to protect European migratory birds that are currently being slaughtered

Lebanon lies at the centre of an extremely important migratory route for European birds, with several million flying across the country every winter.

This migratory activity led directly to hunting being officially banned in Lebanon in the 1990s, when the country entered into agreements with the European Union and the United Nations, in response to pressure from many international organisations. More recently, BirdLife International, the Global Environment Facility and the United Nations Development Programme, in particular, have launched the Migratory Soaring Birds project ([1]), which aims to integrate conservation programmes into the public/private policies of 11 countries lying on the migratory route referred to above.

In addition, on 5 December 2013, hunters' representatives from Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Yemen and Ethiopia signed a Regional Declaration on Responsible Hunting, under the patronage of Lebanese Minister Nazem El Khoury ([2]). However, in spite of all the initiatives detailed above, poaching is still extremely widespread in Lebanon, as has been recently highlighted in great detail by a report published by the members of the CABS (Committee Against Bird Slaughter) ([3]), which cites as one of its sources a Facebook page on which poachers have uploaded photographs of the birds they have killed, as a sort of trophy ([4]). In particular, by analysing these photographs CABS members were able to identify as many as 143 different species of birds that had been hunted and killed, including the endangered Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) and corncrake (*Crex crex*) ([5]), as well as many other species also under threat.

1. Given this situation, can the Commission specify what agreements are currently in place between the European Union and Lebanon concerning hunting and the protection of migratory birds and what those agreements stipulate, and also give details of the measures it intends to take should any of these agreements not be complied with?

2. Does the Commission not intend, for example, to make the conclusion of commercial agreements with Lebanon contingent on that country complying with international and Community anti-poaching rules?

3. Does it also see scope for further urgent action in order to bring an end to, or at least limit, the slaughter of millions of European migratory birds that is currently taking place?

([1]) http://migratorysoaringbirds.undp.birdlife.org/en
([2]) http://www.birdlife.org/middle-east/news/prominent-hunters-middle-east-and-africa-sign-declaration-responsible-hunting
([3]) http://goo.gl/uoYvig
([4]) https://www.facebook.com/stophuntinglebanon?fref=ts
([5]) All included in Annex I to the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

Question for written answer E-000425/14
to the Commission
Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)
(17 January 2014)

Subject: Illegal hunting in Lebanon and impact on European conservation objectives

Recently, Members of the European Parliament have been receiving regular reports from concerned citizens and NGOs about excessive hunting in Lebanon; a large number of photographs have also been posted on social media websites (in some cases by local volunteers). It is clear that this problem is also affecting nesting birds from Europe which pass through Lebanon as they migrate south for the winter. These birds are often listed species covered by many European measures, to which Europe has devoted considerable resources. These efforts, both in terms of finance and the work of a large number of professional and volunteer conservationists and official bodies in this field, are rendered useless if an abnormally high number of birds do not survive the migration. This problem will also make it more difficult to achieve the conservation objectives which the European Union intends to impose on its Member States for a number of species.

Lebanon undoubtedly has its own hunting regulations, but they do not seem to be preventing large-scale illegal hunting.

The first step towards a solution to a similar problem was taken recently in Egypt, where hundreds of kilometres of nets along the coastline trap millions of birds. ([6])

1. Does the Commission have any information to confirm these beliefs? Are there any reports containing figures for species and numbers?

2. Does the Commission see this as a threat to its own conservation objectives? Which species are considered to be most at risk from this?

3. What means does the Commission have to record these problems in non-EU countries?

4. Has the Lebanese Government already been approached on this subject? Can the Commission provide any correspondence about this?

5. What initiatives can we expect the Commission to take in the future?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is concerned by the hunting of migratory birds in Lebanon and other countries of the Middle East as it also affects birds from Europe for which the Middle East is an important migratory route. However, the Commission has neither competence to tackle nor the means to record such practices in third countries, and it does not take part in the Migratory Soaring Birds project.

The European Union does not have specific agreements on hunting with any third country. Dialogue with the Lebanese authorities on environment usually takes place at the Subcommittee on Energy, Environment and Transport. Due to the current political situation in the country, theses bilateral contacts have been delayed but the Commission will raise this issue at the next occasion.

Lebanon is a contracting party to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) under the Bonn Convention. As such, it is legally bound by the AEWA Action Plan and its conservation objectives of migratory water bird species throughout their range. ([7])

In Europe, the Birds Directive ([8]) tackles the illegal hunting of migratory birds. Although enforcement lies primarily with Member States, the Commission has also decided to address the specific issue of illegal killing of birds in the EU in collaboration with stakeholders. It commissioned a study ([9]) and has produced a Roadmap ([10]) identifying actions to increase the effectiveness of measures aimed at eliminating illegal killing, trapping, and trade of birds in the EU. It has also initiated infringement procedures against Member States for non-compliance with the Birds Directive, including its provisions on hunting and trapping.

([6]) More information about this can be found at http://www.birdlife.org/africa/news/concern-over-migrant-birds-prompts-international-response
([7]) More detailed reports regarding affected species are available on the AEWA website: http://www.unep-aewa.org/documents/agreement_text/table1-overview.htm
([8]) 2009/147/EC, OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.
([9]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf
([10]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000058/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(7 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Οι διαδικασίες χρηματοδότησης νέων επιχειρήσεων crowdfunding και business angels στην ΕΕ

Δυο διαδικασίες χρηματοδότησης που μπορούν να στηρίξουν νέες επιχειρήσεις, η «χρηματοδότηση από το πλήθος» (γνωστό ως «crowdfunding») και οι «επιχειρηματικοί άγγελοι» (business angels) χρησιμοποιούνται με μεγάλη επιτυχία στις ΗΠΑ. Πρόσφατα μάλιστα ενεργοποιήθηκε το «Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act» («JOBS ACT»), που ρυθμίζει τους κανόνες για το crowdfunding. Εκτός από τις ΗΠΑ, η Ιταλία τον Δεκέμβριο του 2012 υπερψήφισε νομοθετικό κείμενο για το crowdfunding το οποίο ενεργοποιήθηκε τον Ιούλιο του 2013 ενώ στη Γαλλία ετοιμάζεται σχετική νομοθεσία.

Οι business angels, οι οποίοι είναι εξειδικευμένοι επενδυτές που ενισχύουν νέες επιχειρήσεις συνήθως στον τομέα ειδικότητάς τους, έχουν αναπτυχθεί σημαντικά και σε χώρες της ΕΕ. Χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα είναι το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο.

Με δεδομένο ότι οι διαδικασίες αυτές, ιδιαίτερα σε περίοδο βαθιάς οικονομικής ύφεσης, μπορούν να αναδειχθούν σε εξαιρετικά χρήσιμα και πολύτιμα αναπτυξιακά εργαλεία, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Διαθέτει στοιχεία για το ποιες χώρες και με τι αποτελέσματα εφαρμόζουν τις δύο αυτές διαδικασίες χρηματοδότησης;

— Πώς αντιμετωπίζει την ανάληψη πρωτοβουλιών σε ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο για την προώθησή τους; Σχεδιάζει κάποια δράση στο άμεσο μέλλον;

Απάντηση του κ. Barnier εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(3 Μαρτίου 2014)

Σήμερα δεν υπάρχουν διαθέσιμα επίσημα στοιχεία για το μέγεθος των αγορών crowdfunding (διαδικτυακής μικροχρηματοδότησης). Οι εκτιμήσεις της βιομηχανίας δείχνουν ότι στην Ευρώπη συγκεντρώθηκαν το 2012 ([1]) περίπου 735 εκατ. ευρώ. Ενώ δεν υπάρχει συνολική κατανομή στοιχείων ανά κράτος μέλος, το Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο φαίνεται να διαθέτει το βασικό μερίδιο των συνολικών στοιχείων: 360 εκατομμύρια λίρες μόνον για δάνεια και μετοχικό κεφάλαιο ([2]), ενώ η Ιταλία αναφέρει το πολύ χαμηλότερο ποσό των 13 εκατ. ευρώ που συλλέγονται από όλες τις μορφές crowdfunding ([3]). Ο προσφάτως εφαρμοσθείς νόμος των ΗΠΑ για τις θέσεις εργασίας (US JOBS Act) ρυθμίζει το μετοχικό κεφάλαιο των χρηματοδοτήσεων crowdfunding. Η Ιταλία έθεσε σε εφαρμογή ένα κανονιστικό πλαίσιο που θα επιτρέπει σε νεοσυσταθείσες καινοτόμες επιχειρήσεις να αντλούν ίδια κεφάλαια μέσω crowdfunding. Η Γαλλία και το ΗΒ προτίθενται να ρυθμίσουν τις πρακτικές στον τομέα της χρηματοδότησης crowdfunding τόσο για τις αγορές τίτλων όσο και για τις χρηματοδοτικές πράξεις.

Τόσο η χρηματοδότηση crowdfunding όσο και ο μηχανισμός κεφαλαίου «επιχειρηματικών αγγέλων» (angel capital) είναι πολλά υποσχόμενοι τρόποι χρηματοδότησης των νέων επιχειρήσεων που θα μπορούσαν να τονώσουν την ανάπτυξη. Έχει προγραμματιστεί μια μελέτη για το 2014 που αναμένεται να δώσει μια πιο ολοκληρωμένη εικόνα του επενδυτικού δυναμικού των μηχανισμών χρηματοδότησης crowdfunding και επιχειρηματικών αγγέλων ώστε να βελτιωθεί η πρόσβαση στη χρηματοδότηση για τις επιχειρήσεις της ΕΕ, και ιδιαίτερα τις ΜΜΕ. Όπως και σε άλλα τμήματα του τομέα των χρηματοπιστωτικών υπηρεσιών είναι, ωστόσο, σημαντικό να εξασφαλιστεί ότι οι επενδυτές έχουν ενημερωθεί με διαφανή τρόπο για τους πιθανούς κινδύνους που μπορεί να συνεπάγεται αυτή η συγκέντρωση κεφαλαίων.

Κατά το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2014, η Επιτροπή θα παρουσιάσει τις πρωτοβουλίες που ακολούθησαν την Πράσινη Βίβλο του Μαρτίου 2013 για τη μακροπρόθεσμη χρηματοδότηση και τη δημόσια διαβούλευση σχετικά με τη χρηματοδότηση crowdfunding που ολοκληρώθηκε στις 31 Ιανουαρίου 2013. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή θα διερευνήσει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο η δράση της ΕΕ μπορεί να προωθήσει την ανάπτυξη μιας υγιούς αγοράς χρηματοδότησης crowdfunding στην Ευρώπη. Η Επιτροπή θα αναλάβει επίσης δράση για την ανάπτυξη της ευαισθητοποίησης των ΜΜΕ σχετικά με τις εν λόγω εναλλακτικές μορφές χρηματοδότησης.

([1]) Massolution (2013) Έκθεση του κλάδου του 2012 για τη χρηματοδότηση crowdfunding, στη διεύθυνση: http://www.crowdsourcing.org/research

([2]) Πηγή — (2013) Έγγραφο διαβούλευσης CP13/13, η ΦΑΑ ρυθμιστική προσέγγιση της crowdfunding (και παρόμοιες δραστηριότητες), στη διεύθυνση: http://www.fca.org.uk/static/documents/consultation-papers/cp13-13.pdf

([3]) Castrataro and Pais, (2012), «Analisi delle Piattaforme di Crowdfunding Italiane»: http://www.crowdfundingitalia.com/2013/10/analisi-delle-piattaforme-italiane-di.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000058/14
to the Commission
Georgios Koumoutsakos (PPE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Using crowdfunding and business angels to finance business start-ups in the EU

'Crowdfunding' and 'business angels' both provide means of financing business start-ups that have proved highly successful in the USA, crowdfunding rules being set out in the recently adopted 'Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act' ('JOBS ACT'). Apart from the USA, Italy also adopted crowdfunding legislation in December 2012, which came into effect in July 2013, and similar legislation is currently being drawn up in France.

The activities of business angels, specialised investors funding business start-ups generally within their own specialist areas, have spread significantly in EU countries as well, especially in the. United Kingdom.

Given that such resources may provide a useful and valuable means of stimulating growth:

— Can the Commission identify those countries in which these two methods of financing are currently being used and with what degree of success?

— Does it intend to take action at EU level to encourage these initiatives and is it planning to do so in the near future?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

Today official data on the size of crowd funding markets is not available. Industry estimates indicate that in Europe about EUR 735 million was collected in 2012 ([1]). While a comprehensive breakdown by Member States does not exist, the UK seems to take a substantial share of the total EU figure: GBP 360 million in loans and equity alone, ([2]) while Italy reports a more modest EUR 13 million collected through all forms of crowd funding ([3]). The recently implemented US JOBS Act regulates equity crowd funding. Italy has put in place a regulatory framework to allow for innovative start-ups to raise equity through crowd funding. France and the UK are planning to regulate both securities-based and lending-based crowd funding practices.

Both crowd funding and angel capital are promising ways of financing start-ups that could stimulate growth. A study has been programmed for 2014 and should deliver a more comprehensive picture of the potential for angel- and crowd funding investors to improve access to finance in the EU for companies, SMEs in particular. As in other parts of the financial services sector, it is however important to ensure that investors are made aware in a transparent way of the potential risks that these types of fund raising could involve.

In the first quarter of 2014 the Commission will present initiatives following up the Green paper on long-term financing presented in March 2013 and the public consultation on crowd funding that closed on 31 January 2013. In this context, the Commission will explore how EU action could best promote the development of a healthy crowd funding market in Europe. The Commission will also take action to raise awareness among SMEs about these alternative forms of finance.

([1]) Massolution (2013) Crowd funding Industry Report 2012 at: http://www.crowdsourcing.org/research
([2]) Source — FCA (2013) Consultation Paper CP13/13 The FCA's regulatory approach to crowd funding (and similar activities) at http://www.fca.org.uk/static/documents/consultation-papers/cp13-13.pdf
([3]) Castrataro and Pais, (2012), 'Analisi delle Piattaforme di Crowdfunding Italiane' at: http://www.crowdfundingitalia.com/2013/10/analisi-delle-piattaforme-italiane-di.html

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000059/14
до Комисията
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(7 януари 2014 г.)

Относно: Проекти в рамките на трансевропейската транспортна мрежа (ТЕМ-Т) и сътрудничество в областта на трансграничните връзки

В Смолянска област, в рамките на магистралната мрежа ТЕМ-Т от България до Гърция, липсва свързваща отсечка от почти 9 км от гръцка страна. Ако тази магистрала бъде завършена, тя ще предоставя пряк достъп до Гърция и до гръцките магистрали, по-специално до магистрала „Егнатия“, която е част от мащабен проект от ТЕМ-Т.

Изграждането на двулентов път от град Рудозем до границата с Гърция (също на разстояние от около 9 км) беше съфинансирано от предприсъединителния финансов инструмент ИСПА. Този път завършва на границата с Гърция и е необходима 9-километрова вертикална ос от гръцка страна, за да се свърже той с гръцката пътна и магистрална мрежа.

Какво може да направи Комисията, за да се позволи завършването на този проект, който е малък, но стратегически важен от гледна точка на териториалното сближаване? Съфинансирането от ЕС на българска територия губи добавената си стойност, ако не бъде продължен пътят от Рудозем до границата с Гърция, за да свърже българската община със съседните ѝ общини в Гърция. Може ли Комисията да предостави подпомагане на Гърция за изграждането на този проект чрез инструменти за териториално сътрудничество? Има ли други средства, които да позволят изграждането на този път?

Отговор, даден от г-н Калас от името на Комисията
(21 февруари 2014 г.)

Механизмът за свързване на Европа ([1]) е насочен предимно към развитие на устойчивите видове транспорт и основната трансевропейска мрежа ТЕМ-Т, поради което разполага с ограничени възможности за финансиране на проект за свързването на пътя от българската граница до гръцката пътна мрежа. Подобен проект, обаче, би отговарял на условията за финансиране по линия на политиката на сближаване и в рамките на инструментите за териториално сътрудничество. Комисията е запозната с факта, че гръцката страна е в процес на проучвания за посочения по-горе пътен участък, който наскоро бе включен в трансевропейските мрежи.

Програмите за трансгранично сътрудничество могат да способстват за премахване на участъците със затруднения в ключова инфраструктура чрез инвестиции в ТЕМ-Т, ако Гърция и България се споразумеят да изберат тази тематична цел за своята програма за сътрудничество.

Що се отнася до останалите възможности, Европейският фонд за регионално развитие и Кохезионният фонд на теория биха могли да подкрепят подобни инвестиции, ако бъдат спазени следните основни изисквания:

— за основа при избора на инвестиционни приоритети в областта на транспорта следва да се използва общият генерален план за транспорта,

— всички инвестиции следва да се вписват в стратегията за териториално развитие, определена в оперативната програма, и да допринасят за изпълнението на целите за съответната приоритетна ос,

— инвестициите следва да се основават на приемливи резултати от проучването за осъществимост и положителен анализ на разходите и ползите.

([1]) Регламент (ЕС) № 1316/2013 на Европейския парламент и на Съвета от 11 декември 2013 г. за създаване на Механизъм за свързване на Европа, за изменение на Регламент (ЕС) № 913/2010 и за отмяна на регламенти (ЕО) № 680/2007 и (ЕО) № 67/2010 (ОВ L 348, 20.12.2013 г.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000059/14
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: TEN-T projects and cross-border connections cooperation

The TEN-T motorway network from Bulgaria to Greece in the Smolyan region has a missing link of almost 9 km on the Greek side. If this motorway road is completed, it will provide direct access to Greece and to Greek motorways, in particular to the Egnatia motorway, which is part of a major TEN-T project.

The building of the two-lane road from the town of Rudozem to the Greek border (approximately 9 km as well) was co-financed by the ISPA pre-accession financial instrument. This road ends at the Greek border and requires a 9 km vertical axis on the Greek side to connect it to the Greek road and motorway network.

What can the Commission do to enable this project, which is small but strategically important in terms of territorial cohesion, to be completed? The EU co-financing on the Bulgarian side has no added value whatsoever if the road from Rudozem to the Greek border is not continued to connect the Bulgarian municipality with its neighbouring municipality in Greece. Can the Commission provide assistance to Greece through the territorial cooperation instruments to construct this project? Are there any other means to enable this road to be constructed?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

The Connecting Europe Facility ([1]) focuses mainly on sustainable transport modes and the TEN-T core network, with limited funding possibilities for a project connecting the road from the Bulgarian border to the Greek road network. Such a project would however be eligible under the Cohesion Policy and within the territorial cooperation instruments. The Commission is aware that the Greek side is preparing studies for the aforementioned stretch of road, which has been recently included in the Trans-European Networks.

The cross-border cooperation programmes may provide support to removing bottlenecks in key infrastructure by investing in the TEN-T, provided Greece and Bulgaria agree to select this thematic objective for their cooperation programme.

As far as other means are concerned, both European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund could in theory support such investments if the following basic requirements are fulfilled:

— the Comprehensive Transport Master Plan should serve as a basis for the choice of transport investment priorities.

— all investments should fit into the territorial development strategy set out in the operational programme, and contribute to delivering the objectives for the priority axis concerned,

— Investments should be underpinned by plausible results of the feasibility study and positive Cost/Benefit Analysis.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348, 20/12/2013,.

(българска версия)

Въпрос с искане за писмен отговор E-000060/14
до Комисията
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(7 януари 2014 г.)

Относно: Програма „NER 300“ и подпомагане за финансиране на проекти

„NER 300“ е една от най-широкообхватните програми на ЕС за финансиране на иновативни демонстрационни проекти в областта на енергетиката с ниски въглеродни емисии. Втората покана за представяне на предложения беше обявена на 3 април 2013 г. Планирана ли е трета покана и ако това е така, кога се очаква да бъде обявена тя?

Един от основните елементи на програмата е, че всяка държава членка може да се възползва от поне един проект от този вид. Тъй като някои държави членки, например България, все още не са имали възможността да изпълнят такъв проект, е важно да им се предостави възможност за разработването на проект от този вид.

Какво може да направи Комисията от гледна точка на изграждане на капацитет и предоставяне на подкрепа в полза на България или други държави членки, които биха могли да се нуждаят от помощ, така че да извлекат полза от такива проекти, ако бъде обявена трета покана?

Отговор, даден от г-жа Кони Хедегор от името на Комисията
(27 февруари 2014 г.)

Целта на програмата NER 300 е да подкрепя демонстрационни проекти в областта на новаторските технологии за производство на енергия от възобновяеми източници и за улавяне и съхранение на CO_2. Средствата са разпределени между проектите, избрани чрез две процедури за представяне на предложения, първата от които се състоя през 2010 г., а втората все още е в ход.

Според правилата на програмата NER 300 ([1]) във всяка държава членка се финансира поне един проект — но не повече от три — при условие, че всеки проект е преминал успешно процедура за подбор, състояща се от проверка за допустимост, извършена от съответната държава членка, и оценка на целесъобразността, извършена от Европейската инвестиционна банка. След това Европейската комисия класира успешните кандидатури въз основа на свързаните с тях разходи за единица резултат, като поема крайната отговорност за подбора на проектите.

С цел да се предостави съдействие на държавите членки по всички въпроси, свързани с програмата NER 300, Комисията създаде мрежа от национални звена за контакт, чрез които държавите членки да поддържат връзка и диалог с Комисията и при поискване да получават становища от нея.

([1]) Решение на Комисията, ОВ L 290, 6.11.2010 г.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000060/14
to the Commission
Vladko Todorov Panayotov (ALDE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: NER 300 Programme and project funding assistance

NER 300 is one of the largest EU funding programmes for innovative low-carbon energy demonstration projects. The second call for proposals was launched on 3 April 2013. Is a third call for proposals planned and, if so, when is it expected to take place?

One of the key elements of the programme is that every Member State can benefit from at least one project of this kind. As certain Member States, such as Bulgaria, have not yet had the chance to implement any such project, it is be important to give these Member States the opportunity to develop a project of this kind.

What can the Commission do in terms of capacity building and providing assistance to help Bulgaria or other Member States which might need some assistance in order to benefit from such projects if a third call was announced?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The aim of the NER 300 programme is to support demonstration projects in innovative renewable energy and carbon capture and storage technologies. The funds are distributed to projects selected through two calls for proposals; the first of them took place in 2010 and the second one is ongoing.

According to the NER 300 rules ([1]), at least one and no more than three projects could be funded per Member State, provided that each project succeeds in the selection procedure as follows. Project proposals have to pass an eligibility check performed by the relevant Member State and a due diligence executed by the European Investment Bank. Successful applications are then ranked on the basis of their cost per unit performance by the European Commission, which takes ultimate responsibility for the selection of projects.

In order to assist Member States on any issue related to the programme, the Commission established a network of national NER 300 contact points, through which Member States maintain contacts and dialogue with the Commission and receive requested advice.

([1]) Commission Decision, OJ L290, 6.11.2010.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000062/14
do Komisji
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Rozporządzenie KE w sprawie dopuszczalnych norm substancji smolistych w żywności

Komisja Europejska w sierpniu 2011 r. wydała rozporządzenie dotyczące zawartości substancji smolistych w żywności. Rozporządzenie, które ma wejść w życie z dniem 19 września 2014 r. obniża dopuszczalne normy substancji smolistych w wędzonych wędlinach, w tym przypadku benzoapirenu z 5 do 2 mikrogramów na kilogram, co dla bardzo wielu polskich producentów wędlin, zwłaszcza na Podkarpaciu, gdzie skupia się 95 % małych przedsiębiorstw wędliniarskich oznacza wstrzymanie produkcji i wzrost bezrobocia. Polska produkuje i eksportuje najwięcej produktów tradycyjnych, a ich jakość i niepowtarzalny smak jest chwalony i doceniany w większości krajów Unii Europejskiej.

W przypadku wyrobów produkowanych tradycyjnymi sposobami, a więc w komorach opalanych drewnem, spełnienie powyższych norm jest wręcz niemożliwe, gdyż drewno posiada różną wilgotność. Producenci dodatkowo podkreślają, że badanie każdej partii wyrobów pod zawartość benzoapirenu jest bardzo kosztowne, a na same wyniki trzeba czekać do 7 dni, co automatycznie skraca datę przydatności do spożycia produkowanych wędlin.

Chciałabym zwrócić uwagę Pana Komisarza także na fakt, że unijne rozporządzenie nie jest tak restrykcyjne wobec innych produktów jak niektórych wędzonych ryb, małż, przetworzonej żywności na bazie zbóż czy kakao, gdzie normy mogą wynosić 5 i 6 mikrogramów na kilogram. Ponadto małym producentom ciężko jest zmienić tradycyjne technologie produkcji.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z uprzejmym zapytaniem:

1. Czy Komisja Europejska mogłaby jeszcze raz przeanalizować ww. rozporządzenie w kontekście tych najmniejszych przedsiębiorstw branży wędliniarskiej, które zajmują się produkcją wędlin według tradycyjnych receptur?

2. Czy wzorem innych krajów, jak na przykład Szwecji, jest możliwość, aby Komisja Europejska utrzymała odstępstwa w tych normach dla wybranych produktów tradycyjnych?

3. Czy Komisja Europejska prowadziła lub zamierza prowadzić konsultacje z przedsiębiorstwami branży wędliniarskiej, które miałyby na celu poinformowanie, w jaki sposób najlepiej dostosować technologie, aby zachować tradycyjne sposoby produkcji wędlin i tym samym spełniać nowe normy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2014 r.)

1. Do Komisji nie wpłynęły dotąd dowody wykazujące, że osiągnięcie obniżonych najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych (WWA) nie jest możliwe w przypadku tradycyjnego i regionalnego mięsa wędzonego oraz tradycyjnych i regionalnych produktów mięsnych wędzonych. Przy zastosowaniu dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych osiągnięcie obniżonych dopuszczalnych poziomów WWA w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych wykonalne jest również w przypadku tradycyjnego wędzenia drewnem, co odnosi się także do małych przedsiębiorstw branży wędliniarskiej. Wspomniane dobre praktyki zawarte są w kodeksie postępowania w zakresie redukcji zanieczyszczenia żywności wielopierścieniowymi węglowodorami aromatycznymi (WWA) w procesie wędzenia i suszenia bezpośredniego (CAC/RCP 68-2009) ([1]).

2. Komisja nie widzi w chwili obecnej potrzeby ustanowienia odstępstwa lub specjalnego traktowania w odniesieniu do produktów tradycyjnych lub regionalnych, a państwom członkowskim nie przyznano w tej dziedzinie żadnych odstępstw.

3. Na wniosek właściwych organów Komisja mogłaby służyć pomocą w zakresie stosowania dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych zawartych w wyżej wymienionym kodeksie postępowania.

([1]) http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/11257/CXP_068e.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000062/14
to the Commission
Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska (PPE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Commission regulation on maximum levels of tarry substances in food

In August 2011, the Commission published a regulation on the content of tarry substances in food. The regulation, which comes into force on 19 September 2014, reduces the permissible levels of tarry substances in smoked meats, in this case benzo(a)pyrene, from 5 to 2 micrograms per kilogram, which for very many Polish cold meat producers, especially in the Podkarpacie province, where 95% of small smoked meat producers are concentrated, means cutting production and an increase in unemployment. Poland produces and exports the largest volume of traditional products and their quality and unique flavour is highly acclaimed and valued in the majority of European Union countries.

In the case of goods produced using traditional methods, i.e. in wood-fired smoking ovens, it is quite impossible to meet the above norms, as the moisture levels of wood vary. Producers also emphasise that it would be extremely expensive to test each batch of goods for their benzo(a)pyrene content, and in addition it can take up to seven days to obtain test results, which automatically reduces the use-by date of the smoked meat products.

I also wish to draw the Commissioner's attention to the fact that the EU regulation is not as restrictive as regards other products such as certain smoked fish, mussels and processed foods based on cereals and cocoa, for which the maximum levels are 5 or 6 micrograms per kilogram. Furthermore, it is difficult for small producers to change traditional production technologies.

In respect of the above:

1. Could the Commission reconsider the abovementioned regulation in the context of these smallest businesses in the smoked meats sector, which produce cooked meats according to traditional recipes?

2. Following the example of other countries, such as Sweden, can the Commission maintain a derogation from these norms for selected traditional products?

3. Has the Commission conducted, or does it intend to conduct, consultations with smoked meat sector enterprises in order to inform them of how best to adapt their technologies to maintain the traditional methods of producing smoked meats whilst meeting the new norms?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

1. The Commission has not yet received any evidence demonstrating that achieving the lower maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) is impossible for traditional and regional smoked meat and smoked meat products. By applying good smoking practices, also with traditional wood-smoking, and feasible for small businesses in the smoked meat sector, the lower maximum levels for PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products are achievable. These good practices are provided for in the Codex Code of Practice for the Reduction of Contamination of Food with Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) from Smoking and Direct Drying Processes (CAC/RCP 68-2009) ([1]).

2. The Commission therefore does not see for the time being the need to envisage a derogation or special treatment for traditional or regional products and no derogation has been granted to Member States in this area.

3. The Commission is considering providing assistance, if requested by the competent authority, for the application of the good smoking practices as provided for in the abovementioned Codex Code of Practice.

([1]) http://www.codexalimentarius.org/download/standards/11257/CXP_068e.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000064/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(7. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Olympische Spiele in Sotschi

Die Olympischen Spiele in Sotschi nähern sich.

1. Veranstaltet die Kommission im zeitlichen Umfeld der Olympischen Spiele eigene Veranstaltungen (Events, Empfänge, Dinner, etc.) im Großraum Sotschi?

2. Welche Mitglieder der Kommission und gegebenenfalls Mitarbeiter der Kommission besuchen die Olympischen Spiele in offizieller Funktion?

3. Für welche Mitglieder der Kommission liegen offizielle Einladungen vor und für welche Veranstaltung(en)?

4. Welche Veranstaltungen gedenkt die Kommission aufgrund vorliegender Einladungen wahrzunehmen und mit welcher Begründung?

5. Sofern Veranstaltungen abgehalten beziehungsweise besucht werden, um welche Beträge handelt es sich hier, die aus offiziellen Geldern beglichen werden? (Mit der Bitte um eine entsprechende genaue Auflistung).

Antwort von Frau Vassiliou im Namen der Kommission
(27. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission organisiert keine gesellschaftlichen Veranstaltungen (Events, Empfänge, Dinner usw.) im Zusammenhang mit den Olympischen Spielen im Großraum Sotschi, da die Dienststellen der Kommission bei den Spielen nicht vertreten sind. Das für Sport zuständige Mitglied der Kommission hat nicht vor, die Spiele zu besuchen. Das gilt auch für sein Kabinett und seine Dienststellen. Die Kommissarin hat keine Kenntnis von etwaigen offiziellen Einladungen an ihre Kolleginnen und Kollegen.

Da die Kommission offiziell nicht vertreten ist, sind die öffentlichen Mittel der Europäischen Union nicht betroffen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000064/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Olympic Games in Sochi

The Olympic Games in Sochi are drawing near.

1. Is the Commission organising its own functions (events, receptions, dinners, etc.) in the Sochi area to coincide with the Olympic Games?

2. Which Members of the Commission or Commission staff will be attending the Olympic Games in an official capacity?

3. Which Members of the Commission have received official invitations, and to what functions?

4. In what cases does the Commission plan to attend functions to which it has been invited, and why?

5. In so far as functions are to be held or attended, what sums coming from official funds are involved here? (A detailed list is requested in this regard.)

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is not organising any social events (events, receptions, dinners, etc.) in the Sochi area coinciding with the Olympic Games, as there will be no presence of Commission services at the Games. The Member of the Commission responsible for Sport, has no plans to attend the Games. The same applies to her Cabinet and her services. The Commissioner is not aware of any official invitations having been addressed to her colleagues.

As no official Commission attendance is foreseen, official funds of the European Union are not concerned.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000066/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(7 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Κατάσχεση φορτηγού που μετέφερε όπλα από την Τουρκία στην Συρία

Οι τουρκικές δυνάμεις ασφαλείας κατέσχεσαν την 1η Ιανουαρίου όπλα και πυρομαχικά από φορτηγό, το οποίο υποτίθεται πως θα μετέφερε ανθρωπιστική βοήθεια στην Συρία. Σύμφωνα με τις δηλώσεις του τουρκικού τύπου, στο φορτηγό βρισκόταν και εκπρόσωπος της ΜΙΤ ο οποίος δεν επέτρεψε να γίνει έρευνα στο φορτηγό, ο δε Υπουργός Εσωτερικών, Εφκάν Αλά, παρενέβη επίσης ζητώντας να αφεθεί ελεύθερο το φορτηγό. Εν τέλει όμως το φορτηγό κατασχέθηκε από τη στρατοχωροφυλακή και συνελήφθησαν τρία άτομα εκ των οποίων ο ένας συριακής καταγωγής και οι άλλοι δύο τουρκικής.

Η εφημερίδα Ραντικάλ, η οποία είχε αποκαλύψει πρώτη το θέμα επικαλέστηκε πηγές σύμφωνα με τις οποίες το φορτηγό ανήκει στην τουρκική ισλαμική οργάνωση ΙΗΗ (Ίδρυμα Ανθρωπιστικής Βοήθειας), η οποία πρόσκειται στον Τούρκο Πρωθυπουργό Ταγίπ Ερντογάν.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

Σε ποιες ενέργειες έχει προβεί η ΕΕ προκειμένου να ελέγξει σε ποιο βαθμό η Τουρκία εξοπλίζει την Συρία συμβάλλοντας έτσι στην συντήρηση της εμπόλεμης κατάστασης;

Πώς ελέγχεται αν η Τουρκία υλοποιεί τη συμφωνία να μην πηγαίνει οπλισμός στη Συρία και πως μπορεί αυτό να επιβληθεί και να ελέγχεται;

Απάντηση της Ύπατης Εκπροσώπου/Αντιπροέδρου Ashton εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η ΕΕ παραμένει σε στενή επαφή με την Τουρκία σχετικά με την κρίση στη Συρία. Στο πλαίσιο του ενισχυμένου διαλόγου με την Τουρκία της ΕΕ στον τομέα της εξωτερικής πολιτικής επί θεμάτων κοινού ενδιαφέροντος, η ΕΕ διατηρεί στενές και τακτικές διαβουλεύσεις με την Τουρκία σε διάφορα επίπεδα για όλες τις πτυχές της κρίσης στη Συρία. Η τουρκική κυβέρνηση έχει αναγνωρίσει την παροχή βοήθειας μη συνδεόμενης με φονικό εξοπλισμό (που επιτρέπεται επίσης στην ΕΕ) τον περασμένο Δεκέμβριο. Ταυτόχρονα, οι τουρκικές αρχές απορρίπτουν συνεχώς καταγγελίες σχετικά με οποιαδήποτε σύνδεση με την Al Qaida και άλλες εξτρεμιστικές ομάδες στη Συρία.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000066/14
to the Commission
Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Seizure of a truck carrying weapons from Turkey to Syria

On 1 January, the Turkish security forces seized weapons and ammunition from a truck allegedly carrying humanitarian aid to Syria. According to the Turkish press, a representative of the Turkish National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) who was on the truck, refused to allow officers to search it. The Minister of the Interior, Efkan Ala, also intervened requesting the truck to be released. However, the truck was finally seized by the Turkish Gendarmerie and three people were arrested, namely one Syrian and two Turkish nationals.

The 'Radikal' newspaper, which was the first to reveal this information, cited sources indicating that the truck belongs to the Turkish Islamic IHH organisation (Humanitarian Relief Foundation), closely associated with the Turkish Prime Minister, Tayyip Erdogan.

In view of this:

Can the Commission say what action is being taken by the EU to investigate the extent to which Turkey is supplying arms to Syria, thus helping to prolong the state of war?

What action is being taken to ensure compliance by Turkey with the agreement prohibiting the supply of arms to Syria? How can the agreement be enforced and monitored?

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

The EU remains in close contact with Turkey on the crisis in Syria. In the framework of the enhanced EU foreign policy dialogue with Turkey on issues of common interest, the EU holds close and regular consultations with Turkey at various levels on all aspects of the Syrian crisis. The Turkish government has acknowledged the provision of non-lethal aid (as authorised also in the EU) in December last year. At the same time, the Turkish authorities have been constantly rejecting allegations of any link with AQ and other extremist groups in Syria.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000067/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Corredor ferroviario mediterráneo RTE-Transporte: España instala vías de ancho europeo estándar en el tramo entre Castellón y Vandellós, haciendo pasar por Madrid a los trenes de mercancías.

La UE ha obligado a España a completar el corredor mediterráneo, que forma parte de la red transeuropea de transporte (RTE-Transporte) y transcurre desde Algeciras, en el sur de España, hasta la frontera húngaro-ucraniana y más allá, con enlaces tan lejanos como Chipre o Helsinki. No obstante, el Gobierno español ha encontrado una manera de inutilizar la línea para el transporte de mercancías ([1]).

En una decisión absurda tomada la semana pasada, el Gobierno español sacó a licitación las obras del tramo entre Vandellós (Cataluña) y Castellón (Comunidad Valenciana), especificando exclusivamente el ancho de vía europeo y no el ancho ibérico estándar que se suele utilizar en España, que es mayor. Dicho tramo ha estado parado durante décadas y en su mayor parte tiene una única vía. Sin embargo, ahora se ha decidido de repente que el tramo en su totalidad se va a construir de nuevo y únicamente con el ancho de vía estándar europeo. Esto significa que los trenes de mercancías que lleguen del Sur tendrán que desviarse a Madrid en Valencia antes de seguir hacia otras partes de Europa, lo que supone un golpe bajo, sobre todo para la industria valenciana.

La decisión es increíble. Había tres opciones. La primera era poner una ruta de ancho de vía europeo paralela a la actual, de ancho ibérico. La segunda era poner raíles de ancho europeo contiguos a la vía actual, de ancho ibérico, y que compartieran la infraestructura existente. La tercera era retirar la actual vía y sustituirla por una con ancho de vía exclusivamente europeo. Esta tercera opción, a pesar de ser la más cara y de que empresarios tanto valencianos como catalanes la desaconsejaron, es la que Madrid ha elegido.

La razón es evidente. El resultado de mantener el tramo de vía única entre Castellón y Vandellós, paralizado durante décadas, era dificultar a las industrias de la cuenca mediterránea el tráfico directo a otras partes de Europa. Puesto que la Unión Europea ha obligado finalmente a España a completar el tramo, se logrará el efecto opuesto, evitando así sanciones por parte de Europa. Con un ancho de vía exclusivamente europeo, todos los trenes de mercancías que partan de lugares al sur de Castellón tendrán que pasar por Madrid para llegar a otras partes de Europa. Así, Madrid consigue una parte del corredor central que la Unión Europea le había denegado, sin que la UE pueda acusar al Gobierno español de incumplir sus obligaciones.

1. ¿Puede la Comisión confirmar esta decisión del Gobierno español?

2. ¿Está en consonancia con lo decidido y aprobado en la revisión del RTE-Transporte y, en concreto, con lo relativo a la red básica?

3. ¿Es esta decisión resultado de un análisis coste-beneficio? En caso contrario, ¿podría la Comisión solicitar tal estudio al ministerio competente de España?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de febrero de 2014)

1. y 3. La Comisión no está en condiciones de responder en nombre del Gobierno español y solicita a Su Señoría que reoriente su pregunta en consecuencia.

2. La línea Barcelona-Tarragona-Valencia, que pertenece al corredor D del ERTMS y al nuevo corredor mediterráneo y, por lo tanto, a la red principal de la RTE-T, ha sido trasladada al ancho europeo estándar (ancho UIC), aunque con algunas excepciones en lugares en los que se utilizará el ancho dual para garantizar las conexiones con el centro de la Península Ibérica y permitir la compatibilidad con los servicios ferroviarios locales de la red de cercanías. Esta política se ajusta plenamente a los requisitos del nuevo Reglamento de la red transeuropea de transporte, en particular en relación con la red principal.

([1]) http://www.helpcatalonia.cat/2013/12/spanish-government-finds-way-to-break.html?m=1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000067/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: TEN-T Mediterranean Rail Corridor: Spain installs European standard-gauge track on the stretch between Castelló and Vandellòs, requiring freight trains to pass through Madrid

The EU has obliged Spain to complete the Mediterranean Corridor, which is part of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), running from Algeciras in the south of Spain to the Hungary-Ukraine border and beyond, with links as far as Cyprus and Helsinki. However, the Spanish Government has found a way to make the line useless for freight trains ([1]).

In an absurd decision made last week, the Spanish Government issued a tender for works on the section between Vandellòs in Catalonia and Castelló in Valencia which specified European standard gauge only and not the broader Iberian standard gauge usually used in Spain. This section has been paralysed for decades, with only a single track in place for the better part of the line. But now it has suddenly been decided that the whole section will be made anew using European standard gauge only. This means that freight trains coming up from the south will have to divert at Valencia to Madrid before going on to other parts of Europe. This is a low blow, especially for industry in Valencia.

The decision is unbelievable. There were three options. The first was to lay a European-gauge route parallel to the current Iberian gauge. The second was to lay European-gauge rails directly alongside the current Iberian-gauge track, sharing the infrastructure already in place. The third option was to tear up the current track and replace it with exclusively European-gauge track. Although this third option was the most expensive, and business leaders in both Valencia and Catalonia advised against it, it is the one that Madrid has chosen.

The reason is obvious. The effect of retaining the single-track stretch between Castelló and Vandellòs, paralysed for decades, was to complicate direct transit to other parts of Europe for industries in the Mediterranean Basin. As the European Union has finally forced Spain to complete the link, the effect will be reversed, thus avoiding European sanctions. With an exclusively European gauge, all freight trains departing from south of Castelló will have to go via Madrid if they are to continue to other parts of Europe. Madrid thus gets part of the central corridor that the European Union had rejected, but the EU cannot accuse the Spanish Government of not fulfilling its obligations.

1. Can the Commission confirm the decision made by the Spanish Government?

2. Is it in line with what was decided and approved in the revision of the TEN-T, in particular with regard to the core network?

3. Was the decision made following a cost-benefit analysis? If not, could the Commission ask the competent Spanish Ministry to undertake such a study?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

1 and 3. The Commission is not in a position to reply on behalf of the Spanish Government and asks the Honourable Member to redirect his question accordingly.

2. The Barcelona — Tarragona — Valencia line, belonging to ERTMS Corridor D and the new Mediterranean Corridor and thus to the TEN-T core network, is being shifted to the standard European gauge (UIC gauge) with some exceptions where dual gauge will be used to ensure the connections to the heart of the Iberian peninsula and allow compatibility with local rail services ('Cercanias'). This policy is fully in line with the requirements of the new TEN-T Regulation, in particular as regards the core network.

([1]) http://www.helpcatalonia.cat/2013/12/spanish-government-finds-way-to-break.html?m=1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000069/14
to the Commission
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: CXL duty on sugar imports

European sugar cane refiners currently pay a 'CXL duty' of EUR 98 per tonne on their raw material imports. The CXL duty value seems completely arbitrary, and countless efforts to find out how the figure was arrived at have proved unsuccessful. Will the Commission outline the reason why the 'CXL duty' stands at the rate of EUR 98 per tonne?

Under the new CAP reform, sugar quotas are set to stay in place until 2017. Part of the agreement included a commitment on the part of the Commission to undertake an analysis of the European sugar sector with the aim of addressing any imbalances in the sector, particularly in relation to the situation faced by European cane refiners.

Will the Commission provide details of what it plans to do to alleviate any pressure on the sugar cane refining industry in the wake of the abolition of sugar quotas in 2017?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The CXL bound in-quota import duty of 98 Euro per tonne was the result of the enlargement to the EU 15 and the consolidation of a Finnish tariff rate quota, with the in-quota tariff equivalent of 98 Euro per tonne, which are part of the World Trade Organisation CXL concessions. Scheduled commitments can be amended by either multilateral negotiations, such as the Doha Development Agenda, or WTO Article XXVIII negotiations.

The new CAP reform does not entail any commitment for an analysis of the EU sugar sector before 2017. However, according to a declaration made by the Commission, the Commission will have regard to the interests of both Union sugar beet growers and raw cane refiners in the event that it is necessary to apply the temporary market management mechanism, during the remaining period of quotas until 2017.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000070/14
do Komisji
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Budowa sieci TEN-T w województwie kujawsko-pomorskim w Polsce

Dziękuję za odpowiedź udzieloną przez komisarza Siima Kallasa (nr P-012988/2013) w sprawie budowy sieci TEN-T w Polsce. Rozumiem, że w chwili obecnej Komisja Europejska nie jest w stanie szczegółowo odpowiedzieć na to pytanie.

Z treści odpowiedzi wynika jednak, że przez terytorium województwa kujawsko-pomorskiego przebiegać będzie odgałęzienie korytarza bałtycko-adriatyckiego. Wskazano przy tym, że wstępnie ustalone projekty wchodzą w skład rozporządzenia ustanawiającego instrument „Łącząc Europę". Prosiłbym o informację, jakie odcinki linii kolejowych oraz jakie obiekty kolejowe (dworce) planowane są do budowy lub modernizacji w ramach TEN-T na terenie województwa kujawsko-pomorskiego.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Siima Kallasa w imieniu Komisji
(3 lutego 2014 r.)

Rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady: (UE) nr 1315/2013 w sprawie unijnych wytycznych dotyczących rozwoju transeuropejskiej sieci transportowej ([1]) oraz (UE) nr 1316/2013 ustanawiające instrument „Łącząc Europę" (CEF) ([2]) zostały opublikowane w dniu 20 grudnia 2013 r.

Załącznik do rozporządzenia CEF zawiera wykaz wstępnie określonych odcinków nowego korytarza Bałtyk-Adriatyk oraz zestaw „środków horyzontalnych", takich jak systemy aplikacji telematycznych dla dróg, kolei, śródlądowych dróg wodnych i statków bądź nowych technologii, które będą kwalifikować się do finansowania ze środków CEF.

Wykaz wstępnie określonych odcinków obejmuje prace wzdłuż linii kolejowej Gdynia – Katowice (CE 65) w województwie kujawsko-pomorskim. Finansowanie ze środków CEF odbywać się będzie poprzez ogłaszanie szczegółowych zaproszeń. Wnioski będą oceniane przez ekspertów zewnętrznych. Za pomocą instrumentu „Łącząc Europę" można finansować działania realizowane na torach, ale nie na dworcach kolejowych.

Zgodnie z art. 47 rozporządzenia w sprawie TEN-T, do dnia 22 grudnia 2014 r. każdy koordynator europejski przekazuje zainteresowanym państwom członkowskim plan prac zawierający analizę rozwoju korytarza. Wspomniane plany prac będą omawiane oraz opracowywane wspólnie z odpowiednimi państwami członkowskimi, zarządcami infrastruktury oraz innymi zainteresowanymi stronami w ramach posiedzeń forum ds. korytarza w ciągu roku 2014. Jak dotąd brak jest konkretnego wykazu projektów, które mają zostać uwzględnione w tych planach prac.

([1]) Dz.U. L 348 z 20.12.2013, s. 1-128.
([2]) Dz.U. L 348 z 20.12.2013, s. 129-170.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000070/14
to the Commission
Janusz Władysław Zemke (S&D)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Building of the TEN-T network in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie province in Poland

Thank you for the response given by Commissioner Kallas (No P-012988/2013) on the building of the TEN-T network in Poland. I understand that at the moment the Commission is not in a position to provide a detailed answer to the question.

The reply does, however, make clear that a branch of the Baltic-Adriatic Corridor will run through the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province, and that pre-identified projects come under the regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility. Could the Commission provide information about which railway line sections and railway facilities (train stations) are planned for construction or modernisation under the TEN-T programme in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province?

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

The regulations of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 No 1315/2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network ([1]) and No 1316/2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) ([2]) were published on 20 December 2013.

The CEF annex includes a list of pre-identified sections along the new Baltic-Adriatic Corridor and a set of 'horizontal measures' as Telematic applications systems for road, rail, inland waterways and vessels or new technologies which will be eligible for CEF funding.

The list of pre-identified sections includes works along the rail line Gdynia — Katowice (CE65) crossing the province of Kujawsko-Pomorskie. The CEF funding will be organised via specific calls. Applications will be evaluated by external experts. The CEF can fund measures on tracks but not at railway stations.

According to Article 47 of the TEN-T, each European Coordinator should, by 22 December 2014, submit to the member states concerned a work plan analysing the development of the corridor. These workplans will be discussed and drawn up with the Member States concerned, the infrastructure managers and other stakeholders in the Corridor Forum meetings in the course of the year 2014. There is yet no concrete list of projects to be included in these workplans.

([1]) OJ L 348, 20/12/2013, p. 1-128.
([2]) OJ L 348, 20/12/2013, p. 129-170.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-000071/14
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(7 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Drepturile cetățenilor europeni

Având în vedere prevederile de la articolul 17 din Tratatul privind Uniunea Europeană (versiunea consolidată), care enumeră atribuțiile Comisiei în promovarea interesului general al Uniunii, asigurarea aplicării tratatelor și a măsurilor adoptate de instituții în temeiul acestora, precum și supravegherea aplicării dreptului Uniunii,

Având în vedere prevederile de la articolele 2 și 3 din tratatul menționat anterior, care precizează că Uniunea se întemeiază pe valorile respectării demnității umane, libertății, democrației, egalității, statului de drept, promovează valorile și bunăstarea popoarelor sale și oferă cetățenilor săi un spațiu de libertate, securitate și justiție fără frontiere interne,

Solicit Comisiei să răspundă la următoarele întrebări:

— nu consideră că recentele luări de poziție din unele state membre împotriva cetățenilor europeni din România sunt atacuri la adresa principiilor europene ocrotite de tratate?

— ce măsuri care decurg din tratate intenționează să ia pentru combaterea acestor poziții?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(14 februarie 2014)

După expirarea, la 31 decembrie 2013, a măsurilor tranzitorii privind libera circulație a lucrătorilor, cetățenii români beneficiază, în temeiul legislației UE, de exact aceleași drepturi și prerogative ca și cetățenii UE din oricare alt stat membru al UE. Nu poate exista o discriminare care să vizeze cetățenii UE dintr-un anumit stat membru.

Comisia va utiliza pe deplin toate instrumentele pe care le are la dispoziție prin intermediul tratatelor pentru a se asigura că măsurile luate de statele membre sunt în conformitate cu obligațiile care le revin în temeiul legislației UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000071/14
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: European citizens' rights

Article 17 of the Treaty on European Union (consolidated version) lists the Commission's tasks in promoting the general interest of the Union, ensuring the application of the Treaties and the measures adopted by the institutions pursuant to them, and overseeing the application of Union law.

Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on European Union state that the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law, and that it will promote its values and the well-being of its people and offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers.

Can the Commission answer the following questions:

— Does it not consider that the positions recently taken by some Member States againstEuropean citizens from Romania constitute attacks on the European principles enshrinedin the Treaty?

— What steps will it take to counter these positions, in accordance with the Treaty?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

After the expiry of transitional arrangements on free movement of workers on 31 December 2013, Romanian citizens enjoy exactly the same rights and entitlements under EC law as EU citizens from any other EU Member State. There can be no discrimination that would target EU citizens from a particular Member State.

The Commission will make full use of all the tools the Treaties place at its disposal to ensure that measures taken by Member States are in line with their obligations under EC law.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000072/14
to the Commission
Roger Helmer (EFD)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: UK renewable subsidies

The Commission will be aware of news reports stating that it has called on the British Government to phase out renewables subsidies by 2020, which might otherwise infringe the EU treaty provisions on 'State Aids' ([1]). Many of my constituents in the East Midlands will be delighted by any sign that sanity might be returning to the energy market, and renewables subsidies reduced.

However, I should be grateful for some clarification, especially on the definition of 'subsidies for renewables'. I take it that this will include the UK's Renewable Obligation Certificates, Feed-In Tariffs, and the Carbon Price Floor. Can the Commission confirm that it will also apply to the so-called 'Constraint Payments' — that is, the compensation paid to operators when the Grid is unable to take their output?

Does the Commission also agree with me that the proposed 'capacity payments' to persuade fossil-fuel back-up plants to be available when the wind drops are also subsidies for renewables, rather than subsidies for fossil fuel plants per se, since they would clearly not be necessary at all but for the intermittency of wind power?

The Commission will also be aware of discussions on large-scale energy storage projects based on pumped hydro or compressed air. To be implemented, these projects will also require major subsidies and, like the capacity payments mentioned above, these subsidies would not be needed at all if it were not to support renewables. Will the Commission also class such subsidies as 'subsidies for renewables'?

And a final key question: while the Commission has called for the phasing-out of subsidies, it has not repealed its Climate & Energy Package, nor removed the renewables targets set for 2020. I am not aware of any method other than subsidies which Member State governments can apply to ensure that these mandatory renewables targets are achieved. Does the Commission agree with me that without large-scale subsidies, its renewables targets cannot, in fact, be achieved? Does it therefore plan to relax or remove those targets?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The Commission cannot confirm the statement that the UK will be obliged to phase out support for renewable energy by 2020. In fact the UK is obliged to achieve its binding renewable energy target of 15% in 2020 and to put in place national measures which will allow the achievement of this target. However, all instruments to directly or indirectly support renewable energy, in so far as they constitute state aid, have to comply with EU State aid rules, including in particular the EU guidelines on state aid for environmental protection, ([2]) which are currently undergoing revision ([3]).

As regards capacity payments the Commission has set out its views on these instruments in a recent Communication ([4]) which includes an analytical framework for assessing the necessity of such mechanisms. Likewise the question of whether and under which circumstances capacity mechanisms, when they involve state aid, can be considered necessary, is dealt with by the draft Environmental and Energy Aid Guidelines.

The Commission is currently not aware of concrete plans by Member States to subsidise large scale development of new storage capacity beyond investment in research and development.

As regards target fulfilment, the Commission has recently published a communication on the principles for the 2030 energy and climate policy framework which stresses that this should be based on full implementation of the 2020 targets ([5]). The paper also states that for mature renewable energy technologies subsidies should be phased out in the 2020-2030 timeframe.

([1]) http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/energy/renewableenergy/10548157/Europe-wants-to-block-UK-windfarm-subsidies.html
([2]) Community guidelines on state aid for environmental protection, OJ C 82, 1.4.2008.
([3]) Cf. Environmental and Energy Aid Guidelines 2014 — 2020, Consultation Paper, http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/legislation/environmental_aid_issues_paper_en.pdf
([4]) C(2013)7243 final and SWD(2013) 438 final.
([5]) COM(2014) 15 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000074/14
to the Commission
Jim Higgins (PPE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Presseurop closure

1. Why has the Commission decided that presseurop.eu is no longer deserving of funding, despite a report ordered in 2012 by the Commission which gave the media outlet a glowing assessment?

2. Why has an outlet that so effectively promotes integration and provides a service which, given its inherent cost, is unlikely to be provided by the private sector, become less of a priority now than it was in 2009?

3. If budgetary concerns are the reason, why, given the fact that it was established a year after the financial crisis and has operated for five years since then, has it been decided that now is the time for it to be closed?

4. With European Parliament elections due to be held in May 2014, has the need for a multilingual political forum and media outlet not become greater?

5. Are there any political reasons, as has been suggested by a number of media outlets, to account for the fact that the presseurop.eu project has become undesirable or for the time of the closure?

Answer given by Mrs Reding on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions E-011724/2013 ([1]) and E-014224/2013 ([2]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000075/14
a la Comisión
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(7 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Solicitud de apertura de investigación por la reventa por parte de Camboya a la UE de arroz de otros países sin aranceles

Camboya y Myanmar, en la actualidad principales exportadores mundiales de arroz, gozan del régimen especial arancel 0 que la Unión Europea destina a los Países Menos Avanzados (PMA). Sin embargo, las importaciones de arroz procedente de estos países se multiplicaron por 33,5 durante el período 2009-2010, y todo indica que aumentaron todavía más en los años siguientes.

Dicho de otro modo, en cinco años se ha pasado de importar 5 000 toneladas anuales de dichos países a 180 000 toneladas. Sin embargo, estas cifras de exportaciones superan los teóricos excedentes de producción de estos países, por lo que medios de comunicación de regiones arroceras afectadas en la EU, como es el caso de la Comunidad Valenciana, se han hecho eco de la sospecha de los productores europeos según la cual Camboya y Myanmar estarían comprando fuera arroz que luego revenden a la UE sin aranceles.

¿Piensa la Comisión abrir una investigación para determinar si estos PMA están exportando a la UE sin aranceles arroz que no ha sido cultivado en sus territorios?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(29 de enero de 2014)

La Comisión hace un seguimiento de las importaciones de arroz en la EU en estrecha cooperación con las autoridades aduaneras de los Estados miembros. Aunque no se ha detectado hasta el momento ninguna elusión de derechos, la Comisión hace un seguimiento constante de los flujos comerciales, y toma buena nota de la inquietud expresada por Su Señoría.

Las importaciones de arroz de Camboya y Myanmar/Birmania a la UE han aumentado en el transcurso de los últimos años. Aunque el aumento de las importaciones procedentes de Camboya fue notable, cabe señalar que partían de una base muy baja, y con respecto a Myanmar/Birmania, sus exportaciones aún son limitadas, y estos países todavía no figuran entre las principales fuentes de nuestras importaciones. Si bien los países que se benefician de la iniciativa «Todo menos armas» (EBA) están aumentando su cuota, el total de las importaciones de arroz en la EU permanece estable.

Cabe añadir que un 40 % del consumo anual de arroz de la UE procede de las importaciones, y que tradicionalmente la UE no es autosuficiente en arroz.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000075/14
to the Commission
Andrés Perelló Rodríguez (S&D)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Request to open an investigation into Cambodia's reselling of rice from other countries to the EU duty free.

Cambodia and Myanmar, currently two of the world's leading exporters of rice, benefit from the EU's special zero-duty scheme for Least Developed Countries (LDC). However, rice imports from these countries multiplied by 33.5 in the period 2009-2010, and all signs point to further increases in the following years.

In other words, in the space of five years annual rice imports from these countries have increased from 5 000 tonnes to 180 000 tonnes. This figure exceeds their theoretical production surplus, and the media in affected rice-producing areas of the EU, such as Valencia, have echoed the suspicion expressed by European producers that Cambodia and Myanmar are buying rice from other countries and then selling it on to the EU duty free.

Does the Commission plan to open an investigation in order to determine whether these LDCs are exporting rice which has not been produced in their territories to the EU duty free?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(29 January 2014)

The Commission monitors EU imports of rice in close cooperation with the Member States' custom authorities. While no circumvention of duties was identified so far, the Commission is constantly monitoring trade flows, and takes good note of the concern expressed by the Honourable Member.

Imports of rice from Cambodia and Myanmar/Burma to the EU increased over the last years. Although the increase from Cambodia specifically was remarkable, it started from a very low basis and with regard to Myanmar/Burma, exports are still limited and the countries do not figure yet among the major sources of our imports. While countries benefitting of Everything But Arms (EBA) are increasing their share, total imports of rice into the EU are stable.

It is worth noting that some 40% of the EU annual rice consumption is indeed covered from imports and that the EU is traditionally not self-sufficient regarding rice.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000076/14
aan de Commissie
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(7 januari 2014)

Betreft: 450 miljoen euro voor onderzoek en innovatie op het Europees spoor

Op 16 december 2013 heeft de Europese Commissie bekend gemaakt dat zij voor de komende 7 jaar maar liefst 450 miljoen euro uittrekt voor onderzoek naar innovatie op het spoor. Hierbij denkt zij aan een nieuwe generatie treinen van hoge capaciteit, betere infrastructuur en efficiëntere spoorwegdiensten en verkeersmanagementsystemen. De sector zou zelf ook financieel moeten bijdragen volgens de Commissie.

1. Is de Commissie bekend met het bericht „EU maakt 450 miljoen vrij voor spoorwegen" ([1])?

2. Klopt het dat de Commissie voornemens is 450 miljoen euro belastinggeld te stoppen in onderzoek en innovatie ten behoeve van het Europees spoornet? Zo ja, wat bezielt de Commissie om een half miljard euro uit te geven aan iets dat de lidstaten prima zelf kunnen organiseren?

3. Klopt het dat de Commissie ook al ruim 160 miljoen euro wenst uit te geven voor het vierde spoorwegpakket en dat daarnaast een deel van de TEN-T- en CEF-budgetten voor spoorinfrastructuur is bestemd?

4. Deelt de Commissie de mening dat er dus al veel te veel projecten (vierde Spoorwegpakket, Connecting Europe Facility en trans-European transport network) bestaan om allerlei spoorwegdoelstellingen te realiseren? Zo nee, waarom niet?

5. Is de Commissie met de PVV van mening dat reeds bestaande projecten gedoemd zijn te mislukken omdat zij blijkens het signaal dat de Commissie nu afgeeft[1] niet volstaan wat betreft spoorinnovatie? Waarom denkt de Commissie dat het krampachtig smijten met een enorme zak belastinggeld nuttig is?

6. Snapt de Commissie echt niet dat zij de markt volkomen kapot maakt met haar betuttelende en verlammende miljoenensubsidies?

7. Wanneer realiseert de Commissie zich dat zij onmiddellijk moet stoppen zich overal mee te bemoeien, zodat de markt en de lidstaten zelf met nuttige ontwikkelingen op basis van marktwerking en samenwerking tussen lidstaten kunnen komen die daadwerkelijk meerwaarde kunnen bieden, in plaats van achteloos geld verkwanselen onder het motto „gratis geld van de EU"?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(24 februari 2014)

In het kader van het meerjarig financieel kader waarover de Raad en het Parlement overeenstemming hebben bereikt, heeft de Commissie inderdaad plannen om in de komende zeven jaar maximaal 450 miljoen euro uit het Horizon 2020-programma toe te wijzen voor activiteiten op het vlak van onderzoek en innovatie (O&I) in de spoorsector.

Uit de effectbeoordeling bij het voorstel voor Horizon 2020 blijkt ([2]) de toegevoegde waarde van het optreden van de EU in O&I in de spoorsector.

In het vierde spoorwegpakket ([3]) is geen medefinanciering van de Commissie opgenomen, maar de Raad en het Parlement hebben een nieuw kader voor infrastructuurbeleid vastgesteld in de vorm van de TEN-T-richtsnoeren ([4]) en de Connecting Europe Facility ([5]). Het TEN-T-kernnet zal zich aan de hand van een grondige en algemeen aanvaarde methodologie concentreren op de grootste Europese toegevoegde waarde, zoals grensoverschrijdende trajecten, knelpunten en ontbrekende schakels.

De CEF zal naar verwachting verschillende spoorwegprojecten ondersteunen, met name de van tevoren bepaalde projecten op het TEN-T-kernnet, de interoperabiliteit van de spoorwegen, de invoering van ERTMS en maatregelen om het lawaai van goederenvervoer per spoor te beperken.

([1]) http://www.nieuws.nl/algemeen/20131216/EU-maakt-450-miljoen-vrij-voor-spoorwegen.
([2]) Werkdocument van de diensten van de Commissie SEC(2011) 1427 final betreffende een effectbeoordeling bij de mededeling „Horizon 2020 — Het kaderprogramma voor onderzoek en innovatie".
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm
([4]) Verordening (EU) nr. 1315/2013 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 11 december 2013 betreffende EU-richtsnoeren voor de ontwikkeling van een trans-Europees vervoersnet, en tot intrekking van Besluit nr. 661/2010/EU, PB L 348 van 20.12.2013.
([5]) Verordening (EU) nr. 1316/2013 van het Europees Parlement en de Raad van 11 december 2013 tot vaststelling van de Connecting Europe Facility, tot wijziging van Verordening (EU) nr. 913/2010 en tot intrekking van Verordening (EG) nr. 680/2007 en Verordening (EG) nr. 67/2010, PB L 348 van 20.12.2013.

Projecten worden gesteund door middel van werkprogramma's, die zijn besproken met het Parlement en goedgekeurd door de lidstaten en die zijn geselecteerd naar aanleiding van uitnodigingen tot het indienen van voorstellen. De Commissie legt de lidstaten geen projecten op die zij niet willen uitvoeren.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000076/14
to the Commission
Patricia van der Kammen (NI)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: EUR 450 million for research and innovation in the European rail sector

On 16 December 2013, the Commission announced that it would be investing no less than EUR 450 million in rail research and innovation over the next seven years. The intention is to provide a new generation of high-capacity trains, better infrastructure and more efficient rail services and traffic management systems. The rail sector will also have to make a financial contribution to the scheme, according to the Commission.

1. Is the Commission aware of the article from Dutch website *www.nieuws.nl* on EU plans to allocate EUR 450 million to the rail sector ([1])?

2. Is it true that the Commission plans to spend EUR 450 million of taxpayers' money on research and innovation for the European rail network? If so, what is the motivation for the Commission to spend half a billion euros on something that the Member States can organise perfectly well themselves?

3. Is it true that the Commission also intends to spend over EUR 160 million on the fourth railway package and that, in addition, a certain portion of the budgets for Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) has been earmarked for railway infrastructure?

4. Does the Commission share the view that there is already a wildly excessive number of projects (fourth railway package, CEF and TEN-T) with all manner of aims for the railways? If not, why not?

5. Does the Commission share the view of the PVV that the existing projects are doomed to fail, since the Commission now seems to be suggesting that they are not adequate to ensure rail innovation? Why does the Commission think that hurling enormous amounts of taxpayers' money at this issue is helpful?

6. Does the Commission not comprehend that its patronising subsidies totalling millions of euros are crippling the market and will eventually completely destroy it?

7. When will the Commission realise that it needs to stop meddling in affairs with immediate effect, so that the market and the Member States themselves can develop profitable solutions which are based on market forces and cooperation between the Member States and which will actually offer added value, instead of carelessly squandering money in the form of 'free hand-outs from the EU'?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

In the context of the multi-annual financial framework agreed by the Council and the Parliament, the Commission indeed plans to allocate up to EUR 450 million from the Horizon 2020 Programme for research and innovation (R&I) activities in the rail sector in the next 7 years.

The impact assessment accompanying the H2020 proposal provides evidence ([2]) of the added value of EU intervention in R&I in the rail sector.

While the fourth railway package ([3]) does not foresee any EU co-funding, the Council and the Parliament have also adopted a new framework for infrastructure policy in the form of the TEN-T Guidelines ([4]) and the Connecting Europe Facility ([5]). The TEN-T core network has been defined according to a thorough and commonly accepted methodology to focus on the highest European added value e.g. cross-border sections, bottlenecks or missing links.

On this basis, the CEF is expected to support several rail projects, notably the pre-identified projects on the TEN-T Core Network, rail interoperability, the deployment of ERTMS and actions to reduce rail freight noise.

([1]) http://www.nieuws.nl/algemeen/20131216/EU-maakt-450-miljoen-vrij-voor-spoorwegen.
([2]) Commission Staff Working Paper SEC(2011) 1427 final on an Impact Assessment accompanying the communication 'Horizon 2020 — The framework Programme for Research and Innovation'.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/rail/packages/2013_en.htm
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and repealing Decision No 661/2010/EU, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.
([5]) Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Connecting Europe Facility, amending Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulations (EC) No 680/2007 and (EC) No 67/2010, OJ L 348, 20.12.2013.

Projects are supported by work programmes, discussed with the Parliament and approved by the Member States, and selected following the calls for proposals. The Commission does not impose on Member States projects which they do not intend to carry out.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-000078/14
aan de Commissie
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(7 januari 2014)

Betreft: Reiskosten leden Europees Economisch en Sociaal Comité alsmede Comité van de Regio's

In de „Discharge 2012; questionnaire to the Economic and Social Committee" (6.1.2014) valt te lezen dat in 2012 de reiskosten van de leden van dit comité 11 552 396 EUR bedroegen. In dat kader de volgende vragen:

1. Kan de Commissie een uitsplitsing geven van de herkomst van deze reizende leden op grond van lidstaat?

2. Kan de Commissie een uitsplitsing geven van de reiskosten per lidstaat?

3. Kan de Commissie een uitsplitsing geven van de reiskosten per individueel lid van het comité?

4. Kan de Commissie ditzelfde geven voor het Comité van de Regio's?

Antwoord van de heer Šefčovič namens de Commissie
(30 januari 2014)

Het Europees Economisch en Sociaal Comité en het Comité van de Regio's hebben elk hun eigen begroting, met inbegrip van de administratieve begroting. Deze kwestie valt niet onder de bevoegdheid van de Europese Commissie.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000078/14
to the Commission
Lucas Hartong (NI)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Travel expenses of members of the European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions

According to 'Discharge 2012; questionnaire to the Economic and Social Committee' (6 January 2014), the travel expenses of members of that committee in 2012 amounted to EUR 11 552 396.

1. Can the Commission provide a breakdown of the origins of these travelling members by Member State?

2. Can the Commission indicate the travel expenses per Member State?

3. Can the Commission indicate the travel expenses of each individual member of the committee?

4. Can the Commission do likewise for the Committee of the Regions?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions dispose each of their own budgets, including administrative budgets. The matter in question does not fall within the remit of the European Commission.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000081/14
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wsparcie projektu rozwojowego Bridgestone Poznań ze środków EFRR

Działanie 4.5.1 Programu Operacyjnego Innowacyjna Gospodarka oraz dostępne w jego ramach dofinansowanie ze środków UE było decydującym argumentem za ulokowaniem innowacyjnej technologii produkcji opon RFT 3G w Poznaniu. Inwestycja ma przyczynić się do zwiększenia zatrudnienia o 200 etatów oraz stworzenia dodatkowych miejsc pracy u poddostawców i kooperantów.

Po otrzymaniu w kwietniu 2010 r. decyzji Ministerstwa Gospodarki o przyznaniu dofinansowania Bridgestone zainwestował 430 mln zł na wdrożenie innowacyjnej technologii w rozbudowywanym zakładzie produkcyjnym. Decyzja Ministerstwa potwierdzała spełnienie restrykcyjnych wymogów innowacyjności, wymagany wpływ projektu na rozwój regionu oraz zintensyfikowanie działalności badawczo rozwojowej w przedsiębiorstwie.

26 sierpnia 2011 r. Bridgestone podpisał umowę o dofinansowanie w wysokości 25 % wartości inwestycji. Obecnie proces rozbudowy jest finalizowany, jednak brak decyzji KE o ostatecznym zatwierdzeniu wsparcia oraz istotne ryzyko negatywnego rozpatrzenia wniosku o potwierdzenie wkładu finansowego, które pojawiło się w ostatniej korespondencji ze strony KE blokuje zakończenie projektu.

Sytuacja ta dotyczy prawdopodobnie nie tylko wspomnianego przypadku, ale również innych przedsiębiorców realizujących inwestycje podlegające pod specjalną procedurę potwierdzenia wkładu finansowego przed KE.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać:

1. Z czego wynika przedłużająca się procedura ostatecznego potwierdzenia wsparcia z EFRR dla projektu Bridgestone Poznań?

2. Ile i jakie inne polskie zakłady znajdują się obecnie w podobnej sytuacji oczekiwania na ostateczne potwierdzenie przez KE wsparcia z EFRR i jakie są powody braku ostatecznej decyzji?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(3 lutego 2014 r.)

1. Wnioski w sprawie dużych projektów są oceniane zgodnie z mającymi zastosowanie przepisami unijnymi. Czas trwania oceny wniosku przez Komisję zależy od jakości wniosku i jego zgodności ze stosownymi kryteriami oceny określonymi w rozporządzeniach dotyczących funduszy strukturalnych. W trakcie procesu oceny każdy wniosek dotyczący dużego projektu jest szczegółowo badany przez ekspertów zewnętrznych i służby Komisji.

Wniosek złożony przez Bridgestone Poznań wymagał znacznych poprawek i dodatkowych wyjaśnień; dlatego też jego ocena jeszcze się nie zakończyła. Komisja będzie kontynuować proces decyzyjny, o ile dodatkowe informacje, o które zwróciła się do władz polskich, dotyczące przeniesienia działalności Bridgestone do innych państw członkowskich, stopnia innowacyjności produktu oraz nowej sytuacji fabryki w Bari, okażą się zadowalające.

2. Komisja dokonuje oceny każdego wniosku dotyczącego współfinansowania dużego projektu z funduszy strukturalnych w sposób spójny i jednolity, stosując kryteria i metody określone we właściwych rozporządzeniach, które są znane państwom członkowskim. Mimo że Komisja stara się zakończyć każdą ocenę najszybciej, jak to możliwe, proces ten zależy od jakości wniosków przedkładanych przez organy państw członkowskich i jest prowadzony przy uwzględnieniu nadrzędnej zasady, zgodnie z którą środki z funduszy strukturalnych mają być wydawane skutecznie i zgodnie z prawem, zapewniając jak największe korzyści europejskim podatnikom.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000081/14
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: ERDF support for a development project at Bridgestone's Poznan plant

The availability of EU funding under Action 4.5.1 of the 'Innovative Economy' Operational Programme was instrumental in the decision to locate the innovative technology for producing the RFT 3G tyre in Poznan. The investment will help the employment situation by providing 200 more direct jobs as well as new jobs in supply and related industries.

Following the announcement of the decision of the Minister of Finance in April 2010 that funding had been granted, Bridgestone invested PLN 430 million in innovative technology in connection with the enlargement of its Poznan plant. The decision confirmed that the strict requirements on innovation and projects' contribution to regional development and stepping up research and development activities had been met.

On 26 August 2011, Bridgestone signed a funding agreement on 25% co-financing of the investment. The enlargement process is now drawing to a close. However, completion of the project is being prevented by the lack of a decision by the Commission finally to approve the funding and the significant risk that it may refuse to do so, as the latest correspondence from the Commission appears to indicate.

This issue is likely to concern not just the case mentioned here but also other companies making investments under the special procedure for the approval of funding by the Commission.

1. What is causing the delay in the procedure to give final approval to ERDF funding for the Bridgestone project in Poznan?

2. How many other Polish factories are currently in a similar situation of waiting for the Commission to give final approval for ERDF funding, and which factories are involved? What is preventing a final decision from being taken?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

1. Major project applications are appraised in line with the applicable EC law. The quality of the application and its compliance with the relevant assessment criteria set out in the Structural Fund regulations have an impact on the duration of the Commission's appraisal. During the appraisal process, every major project application is thoroughly scrutinised by external experts and the Commission services.

The application submitted by Bridgestone Poznan required substantial improvements and additional clarifications and therefore its assessment is still ongoing. Provided that the additional information requested from the Polish authorities on the relocation of Bridgestone's services between Member States, the degree of innovation of the product and the new situation of the Bari plant are satisfactory, the Commission will proceed with the decision-making process.

2. The Commission appraises every major project application for co-financing from the Structural Funds in a homogenous and consistent manner, using the criteria and methods set out by the relevant regulations familiar to the Member States. While the Commission endeavours to complete each assessment as rapidly as possible, the process depends on the quality of each application submitted by the Member State authorities; with the overriding principle of ensuring that Structural Funds are spent legally and effectively, guaranteeing the best value for money for the European taxpayer.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000082/14
do Komisji
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Sytuacja polskich producentów tradycyjnych produktów wędzonych w związku z wejściem Rozporządzenia Komisji (UE) NR 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r.

W 2014 r. przewidziane jest wejście w życie Rozporządzenia Komisji (UE) NR 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 odnośnie najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w środkach spożywczych.

Spowoduje to, że przedsiębiorcy, którzy produkują żywność tradycyjną wędzoną drewnem, będą musieli zaprzestać takiej działalności. Będzie to wielki cios w polskich producentów wyrobów tradycyjnych i regionalnych produkujących tą metodą.

Czy Komisja dysponuje danymi dotyczącymi tego, jakie skutki będzie niosło ze sobą ww. rozporządzenie dla producentów produkujących żywność tradycyjną wędzoną drewnem? Czy ww. rozporządzenie zostało zatwierdzone w drodze konsultacji z polskim rządem?

Polska wpisała na listę produktów tradycyjnych i regionalnych ogólnie 1190 produktów ([1]).

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(30 stycznia 2014 r.)

Projekt rozporządzenia zmieniającego rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 ustalające najwyższe dopuszczalne poziomy niektórych zanieczyszczeń w środkach spożywczych w odniesieniu do wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych (WWA) przedłożono do zaopiniowania Stałemu Komitetowi ds. Łańcucha Żywnościowego i Zdrowia Zwierząt w dniu 8 kwietnia 2011 r. ([2]). Projekt rozporządzenia otrzymał pozytywną opinię Komitetu – za jego przyjęciem głosowały wszystkie państwa członkowskie (w tym Polska), z wyjątkiem Łotwy i Estonii, które wstrzymały się od głosu. Nie podniesiono żadnych kwestii dotyczących wędzenia mięsa i produktów mięsnych. W dniu 22 października 2010 r. skonsultowano się w sprawie projektu rozporządzenia z CLITRAVI ([3]), europejską organizacją reprezentującą sektor mięsa przetworzonego; nie przedstawiono wówczas żadnych uwag w sprawie proponowanych niższych poziomów.

W dniu 6 maja 2011 r. projekt rozporządzenia został przekazany Parlamentowi Europejskiemu i Radzie we wszystkich językach Unii na okres 3 miesięcy w celu kontroli. We wspomnianym okresie kontroli nie zgłoszono uwag. Po upływie okresu kontroli w dniu 6 sierpnia 2011 r. Komisja przyjęła w dniu 19 sierpnia 2011 r. rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 ([4]), przewidujące 3-letni okres przejściowy przed rozpoczęciem obowiązywania – od dnia 1 września 2014 r. – niższych poziomów WWA w mięsie wędzonym i wędzonych produktach mięsnych.

Niższe dopuszczalne poziomy WWA w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych, również w przypadku tradycyjnego wędzenia drewnem, są możliwe do osiągnięcia, jeżeli stosowane są najlepsze praktyki wędzarnicze.

([1]) http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/

([2]) Sprawozdanie jest udostępnione na stronie: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/sum_08042011_en.pdf

([3]) Centrum Łącznikowe przemysłu przetwórstwa mięsnego w UE.

([4]) Rozporządzenie Komisji (UE) nr 835/2011 z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 odnośnie do najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w środkach spożywczych (DZ.U. L 215 z 20.8.2011, s. 4).

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000082/14
to the Commission
Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Situation of Polish producers of traditional smoked products as a result of Commission Regulation (EU) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011 coming into force

Commission Regulation (EU) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011, amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs, is due to come into force in 2014.

This will mean that firms which produce foodstuffs using traditional wood-smoking will have to cease doing so. This will be a great blow to Polish producers of traditional and regional products who use this method.

Does the Commission have any information on the impact which this regulation will have on producers of foodstuffs using traditional wood-smoking? Was this regulation approved in consultation with the Polish government?

Poland included some 1 190 products in the list of traditional and regional products ([1]).

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(30 January 2014)

The draft Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in food as regards polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) was submitted for opinion to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 8 April 2011 ([2]). The draft Regulation received a favourable opinion from the Committee, all Member States, including Poland, voting in favour, with only Latvia and Estonia abstaining. No concerns as regards the smoking of meat and meat products were raised. The European stakeholder organisation CLITRAVI ([3]), representing the processed meat sector, was consulted on 22 October 2010 on the draft Regulation and no comments on the proposed lower levels were raised.

The draft Regulation was transmitted in all Union languages on 6 May 2011 to the European Parliament and the Council for a 3 months scrutiny. No comments were made during the scrutiny period. After expiry of the scrutiny period on 6 August 2011, the Commission adopted on 19 August 2011 Commission Regulation (EU) 835/2011 ([4]), providing for a 3 year transition period before the lower levels of PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products shall apply as from 1 September 2014 onwards.

By applying good smoking practices, also with traditional wood-smoking, the lower maximum levels for PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products are achievable.

([1]) http://www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/
([2]) Report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/sum_08042011_en.pdf
([3]) Liaison Centre for the Meat Processing Industry in the EU.
([4]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 835/2011 of 19 August 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 as regards maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (OJ L 215, 20.8.2011, p. 4).

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-000084/14
upućeno Komisiji (potpredsjednici/Visokoj predstavnici)
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(7. siječnja 2014.)

Predmet: VP/HR – Ciljevi europskog predsjedavanja Kontaktnom skupinom vezanom uz piratsku aktivnost uz obale Somalije

Europska unija je u siječnju od Sjedinjenih Država preuzela predsjedanje Kontaktnom skupinom vezanom uz piratsku aktivnost uz obale Somalije (CGPCS). Želeći predsjedavajućem Skupinom Macieju Popowskom uspjeh u poslu i pozdravljajući snažnu odlučnost da se broj zatočenih pomoraca i brodova svede na nulu, zanima me sljedeće:

— Premda je broj talaca pao s preko 700 na pedesetak, na koje načine planirate postići željeni cilj kako ne bi više bilo ni zadržanih brodova niti pomoraca – talaca?

— Postoji li za ostvarenje tog cilja dovoljno materijalnih i političkih resursa?

— Razmatrate li pružanje pomoći za iskorjenjivanje ili sprječavanje širenja piratstva i u drugim dijelovima svijeta, poput Nigerije, prevlake Malacca, Južnokineskog mora?

Odgovor visoke predstavnice/potpredsjednice Ashton u ime Komisije
(18. veljače 2014.)

Odgovornost je predsjednika Kontaktne skupine za piratstvo uz obalu Somalije (CGPCS) surađivati sa svim dionicima CGPCS-a u regiji i međunarodnoj zajednici. Tijekom svojeg mandata kao predsjednika Kontaktne skupine EU će od svih dionika zatražiti stalnu usredotočenost na sljedeće prioritete: (a) da nijedan brod ni pomorac ne završi u rukama somalijskih pirata (skraćeno „nula/nula”); (b) da se strukture i radni postupci CGPCS-a i njegovih radnih skupina poboljšaju i unaprijede kako bi Kontaktna skupina postala što važnija, učinkovitija i isplativija te kako bi se povećala regionalna uključenost u Kontaktnu skupinu; (3) da se prijašnja iskustva CGPCS-a dokumentiraju na sveobuhvatan način. CGPCS je imao ključnu ulogu u borbi protiv piratskih napada iz Somalije pa je stoga važno da se iskustva i saznanja Kontaktne skupine pravilno dokumentiraju i čuvaju za buduće potrebe, odnosno za moguću primjenu u drugim dijelovima svijeta ili za izazove slične, transregionalne prirode. Akademski konzorcij koji čine Institut EU-a za sigurnosne studije, Sveučilište u Cardiffu, Međunarodni institut za mir i NVO Oceans Beyond Piracy dokumentirat će prijašnja iskustva CGPCS-a te ih predstaviti u obliku publikacija i web-mjesta prije kraja 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000084/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Tonino Picula (S&D)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Goals of the European chairmanship of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia

In January, the European Union took over the chairmanship of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) from the United States. Wishing the Group's chairperson, Maciej Popowski, success in his work and supporting the strong resolve to reduce the number of seized seafarers and ships to zero, I am interested in the following:

— Although the number of hostages has fallen from over 700 to around 50, how do you plan to achieve the desired goal that there should no longer be any ships that are detained or seafarers held hostage?

— Are there sufficient material and political resources to achieve this goal?

— Are you considering offering assistance to eradicate or prevent the spread of piracy in other parts of the world as well, such as Nigeria, the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea?

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

The responsibility of the Chair of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) is to work with all CGPCS stakeholders within the region and the international community. During its tenure as Chair of the Contact Group the EU will ask continuous attention from all stakeholders for the following priorities: (1) zero ships and zero seafarers in the hands of Somali pirates (abbreviated to 'zero/zero'); (2) to refine and optimize the structures and working procedures of the CGPCS and its Working Groups to make the Contact Group as relevant, efficient and cost-effective as possible and to increase the regional involvement in the Contact Group; (3) to document the CGPCS Lessons Learned in a comprehensive manner. The CGPCS has been instrumental in the fight against Somali based piracy, it is therefore important that the lessons and experiences of the Contact Group are properly documented and conserved for future reference, i.e. for possible application in other parts of the world or for challenges of a similar, transregional nature. An academic consortium consisting of the EU Institute for Security Studies, Cardiff University, the International Peace Institute and the NGO Oceans Beyond Piracy will document the CGPCS lessons learned and present these in the form of publications and websites before the end of 2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000085/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(7 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Rumanía y Bulgaria

El Tratado de adhesión de Bulgaria y Rumanía establecía unas restricciones transitorias para la libre circulación de trabajadores, lo que implicaba que ciudadanos rumanos y búlgaros necesitaran un permiso de trabajo para desempeñar sus actividades en algunos Estados miembros.

Según el Tratado, las medidas nacionales aplicadas por un Estado miembro para regular el acceso a sus mercados de trabajo concluirían como máximo tras un periodo de siete años desde la fecha de adhesión. El pasado 1 de enero de 2014 este periodo expiró y, según lo dispuesto en los artículos 1 a 6 del Reglamento (CEE) n° 1612/68, los Estados miembros que hayan aplicado estas medidas deberán revocarlas, por lo que los ciudadanos rumanos y búlgaros se beneficiarán en el territorio de otro Estado miembro de las mismas prioridades que los nacionales de dicho Estado miembro en el acceso a los empleos disponibles.

Sin embargo, algunos medios de comunicación han recogido que el Gobierno del Reino Unido está considerando limitar el acceso a los subsidios, la vivienda o el sistema sanitario. Además, las noticias desvelan que su Ministerio del Interior pretende introducir un tope a la inmigración procedente de la UE.

Antes esta información:

1. ¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión de la información que se detalla?

2. ¿No cree la Comisión que estas declaraciones discriminan por razón de nacionalidad y, por lo tanto, van en contra del Reglamento (CEE) n° 1612/68?

3. ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión tomar medidas al respecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de febrero de 2014)

El 1 de enero de 2014, el Gobierno del Reino Unido restringió el derecho de los ciudadanos de la UE al subsidio de búsqueda de empleo, una prestación para demandantes de empleo ligada al nivel de ingresos. La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a la pregunta P-352/2014 sobre este asunto.

La Comisión tiene conocimiento de la declaración que realizó el 20 de enero de 2014 el Ministro de Trabajo y Pensiones del Reino Unido, en la que anunciaba restricciones a la concesión de la prestación de vivienda a los «nuevos inmigrantes en búsqueda de empleo del EEE». El Gobierno británico aún no ha publicado ninguna propuesta legislativa concreta a este respecto. A falta de otros datos, la Comisión no puede hacer observaciones sobre la compatibilidad de una medida tal con el acervo de la UE.

La Comisión no tiene constancia de que el Reino Unido haya adoptado recientemente ninguna medida para limitar el derecho de los ciudadanos de la UE a acceder a la asistencia sanitaria en este país.

Por lo que se refiere a la introducción de un tope a la inmigración procedente de la Unión Europea en el Reino Unido, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta que dio a la pregunta E-14323/2013 sobre una cuestión similar.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000085/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Romania and Bulgaria

The Treaty on Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the European Union established some transitional restrictions on the free movement of workers, meaning that Romanian and Bulgarian citizens required a work permit in order to work in certain Member States.

According to the Treaty, the national measures applied by a Member State to regulate access to its labour markets would come to an end a maximum of seven years after the date of accession. This period ended on 1 January 2014 and, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 1 to 6 of Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68, any Member States that applied such measures must repeal them, thereby enabling Romanian and Bulgarian citizens within the other Member State to benefit from the same rights and entitlements as citizens of the Member State concerned with regard to access to job vacancies.

However, certain sections of the media are reporting that the UK Government is considering limiting access to benefits, housing and the healthcare system. Furthermore, it is reported that the Home Secretary is planning to introduce a cap on immigration from the European Union.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of this information?

2. Does the Commission not agree that such action would discriminate on the basis of nationality and, therefore, contravene Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68?

3. Has the Commission considered taking action in this regard?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

On 1 January 2014 the UK Government introduced restrictions on the entitlement of EU nationals to the Jobseeker's Allowance, an income-based allowance for jobseekers. The Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer it gave to Question P-352/2014 on this issue.

The Commission is aware of the statement of 20 January 2014 from the UK Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announcing restrictions on payments of UK Housing Benefit for 'new migrant jobseekers from the EEA'. The UK Government has still to publish a concrete legislative proposal in this regard. In the absence of any detail, the Commission cannot comment on the compatibility of such a measure with the EU acquis.

The Commission is not aware of any recent measures adopted by the UK to limit the right of EU nationals to access to healthcare in the UK.

As regards the introduction of a 'cap' on immigration into the UK from the European Union, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the answer it gave to Question E-14323/2013 on a similar matter.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000086/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(7 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Strage di lupi in Italia

Stando a fonti giornalistiche italiane, negli ultimi giorni sono stati uccisi in Maremma otto esemplari di lupo e pare che nella zona, e in altri parti d'Italia, siano state predisposte trappole mentre il lupo, e i suoi ibridi, sono specie protetta per il rischio di estinzione. I progetti per il ripopolamento, grazie anche ai contributi dell'Unione europea, stanno rinvigorendo le popolazioni di lupi, che però sono fortemente minacciate dal bracconaggio e da una scarsa informazione degli allevatori sui metodi di prevenzione e sulle richieste di risarcimento: l'Europa infatti risarcisce gli eventuali danni subiti dagli allevatori.

La Commissione:

1. sa dirci se gli allevatori maremmani hanno denunciato negli ultimi mesi e settimane perdite ai loro armenti, tramite gli enti comunali, provinciali, regionali e le associazioni di categoria, e in tal caso quanti allevatori italiani hanno presentato richiesta di risarcimento per danni ai loro greggi e quanti eventualmente l'hanno ottenuto, e se non l'hanno ottenuto per quale motivo?

2. Come intende muoversi per sveltire le pratiche di rimborso, e qual è la documentazione necessaria per il rimborso?

3. Non ritiene di dover vincolare il rimborso alla presenza di cani da pastore per il pascolo e di recinti elettrificati per lo stazionamento e di elargire un contributo alle spese per la messa in sicurezza attraverso i fondi preposti alla tutela e alla difesa del lupo?

4. Come intende richiamare le associazioni di categoria e le amministrazioni delle località con presenza di lupi ad una corretta informazione degli allevatori per quanto riguarda sia i risarcimenti che la tutela del lupo e la lotta al bracconaggio?

Risposta di Dacian Cioloș a nome della Commissione
(24 febbraio 2014)

Per quanto concerne il primo quesito, nelle ultime settimane o mesi la Commissione non è stata contattata da associazioni di allevatori/enti comunali, provinciali o regionali per denunciare perdite di bestiame.

In merito alle restanti domande, occorre sottolineare che il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale non può risarcire i danni nel caso di perdite di bestiame dovute all'attacco di animali selvatici in quanto, nell'attuale periodo di programmazione, il risarcimento dei danni è previsto solo nei casi di ripristino del potenziale agricolo o forestale danneggiato da calamità naturali. Tuttavia, il Fondo europeo agricolo per lo sviluppo rurale può finanziare investimenti non produttivi legati al conseguimento di obiettivi agroambientali per controllare la presenza di animali selvatici e la difesa di colture e allevamenti nelle zone montane. Ad esempio, il programma di sviluppo rurale della Toscana garantisce un sostegno in tal senso nell'ambito della misura 216 — «Investimenti non produttivi».

Tuttavia, il risarcimento concesso da uno Stato membro in relazione a tali perdite può essere considerato compatibile con le norme relative agli aiuti di Stato. In numerose decisioni in materia di aiuti di Stato la Commissione ha già proceduto a una valutazione di misure di finanziamento a carattere esclusivamente nazionale, volta a risarcire i danni causati dai carnivori direttamente a norma del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea. In alternativa, possono essere concessi aiuti agli allevatori per misure preventive e per il risarcimento dei danni causati da carnivori, nell'ambito della norma *de minimis* (cfr. regolamento 1408/2013 ([1])).

Nel quadro della revisione degli orientamenti comunitari nel settore agricolo e forestale 2007-2013, è presa in considerazione l'integrazione di disposizioni specifiche in materia di aiuti di Stato per i danni causati da animali predatori.

([1]) GU L 352 del 24.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000086/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Slaughter of wolves in Italy

According to reports in Italy, eight wolves have been killed in the Maremma over the past few days, and it appears that traps have also been laid in that region and elsewhere in Italy, even though the wolf (including wolf hybrids) is a protected endangered species. The repopulation projects currently underway, to which the European Union has also contributed, have brought about an increase in wolf numbers, but wolves still face serious threats, not only in the form of poaching, but also as a result of the inadequate information given to livestock farmers about protective methods and requests for compensation: Europe in fact compensates livestock farmers for any losses that they may sustain as a result of wolf attacks.

1. Can the Commission say whether any farmers in the Maremma have, over the last few weeks or months, approached trade associations or municipal, provincial or regional bodies to report livestock losses , and, if so, how many Italian farmers have submitted requests for compensation for such losses and how many of those requests have been approved? If any of those requests have been rejected, can it give the reasons why?

2. What steps does the Commission intend to take to speed up the reimbursement process, and what documentation must be submitted in order to secure reimbursement?

3. Does it not believe that reimbursements should be made contingent on herds being accompanied by sheepdogs when grazing and on the use of electrified fences where livestock is kept in fields, and that, to help farmers with the cost of those security measures, a contribution should be made from the funds set aside for the protection of wolves?

4. What steps will it take to urge trade associations and local authorities in areas where wolves have been sighted to provide adequate information to farmers concerning compensation, the protection of wolves and measures to combat poaching?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

As for the first question, the Commission has not been approached by farmers' associations/municipal, provincial, regional bodies to report livestock losses in the last weeks or months.

As for the remaining questions, it should be underlined that the European Agricultural Rural Development Fund cannot compensate for damages in the case of livestock losses due to the attack of wild animals, as in the current programming period the only form of damages compensations provided for is in the case of restoration of damaged agricultural or forestry potential following natural disaster. The Rural Development Fund, however, can finance non-productive investments linked to the achievement of agri-environmental objectives to control the presence of wild animals and the defense of crops and livestock in mountain areas In fact the Rural Development Programme of Tuscany, for instance, provide for support in this respect, under Measure 216 — 'Non-productive investments'.

However, compensation granted by a Member State in respect of such losses can be found compatible under the state aid rules. In several state aid decisions, the Commission has already assessed pure national financing measures aiming at compensating for damages caused by carnivores directly under the TFEU. As an alternative, aid can be granted to farmers for preventive measures and for compensation of damages done by carnivores, under *de minimis* (see Regulation 1408/2013 ([1])).

In the framework of the revision of the Community Guidelines for agriculture and forestry 2007-2013, consideration is given to the inclusion of specific provisions on state aid for damages caused by predatory animals.

([1]) OJ L 352, 24.12.2013.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000088/14
Komisi
Olga Sehnalová (S&D)
(7. ledna 2014)

Předmět: Pravidla pro podmínečné schválení léku Ataluren

Nový lék Ataluren (PTC124), který se v současnosti nachází ve stadiu výzkumu, je určen pro léčbu pacientů s Duchenneovou svalovou dystrofií (DMD). DMD je nejzávažnější formou svalové dystrofie a podle údajů zprostředkovaných občanským sdružením Parent Project postihuje cca jednoho z 3600 chlapců. DMD má za následek progresivní a nevyhnutelné oslabování svalů, vedoucí ke ztrátě schopnosti chůze a posléze k selhávání dýchacích a srdečních funkcí. Většina pacientů s DMD umírá ve věku kolem dvaceti let. Podle Parent Project neexistují v současné době pro chlapce s DMD v Evropě žádné možnosti léčby. Ataluren je podle informací Parent Project alternativou pro 13 % chlapců a mladých mužů s DMD způsobenou vzácnou genetickou mutací nazývanou bodová nonsense mutace. V klinických studiích, včetně velkých randomizovaných a placebem kontrolovaných studií, byl Ataluren dobře snášen a podle výsledků je patrné, že zpomaluje proces ztráty schopnosti chůze. Evropská komise udělila léku Ataluren status „orphan drug". Komerční sponzor PTC Therapeutics požádal Evropskou lékovou agenturu (EMA) o podmínečné schválení léku. Pokud této látce nebude podmínečné schválení EMA nyní uděleno, potrvá další tři roky, než k ní budou mít chlapci a mladí muži s DMD přístup.

Může Komise sdělit, jaká jsou v současnosti platná pravidla pro udělení statutu podmínečného schválení u nových léčiv v porovnání se statusem orphan drug?

Jak se Komise staví k přínosům léčby pacientů s Duchenneovou svalovou dystrofií v případě léku Ataluren (PTC124)?

Odpověď Tonia Borga jménem Komise
(19. února 2014)

Nařízení (ES) č. 141/2000 o léčivých přípravcích pro vzácná onemocnění ([1]) zavedlo zvláštní pobídky v případě léčivých přípravků určených pro léčbu vzácných onemocnění. Nařízení však neumožňuje udělit výjimku z požadavků na údaje, pokud jde o obsah žádosti o registraci.

Naproti tomu podmínečná registrace umožňuje, aby byl léčivý přípravek uveden na trh před tím, než žadatel předloží úplné údaje týkající se účinnosti a bezpečnosti v případech, kdy přínos plynoucí z okamžité dostupnosti přípravku převáží nad rizikem spojeným s absencí úplných údajů. Podmínky pro udělení podmínečné registrace jsou stanoveny v nařízení Komise (ES) č. 507/2006 o podmínečné registraci pro humánní léčivé přípravky ([2]). Toto nařízení stanoví, že léčivé přípravky, které byly označeny jako přípravky pro léčbu vzácných onemocnění, se mohou ucházet o podmínečnou registraci.

Komisi nesmírně záleží na zdravotních potřebách evropských pacientů, zejména těch, kteří trpí vzácnými onemoněními, jako je například Duchenneova svalová dystrofie. Pokud budou v tomto případě splněny podmínky pro udělení podmínečné registrace, mohl by být léčivý přípravek uveden na trh před tím, než žadatel poskytne úplné údaje týkající se účinnosti a bezpečnosti.

([1]) Nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 141/2000 ze dne 16. prosince 1999 o léčivých přípravcích pro vzácná onemocnění, Úř. věst. L 18, 22.1.2000, s. 1.
([2]) Nařízení Komise (ES) č. 507/2006 ze dne 29. března 2006 o podmínečné registraci pro humánní léčivé přípravky spadající do oblasti působnosti nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 726/2004, Úř. věst. L 92, 30.3.2006, s. 6.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000088/14
to the Commission
Olga Sehnalová (S&D)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Rules for conditional approval of the drug Ataluren

The new drug Ataluren (PTC124), which is currently being trialled, is intended for the treatment of patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD). DMD is the most severe form of muscular dystrophy. According to data communicated by the civic association Parent Project, it affects around one in 3,600 boys. DMD results in progressive and inevitable weakening of the muscles, leading to a loss in the ability to walk and eventually to the failure of respiratory and cardiac functions. Most patients with DMD die at around 20 years old. According to Parent Project, there are no treatment options currently in existence for boys with DMD in Europe. According to information from Parent Project, Ataluren presents an alternative for 13% of boys and young men with DMD caused by a rare genetic mutation known as a point nonsense mutation. In clinical trials, including large randomised and placebo-controlled studies, Ataluren was well tolerated and results show that it clearly slows down the process of losing the ability to walk. The European Commission has granted the drug Ataluren the status of 'orphan drug'. The commercial sponsor PTC Therapeutics has applied to the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for a conditional approval of the drug. Unless this substance is now granted conditional approval by the EMA, it will take another three years for boys and young men with DMD to get access to it.

Can the Commission advise what rules currently apply for granting the status of conditional approval for new medicines as compared with the status of orphan drug?

What is the Commission's attitude toward the benefits of treating patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy with the drug Ataluren (PTC124)?

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

Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 on orphan medicinal products ([1]) created specific rewards for medicinal products intended to treat rare diseases. However, the regulation does not permit to waive data requirements in terms of the content of the marketing authorisation application.

In contrast, a conditional marketing authorisation permits that a medicinal product can be marketed before the applicant generates comprehensive data on efficacy and safety in cases where the benefit of making the product immediately available outweighs the risks inherent in the absence of comprehensive data. The conditions governing conditional marketing authorisations are laid down in Commission Regulation (EC) No 507/2006 on the conditional marketing authorisation for medicinal products for human use. ([2]) This regulation provides that medicinal products that have been granted orphan designation can be candidates for a conditional marketing authorisation.

The Commission is extremely sensitive to the health needs of European patients, in particular those that suffer from rare diseases such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy. Should the conditions for the granting of a conditional marketing authorisation be met in this case, the medicinal product could therefore be marketed before the applicant generates comprehensive data on efficacy and safety.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1999on orphan medicinal products, L18, 22.01.2000, p. 1.
([2]) Commission Regulation (EC) No 507/2006 of 29 March 2006 on the conditional marketing authorisation for medicinal products for human use falling within the scope of Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ L92, 30.3.2006, p. 6.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000089/14
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(7 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zgodność przepisów w zakresie ubezpieczenia społecznego w Danii z prawem UE

Chciałbym zwrócić się do Komisji w sprawie pomocy przy interpretacji przepisów w zakresie ubezpieczenia społecznego w Danii. Okazuje się, że mogą one być podstawą dyskryminacji w zakresie przyznawania rent i emerytur. W związku z tym zwracam się do Komisji z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Kto ma prawo do skorzystania z uprawnień zawartych w art. 50 Rozporządzenia 883/2004 i art. 51 ust. 2 Rozporządzenia 1408/71 odpowiadających decyzji P-1 i duńskiemu prawu o rentach i emeryturach? (decyzja P-1 z dnia 12 czerwca 2009 r. w sprawie wykładni art. 50 ust. 4, art. 58 i art. 87 ust. 5 rozporządzenia Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (WE) nr 883/2004 w odniesieniu do przyznawania świadczeń z tytułu inwalidztwa, starości oraz rent rodzinnych)

2. Czy odpowiedź KE z dnia 20.04.2012 skierowana do Parlamentu Europejskiego (PE462.649v02-00) dotyczy tylko nieaktywnych zawodowo obywateli UE zamieszkałych w Danii, czy również zawodowo aktywnych i z przyznanymi rentami inwalidzkimi na podstawie rozporządzeń 1401/71 i 883/2004 oraz osób które w momencie otrzymania renty inwalidzkiej w Danii otrzymywały świadczenia w zakresie pracy elastycznej i dla bezrobotnych z powodu choroby?

3. Czy możliwe byłoby porównawcze naliczanie emerytur przez organy unijne, tak by wykazać ewentualne naruszenia prawa UE przez organy administracji duńskiej?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(28 lutego 2014 r.)

Jeżeli emeryt lub rencista otrzymuje emeryturę od jednego państwa członkowskiego oraz, na późniejszym etapie, kolejne świadczenie od innego państwa członkowskiego, wyliczenie stawki pierwszego świadczenia na nowo może okazać się konieczne. Zgodnie z pkt 1 decyzji nr P1 Komisji Administracyjnej z dnia 12 czerwca 2009 r. ([1]) instytucja wypłacająca świadczenie dokonuje automatycznie jego ponownego wyliczenia po uzyskaniu informacji, że beneficjent spełnia warunki przyznania świadczenia na podstawie ustawodawstwa innego państwa członkowskiego.

Duńskie emerytury (folkepension), zgodnie z ustawą o emeryturach i rentach socjalnych (Lov om social pension), są wypłacane jedynie na podstawie stałego pobytu w Danii. Oznacza to, że żadna działalność gospodarcza prowadzona w tym czasie nie ma wpływu na ich wysokość. Odpowiedź Komisji z dnia 20.4.2012 r. w sprawie wyliczania tych emerytur zgodnie z prawem UE jest zatem ważna niezależnie od tego, czy dana osoba prowadziła działalność gospodarczą, czy też nie.

Art. 52 rozporządzenia (WE) nr 883/2004 nakłada obowiązek przeprowadzenia porównawczego wyliczenia świadczeń zgodnie z przepisami krajowymi i unijnymi. Jest to zadanie właściwych instytucji każdego z państw członkowskich, a nie Komisji.

([1]) Dz.U. C 106/21 z 24.4.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000089/14
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(7 January 2014)

Subject: Compliance of social insurance legislation in Denmark with EC law

I request the Commission's assistance in interpreting social security legislation in Denmark. It appears that it may constitute grounds for discrimination in the awarding of invalidity benefits and old-age pensions. In light of the above, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Who is entitled to exercise the rights set out in Article 50 of Regulation 883/2004 and Article 51(2) of Regulation 1408/71 corresponding to Decision P-1 and the Danish law on invalidity benefits and old-age pensions? (Decision P-1 of 12 June 2009 on the interpretation of Articles 50(4), 58 and 87(5) of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council for the award of invalidity, old-age and survivors' benefits)?

2. Does the Commission's answer of 20.4.2012 (PE462.649v02-00) only apply to economically inactive EU citizens residing in Denmark or does it also apply to economically active persons and those in receipt of invalidity benefits under Regulations 1401/71 and 883/2004, and persons who, while receiving invalidity benefits in Denmark, were receiving benefits based on flexible employment arrangements and for unemployment due to illness?

3. Would it be possible for EU bodies to make a comparative calculation of pensions in order to identify possible breaches of EC law by the Danish authorities?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

If a pensioner receives a pension from one Member State and, at a later stage, another pension from another Member State, a new calculation of the first pension may become necessary. In accordance with Point 1 of Decision No P1 of the Administrative Commission of 12 June 2009 ([1]), this new calculation shall be made automatically by the institution which pays the benefit when it is informed that the beneficiary satisfies the conditions for the award of a benefit under the legislation of another Member State.

Danish pensions (folkepension) in accordance with the Law on social pensions (Lov om social pension) are based on residence in Denmark only. This means that any economic activity exercised during this time has no bearing on their amount. The Commission's answer of 20.4.2012 on the calculation of those pensions under EC law therefore applies irrespective of whether the person concerned was economically active or not.

Article 52 of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 requires a comparative calculation of pensions in accordance with national legislation and in accordance with EU rules. This is made by the competent institutions of each Member State, not by the Commission.

([1]) OJ C 106/21 of 24.4.2010.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000090/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Directiva sobre el retorno: situación del CIE de Barcelona

El pasado martes 31 de enero, encontraron a un hombre de 42 años ahorcado en la que era su habitación en el Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros (CIE) de la Zona Franca de Barcelona. En las habitaciones del CIE de Barcelona no hay cámaras de vigilancia que hayan podido grabar lo ocurrido, únicamente registran lo que pasa en los pasillos. El síndic de greuges (defensor del pueblo de Cataluña), Rafael Ribó, abrió este martes una investigación por lo sucedido y ha pedido al ministro del Interior información sobre la situación física y psíquica del interno muerto. También se ha dirigido a la defensora del pueblo para pedir una intervención conjunta e inmediata en las dependencias de la Zona Franca. Esta muerte «vuelve a poner sobre la mesa la necesidad de reconsiderar la existencia de este tipo de centros», afirmó Ribó ([1]).

Visto este hecho, la plataforma «Tanquem els CIE» ha denunciado supuestas agresiones a inmigrantes que se encuentran recluidos en el CIE. En señal de protesta, entre cuarenta y cincuenta internos iniciaron hace cinco días una huelga de hambre. La versión de la Prefectura de la Policía de la Generalitat sobre la protesta es que «en ningún caso se está produciendo una huelga de hambre». Desde SOS Racisme se ha criticado la opacidad del CIE y se ha instado a la administración a investigar las agresiones denunciadas.

Otros pronunciamientos de organismos internacionales en el marco de las Naciones Unidas han condenado las políticas españolas y europeas de internamiento preventivo de inmigrantes en situación legal irregular. La privación de libertad en los CIE es muchas veces declarada arbitraria, ya que generalmente el «inmigrante no dispone de recurso judicial ni administrativo para impugnar su detención». Muchas detenciones están, a su vez, motivadas por discriminación basada en el origen nacional, étnico y social, desconociéndose la igualdad esencial de todas las personas en el reconocimiento y goce de sus derechos humanos.

Visto el nuevo reglamento de los CIE adoptado por España, ¿considera la Comisión que es insuficiente para garantizar los derechos humanos de las personas retenidas? ¿Qué cambios sugerirá?

¿Exigirá la Comisión a España que se pronuncie y reconozca estas violaciones, acabe con la fragante violación de derechos humanos y ofrezca reparación a las víctimas?

¿Cómo influirán estos hecho en la revisión y evaluación de la aplicación de la Directiva 2008/115/CE (Directiva sobre el retorno) en España? ¿Visitará la Comisión el CIE de la Zona Franca? ¿Lo hará con el acompañamiento de las ONG y los movimientos que luchan a favor de los derechos fundamentales de las personas retenidas?

Respuesta de la Sra. Malmström en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2014)

Tal como se indicó ya en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta escrita E-004349/2013 ([2]), la evaluación de deficiencias e incidentes concretos que se produzcan en centros de internamiento de cada país es, ante todo, competencia de las autoridades y los órganos jurisdiccionales nacionales.

En el proceso de comprobación de la correcta transposición jurídica y práctica de las disposiciones de la Directiva 2008/115/CE sobre el retorno ([3]), la Comisión está tratando actualmente de aclarar y resolver, en el marco de contactos bilaterales directos con las autoridades españolas, las deficiencias detectadas. En caso necesario, la Comisión no dudará en ejercer las facultades que le confiere el Tratado, sin descartar el recurso a los procedimientos de infracción, en su caso.

La Comisión está decidida a hacer un gran hincapié en el cumplimiento del acervo de la UE en materia de retorno de la UE a la hora de aplicar el sistema de inspecciones establecido en virtud de lo dispuesto en el nuevo mecanismo de evaluación de Schengen, que será operativo en 2014. En ese contexto, la Comisión examinará y evaluará la situación en los centros nacionales de internamiento previo a la expulsión. Este mecanismo no contempla la participación de ONG. Sin embargo, las ONG ya tienen derecho a visitar directamente los centros de internamiento, de conformidad con el artículo 16, apartado 4, de la Directiva sobre el retorno.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2013/12/03/catalunya/1386075033_520219.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004349&language=ES
([3]) Directiva 2008/115/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo, de 16 de diciembre de 2008, relativa a normas y procedimientos comunes en los Estados miembros para el retorno de los nacionales de terceros países en situación irregular. DO L 348 de 24.12.2008, p. 98.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000090/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Directive on returning third-country nationals: Situation at the immigrant detention centre in Barcelona

On Tuesday, 31 January 2013, a 42-year-old man was found hanged in his room at the immigrant detention centre (CIE) in Zona Franca, Barcelona. No recording of the incident is available, since security cameras are only in place in the corridors of the CIE, not in the bedrooms. Catalonia's Regional Ombudsman ('Síndic de Greuges'), Rafael Ribó, has opened an investigation into the case and has requested information on the physical and psychological wellbeing of the deceased from the Minister of Home Affairs. He has also written to the Spanish Ombudsman to request an immediate joint intervention in the detention centres of Zona Franca. This death 'highlights once again the need to reconsider the existence of these kinds of facilities', stated Ribó ([1]).

In light of this, the platform 'Let's close the CIEs' ('Tanquem els CIE') has reported attacks on immigrants detained in the centre. Between forty and fifty detainees have gone on hunger strike in protest. The Prefecture of Police of the Generalitat claims that 'no hunger strike is taking place'. The organisation SOS Racisme has criticised the CIE's lack of transparency and has urged the authorities to investigate these reported attacks.

International organisations in the framework of the United Nations have criticised Spanish and European policies on the preventive detention of immigrants with irregular legal status. The deprivation of liberty in the CIEs is often imposed arbitrarily, since normally the 'immigrant has no access to the legal or administrative means of appealing their detention'. Moreover, many detention measures are motivated by national, ethnic or social discrimination, with no regard to the fact that all people are equal in their fundamental human rights.

Does the Commission agree that the new regulation on CIEs adopted in Spain does not sufficiently guarantee the human rights of detainees? What changes can the Commission suggest?

Will the Commission demand that Spain recognise these violations, end the blatant breach of human rights and offer compensation to victims?

How will these incidents affect the revision and evaluation of the application of Directive 2008/115/EC (Directive on returning third-country nationals) in Spain? Will the Commission send a team to visit the CIE in Zona Franca? If so, will the team be accompanied by the NGOs and other organisations which are fighting for the fundamental rights of the detainees?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

As already highlighted in the Commission's answer to Written Questions E 004349/2013 ([2]), the assessment of individual incidents and shortcomings which take place in national detention centres is a matter primarily for the national authorities and courts concerned.

In the process of checking the correct legal and practical transposition of the provisions of the Return Directive 2008/115/EC ([3]), the Commission, in direct bilateral contacts with Spanish authorities, is currently seeking to clarify and resolve the shortcomings identified. If necessary the Commission will not hesitate to use its powers under the Treaty, including by recourse to infringement procedures when required.

The Commission is determined to put a strong emphasis on compliance with the EU return *acquis* in the system of inspections established under the new Schengen Evaluation Mechanism, which will become operational in 2014. In this context the Commission will examine and assess the situation in national pre-removal detention centres. This mechanism does not provide for NGO involvement. NGOs already have, however, a direct right to visit detention facilities under Article 16(4) of the Return Directive.

([1]) http://ccaa.elpais.com/ccaa/2013/12/03/catalunya/1386075033_520219.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-004349&language=EN
([3]) Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals; OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 98-107.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000091/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Lara Comi (PPE)
(8 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Adozioni internazionali in Congo

Da oltre due mesi, decine di famiglie europee (italiane, belghe e francesi, secondo quanto si apprende dagli organi di stampa) sono bloccate nella Repubblica Democratica del Congo, dove si erano recate per un'adozione internazionale. Nonostante la documentazione fosse tutta in regola, tale Stato ha deciso di sospendere i visti di uscita per i bambini adottati. Tale decisione ha comportato dei costi per le famiglie presenti sia per posticipare i voli di ritorno sia per finanziare la propria permanenza sia per ritardare il ritorno al lavoro, oltre che per le questioni sanitarie legate alle varie profilassi obbligatorie per i cittadini europei in Africa. Negli ultimi giorni è emerso che alcuni di questi cittadini sono tornati a casa senza i bambini a cui avevano diritto e con cui si erano già legati affettivamente.

In merito a questa vicenda, può l'Alto Rappresentante precisare:

1. se è a conoscenza di questa situazione;

2. se ritiene che, essendo coinvolte famiglie di diversi Stati membri, il Servizio europeo di azione esterna debba essere parte attiva ai negoziati volti a sbloccare la situazione;

3. quali aiuti, in termini di garanzie, o economici o di supporto diretto, può fornire l'UE alle famiglie che stanno vivendo questa drammatica situazione?

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

L'AR/VP è perfettamente a conoscenza del caso. La delegazione dell'UE a Kinshasa segue da vicino la situazione delle famiglie cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare. Attualmente non vi è alcuna normativa dell'Unione europea sulle adozioni, poiché la materia è disciplinata dalle legislazioni nazionali e dalle convenzioni internazionali. Ciò significa che spetta alle autorità nazionali di ciascuno Stato membro stabilire regole per l'adozione, le misure preparatorie o i provvedimenti di annullamento.

In qualità di membro della Conferenza dell'Aia di diritto internazionale privato dal 2007, l'Unione europea è parte attiva nello sviluppo e promozione di strumenti giuridici multilaterali per la protezione dei diritti dei minori. In particolare, la Commissione controlla in generale gli sviluppi relativi alla convenzione dell'Aia del 1993 sulla protezione dei minori e la cooperazione in materia di adozione internazionale, cui hanno aderito tutti gli Stati dell'Unione europea. L'Unione europea in quanto tale non ha diritto di firmare e ratificare la convenzione.

A tutt'oggi, gli Stati membri interessati non hanno chiesto all'UE di svolgere alcun ruolo di mediazione. Per le famiglie europee che si trovano in questa situazione non sono previste compensazioni finanziarie. La Commissione continuerà a seguire da vicino la situazione in collegamento con le ambasciate dell'UE a Kinshasa.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000091/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Lara Comi (PPE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — International adoptions in Congo

According to press reports, dozens of European (Italian, Belgian and French) families that travelled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for international adoption purposes have been stranded there for over two months. Although all the relevant documentation is in order, the DRC Government has decided to withhold exit visas for the adopted children. As a result, the families are now facing additional costs, being forced postpone their return flights, meet their living costs, delay their return to work and comply with the compulsory health and vaccination requirements applicable to Europeans in Africa. It has been reported that a number of those concerned have now returned home without the children who should have been entitled to accompany them and with whom they have already formed emotional ties.

In view of this:

1. Is the High Representative aware of this situation?

2. Does she it considers that the European External Action Service should be actively involving itself in negotiations seeking to break the deadlock, given that families from a number of Member States are involved?

3. What guarantees, financial assistance or direct support can the EU provide for the families involved in this extremely difficult situation?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of this case. The EU Delegation in Kinshasa closely follows the situation of families the Honourable MEP is referring to. There is currently no European Union legislation on adoption. This matter is regulated by national laws and international conventions. This means that it is up to the national authorities in each EU Member State to establish rules regarding adoption, measures preparatory to adoption or its annulment.

As a member of the Hague Conference on private international law since 2007, the European Union is actively involved in developing and promoting multilateral legal instruments for the protection of children's rights. In particular, the Commission monitors in general the developments in relation to the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption, to which all the Member States of the European Union are party. The EU as such is not entitled to sign and ratify the Convention.

For the time being, the EU has not been requested by the concerned Member States to play any mediating role. No financial compensation is foreseen for the European families who are affected by the situation. The Commission will continue to follow the situation closely in liaison with EU Embassies in Kinshasa.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000092/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Βρετανική οικονομία και ευρωζώνη

Σύμφωνα με τις φθινοπωρινές προβλέψεις ([1]) της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής για την περίοδο 2013-2015, η οικονομία της Μ. Βρετανίας θα αναπτυχθεί κατά 1,3% το τρέχον έτος και κατά 2,2% το επόμενο έτος καθιστώντας την, την πλέον αναπτυσσόμενη οικονομία μεταξύ των ισχυρότερων οικονομιών στην ΕΕ με οδηγό ανάπτυξης την εσωτερική ζήτηση. Την ίδια στιγμή, μελέτη ([2]) του Κέντρου Οικονομικών και Επιχειρηματικών Ερευνών εκτιμά πως η βρετανική οικονομία θα έχει ξεπεράσει και τη γερμανική οικονομία έως το 2030. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η τόνωση της βρετανικής οικονομίας ([3]) στηρίζεται στη διάθεση 5 δις λίρες στερλίνες για επενδύσεις σε υποδομές έως το 2015, τη διατήρηση 4,6 δις λίρες στερλίνες ετησίως για τη χρηματοδότηση της επιστήμης και της έρευνας, την ενίσχυση της πρόσβασης στην χρηματοδότηση των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων (ΜΜΕ), την ενίσχυση των εξαγωγικών σχημάτων και των επενδυτών, τη μείωση της εταιρικής φορολόγησης, την εκπαίδευση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, την προστασία των δαπανών για υγεία και εκπαίδευση, την υποστήριξη της αγοράς κατοικίας κ.α.

Για το λόγο αυτό ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πως αντιμετωπίζει τις προβλέψεις αυτές για την εξέλιξη της βρετανικής οικονομίας;

2. Πώς αντιμετωπίζει το γεγονός ότι η βρετανική οικονομία παρά το στάδιο δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής που διάγει, στηρίζει την ανάπτυξή της σε πολιτικές χαμηλής εταιρικής φορολόγησης, στην προστασία των δημόσιων επενδύσεων και στη διατήρηση της εσωτερικής ζήτησης, όταν στα κράτη της ευρωζώνης εφαρμόζονται αντίθετες πολιτικές δίχως να φέρνουν τον επιτυχή συνδυασμό δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής και ανάπτυξης;

3. Εξάγει χρήσιμα συμπεράσματα για την ευρωζώνη από τις υιοθετούμενες πολιτικές ανάκαμψης της βρετανικής οικονομίας;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(21 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

1. Σύμφωνα με τις φθινοπωρινές προβλέψεις της Επιτροπής για το 2013, προβλέπεται επιτάχυνση της ανάπτυξης του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου από 1,3% το 2013 σε πάνω από 2% το 2014/2015. Η εγχώρια ζήτηση συμβάλλει περίπου κατά 4/5 στην αύξηση του ΑΕΠ κατά τη συγκεκριμένη χρονική περίοδο. Δεδομένου ότι οι προβλέψεις καλύπτουν την περίοδο μέχρι το 2015, η Επιτροπή δεν μπορεί να διατυπώσει σχόλια όσον αφορά προβλέψεις έως το 2030. Στα τέλη Φεβρουαρίου θα δημοσιευθεί επικαιροποιημένη πρόβλεψη.

2. Η Επιτροπή δεν θεωρεί ότι η ζώνη του ευρώ εφάρμοσε «αντίθετες πολιτικές» από εκείνες του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου ως απάντηση στην κρίση: η μείωση του (κυκλικά προσαρμοσμένου) δημόσιου ελλείμματος μεταξύ του 2009 και του 2012 στο Ηνωμένο Βασίλειο υπήρξε όντως μεγαλύτερη από τη μείωση του ελλείμματος στο σύνολο της ζώνης του ευρώ, ενώ οι δημόσιες επενδύσεις υπήρξαν σε γενικές γραμμές παρόμοιες. Γενικότερα, στην ετήσια επισκόπηση της ανάπτυξης 2014, η Επιτροπή υποστήριξε ότι είναι ζωτικής σημασίας η επιδίωξη φιλικής προς την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικής δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης. Όσον αφορά τις χώρες με σχετικά υψηλούς φορολογικούς συντελεστές, πρέπει να προτιμώνται οι μειώσεις στα επίπεδα των δαπανών ή η διεύρυνση της φορολογικής βάσης. Όσον αφορά τις χώρες με μεγαλύτερα δημοσιονομικά περιθώρια, η Επιτροπή συνιστά τη λήψη μέτρων για την τόνωση των ιδιωτικών επενδύσεων και της κατανάλωσης, καθώς και των δημόσιων επενδύσεων που ενισχύουν την ανάπτυξη, με παράλληλη τήρηση του Συμφώνου Σταθερότητας και Ανάπτυξης.

3. Στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού Εξαμήνου, η Επιτροπή εκδίδει σε ετήσια βάση ειδικές ανά χώρα συστάσεις για την αποκατάσταση της ανάπτυξης και την τόνωση της δημιουργίας θέσεων απασχόλησης, βασιζόμενες στη διεξοδική αξιολόγηση κάθε προγράμματος σταθεροποίησης ή σύγκλισης των κρατών μελών, καθώς και κάθε εθνικού προγράμματος μεταρρυθμίσεων. Οι ειδικές ανά χώρα συστάσεις του 2013 για τη ζώνη του ευρώ (οι οποίες εγκρίθηκαν από το Συμβούλιο κατόπιν προτάσεως της Επιτροπής) περιλαμβάνουν μεταξύ άλλων: i) επιτάχυνση του ρυθμού των διαρθρωτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων· ii) αποκατάσταση της δανειακής ροής στην οικονομία· και επιδίωξη φιλικής προς την ανάπτυξη στρατηγικής δημοσιονομικής εξυγίανσης.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_autumn_forecast_en.htm
([2]) http://www.cebr.com/reports/world-economic-league-table-report/
([3]) https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/achieving-strong-and-sustainable-economic-growth

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000092/14
to the Commission
Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: The British economy and the Eurozone

According to the Commission's autumn forecasts ([1]) for 2013-2015, the British economy, driven by domestic demand, is expected to grow by 1.3% this year and 2.2% the following year, thereby outperforming the strongest EU economies. Moreover, a study ([2]) by the Centre for Economics and Business Research estimates that the British economy will outgrow the German economy by 2030. In this context, the British economy ([3]) is being further stimulated by earmarking GBP 5 billion for investments in infrastructure up to 2015 and GBP 4.6 billion annually for science and research. In addition, measures are being taken to ensure improved access for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), bolster export schemes and encourage investors, reduce corporate taxation, provide training schemes, maintain healthcare and education expenditure, support the housing market, etc.

In view of this:

1. How does the Commission view these economic growth forecasts for Britain?

2. How does it view the fact that the British economy, despite being in a stage of fiscal adjustment, is achieving growth based on low corporate taxation policies, the protection of public investments and measures to maintain domestic demand, at a time when the Eurozone countries are applying opposite policies without achieving this successful combination of fiscal adjustment and growth?

3. Can it draw any useful conclusions regarding the Eurozone from the economic recovery policies adopted by Britain?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

1. According to the Commission Autumn 2013 forecast, UK growth is set to accelerate from 1.3% in 2013 to over 2% in 2014/2015. Domestic demand contributes about four fifth to the GDP increase over this time period. As the forecast horizon ends in 2015, the Commission cannot comment on projections until 2030. An updated forecast will be published end February.

2. The Commission does not hold the view that the euro area has applied 'opposite policies' than those of the UK as a response to the crisis: the reduction in the government deficit (cyclically adjusted) between 2009 and 2012 has actually been larger for the UK than for the euro area as a whole, whereas public investment has been roughly similar. More generally, in its 2014 Annual Growth Survey, the Commission has argued that it is crucial to pursue a growth-friendly fiscal consolidation strategy. For countries with relatively high tax rates, reductions in the levels of expenditure or a broadening of the tax base should be favoured. For countries with greater fiscal space, the Commission recommends measures to stimulate private investment and consumption, and growth-enhancing public investment, while respecting the Stability and Growth Pact.

3. In the context of the European Semester, the Commission issues yearly country-specific recommendations (CSR) to restore growth and boost job creation, based on a thorough assessment of every MS Stability or Convergence Programmes and National Reform Programmes. The 2013 CSR for the euro area (adopted by the Council on proposal of the Commission) include, among others: (i) advancing the pace of structural reforms; (ii) restoring lending to the economy; and pursuing a growth-friendly fiscal consolidation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/eu/forecasts/2013_autumn_forecast_en.htm
([2]) http://www.cebr.com/reports/world-economic-league-table-report/
([3]) https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/achieving-strong-and-sustainable-economic-growth

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000093/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Nuevo aumento del precio de la electricidad en el Estado español

En referencia a la pregunta E-002372/2013 y los aumentos de precio que ahí se explican, el precio de la factura de la electricidad en el Estado español sube un 2,3 % en enero de 2014 ([1]). Ese encarecimiento será puntual, ya que para fijar el precio de la energía desde el segundo trimestre en adelante, el Gobierno formulará un nuevo y definitivo mecanismo de subastas eléctricas, según ha explicado el Presidente, Mariano Rajoy.

Es otra carga a la que tendrán que hacer frente las familias de un Estado en crisis con una cifra de 4 808 908 desempleados a fecha de diciembre de 2013 ([2]). Las empresas españolas se verán aún más afectadas por ese aumento y por lo tanto serán menos competitivas. Y lo más importante, la preocupación por el posible aumento de la «pobreza energética» justo al empezar el invierno ([3]).

¿Qué medidas cree la Comisión que debe adoptar el Estado español para luchar contra la pobreza energética?

¿Está satisfecha la Comisión con las recientes medidas del Gobierno español para reducir el déficit de tarifa? ¿Le preocupa que el contenido de estas medidas suponga un aumento de la carga financiera para los consumidores ([4])?

En referencia a la pregunta E-007474/2013, el Sr. Oettinger respondió en nombre de la Comisión: *«Los servicios de la Comisión están finalizando actualmente la evaluación de la transposición al ordenamiento jurídico español de las Directivas del gas y la electricidad del tercer paquete legislativo para un mercado interior del gas y de la electricidad de la UE»*. ¿Ya ha terminado la Comisión estas evaluaciones? ¿Ha cumplido el Estado español con las recomendaciones de la Comisión en materia energética?

Respuesta del Sr. Oettinger en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2014)

En las recomendaciones específicas por países que dirigió en 2013 a España ([5]), la Comisión destacó el déficit tarifario como uno de los principales problemas del sector energético y recomendó al Estado miembro que sometiera a una revisión global los costes del sistema eléctrico y que redoblara sus esfuerzos para completar las interconexiones de la electricidad y el gas con los países vecinos. Corregir el problema de los costes del sistema tendrá efectos positivos en los precios de la energía que se cobran a los consumidores. También contribuirá a contener esos precios fomentar la competencia a nivel minorista, lo que incluye, entre otras cosas, garantizar que los precios de la energía reflejen plenamente los costes de esta.

Debe recordarse, al mismo tiempo, que los Estados miembros están obligados a proteger a los consumidores vulnerables (artículo 3 de las Directivas de la Electricidad y del Gas) y, para ayudarles a emprender medidas en este tema y a definir el grupo de consumidores vulnerables al que deban dirigir esas medidas, la Comisión publicó en diciembre de 2013 un documento de orientación ([6]) elaborado por el Grupo de trabajo competente en la materia.

El Gobierno español se ha esforzado por combatir el déficit tarifario aprobando la Ley del Sector Eléctrico (Ley 24/2013, de 26 de diciembre). Esta nueva legislación contempla una serie de medidas para garantizar la estabilidad del sistema, principalmente mediante una reducción de los costes regulados (por ejemplo, nueva retribución para las energías renovables y para las redes de transporte y distribución). La Comisión se mantiene en estrecho contacto con las autoridades españolas a fin de evaluar el impacto de las nuevas normas, actuales y futuras (incluidas las que se adopten para la aplicación del tercer paquete).

([1]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20131227/consumidores-pagaran-23-mas-electricidad-partir-del-1-enero/834221.shtml
([2]) http://www.eleconomista.es/interstitial/volver/Nuezoct13/indicadores-espana/noticias/5363274/12/13/Espana-el-paro-baja-en-2475-personas-en-noviembre.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20131117/54393491391/pobreza-energetica-problema-social-creciente.html
([4]) http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2013/12/17/empresas/1387274245_102845.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_es.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000093/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: New increase in the price of electricity in Spain

With reference to Question E-002372/2013 and the price increases explained therein, the price of electricity bills in Spain is going up by 2.3% in January 2014 ([1]). This price rise will be a one-off because, in order to set the price of energy from the second quarter onwards, the Government will establish a new and definitive mechanism for electricity tenders, as explained by the Prime Minister, Mariano Rajoy.

This is another burden on families in a State that is in crisis, with 4,808,908 people unemployed in December 2013 ([2]). Spanish businesses will be affected even further by this increase and, therefore, will be less competitive. And the most important thing is the concern over the potential increase in 'energy poverty', just as winter sets in ([3]).

What measures does the Commission feel that Spain should adopt in order to combat energy poverty?

Is the Commission satisfied with the recent action taken by the Spanish Government to reduce the tariff deficit? Is the Commission concerned over the fact that the content of this action implies an increased financial burden on consumers ([4])?

Replying on behalf of the Commission to Question E-007474/2013, Mr Oettinger stated that 'The Commission services are currently finalising the assessment of the transposition of the Gas and Electricity Directives of the third legislative package for an internal EU gas and electricity market into Spanish legislation'. Has the Commission now completed these assessments? Has Spain followed the Commission's recommendations relating to energy?

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

In the 2013 Country Specific Recommendations for Spain ([5]), the Commission identified the tariff deficit as one of the biggest problems of the energy sector and recommended Spain to undertake a comprehensive review the costs of the electricity system and to intensify efforts to complete the electricity and gas interconnections with neighbouring countries. Addressing the system costs should have a positive impact on energy prices for consumers. Fostering competition at the retail level, including by ensuring that energy prices fully reflect energy costs, should also help contain energy prices.

At the same time, Member States are required to protect vulnerable consumers (Article 3 of the Electricity and Gas Directives). To assist Member States to define the target group of vulnerable consumers and to take action in this area the Commission has published guidance ([6]) developed by the Vulnerable Consumer Working Group in December 2013.

The Spanish Government has been making efforts to tackle the tariff deficit with the approval of Electricity Law (Act 24/2013) adopted on 23 December 2013. The new legislation includes measures to ensure the stability of the system mainly through the reduction of regulated costs (e.g. new retribution for renewable energy and for the transmission and distribution networks). The Commission is in close contact with the Spanish authorities to assess the impact of new and upcoming rules, including as regards the implementation of the 3rd package.

([1]) http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20131227/coonsumidores-pagaran-23-mas-electricidad-partir-del-1-enero/834221.shtml
([2]) http://www.eleconomista.es/interstitial/volver/Nuezoct13/indicadores-espana/noticias/5363274/12/13/Espana-el-paro-baja-en-2475-personas-en-noviembre.html
([3]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20131117/54393491391/pobreza-energetica-problema-social-creciente-html
([4]) http://cincodias.com/cincodias/2013/12/17/empresas/1387274245_102845.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nd/swd2013_spain_en.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/energy/gas_electricity/doc/forum_citizen_energy/20140106_vulnerable_consumer_report.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000094/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Directiva marco del agua

En referencia a la pregunta E-003322/2013, el Sr. Potočnik respondió, en nombre de la Comisión: «De acuerdo con el objetivo 2 de la Estrategia de la UE sobre la biodiversidad hasta 2020 está previsto que los Estados miembros realicen la cartografía y una evaluación de los ecosistemas y de sus servicios antes de 2014».

¿Podría indicar la Comisión si el Estado español ha realizado esos estudios antes de 2014?

Respuesta del Sr. Potočnik en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2014)

España participa activamente en la cartografía y evaluación del estado de los ecosistemas y sus servicios (MAES, por sus siglas en inglés). Ha sido uno de los países a la cabeza en la colaboración con la Comisión en este aspecto fundamental de la Estrategia de la UE sobre la biodiversidad hasta 2020 y ya ha llevado a cabo una parte importante del trabajo sobre MAES en el marco de su «Evaluación de los Ecosistemas del Milenio de España» (EME).

España también ha accedido a participar en un acto de divulgación de alto nivel en la materia organizado por la Comisión, que tendrá lugar el Día Internacional de la Diversidad Biológica, el próximo 22 de mayo. En este acto, se presentarán los primeros resultados preliminares en cuanto a MAES. Los resultados definitivos tanto a nivel de la UE como a nivel de los Estados miembros se publicarán en el sistema de información sobre la biodiversidad para Europa (BISE) a finales de 2014.

En el marco de su plan nacional de adaptación al cambio climático, España también está realizando una cartografía de la vulnerabilidad de la biodiversidad española al cambio climático ([1]).

([1]) http://www.adaptecca.es/contenido/biodiversidad

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000094/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Water Framework Directive

Replying on behalf of the Commission to Question E-003322/2013, Mr Potočnik stated that 'The mapping and assessment of the ecosystems and their services is expected to be performed by Member States by 2014 in accordance with Target 2 of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy'.

Could the Commission state whether or not Spain has carried out these studies by 2014?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

Spain is actively involved in the mapping and assessment of the state of ecosystems and their services (MAES). It has been one of the frontrunner countries collaborating with the Commission in this essential part of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and has already carried out a substantial part of the MAES work in its *Evaluación de los Ecosistemas del Milenio de España* (EME).

Spain has also agreed to participate in the high level outreach event on MAES organised by the Commission on the International Day for Biological Diversity of 22 May 2014. The first preliminary results of MAES will be presented at this event. The final results of MAES at EU and Member State's level will be published on the Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE) at the end of 2014.

In the context of its national climate change adaptation plan, Spain is also mapping the vulnerability of the Spanish biodiversity to climate change ([1]).

(1) http://www.adaptecca.es/contenido/biodiversidad

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000095/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zapowiedzi brytyjskich władz dotyczące zmian w polityce imigracyjnej

Premier Wielkiej Brytanii domaga się ograniczenia swobodnego przepływu pracowników w Unii Europejskiej. Jest to jedna z czterech podstawowych wolności, na których opiera się Wspólnota. David Cameron zapowiada, że jednym z najważniejszych żądań w ramach planowanej renegocjacji warunków brytyjskiego członkostwa w UE ma być zapobieżenie migracji ludności na dużą skalę.

Obecny problem dotyczy m.in. sposobu wypłacania dodatków rodzinnych. Brytyjskie władze postulują, by nie obejmowały one tych pracowników z innych państw, których dzieci przebywają na stałe w swoich krajach ojczystych. Oznaczałoby to wybiórcze traktowanie podatników.

Odbierając z zaniepokojeniem deklaracje brytyjskich władz, zwracam się do Komisji z prośbą o odpowiedź:

1. Jak Komisja ocenia argumentację premiera Camerona w przedmiotowej sprawie, w kontekście obowiązujących przepisów wspólnotowych? Czy podobne propozycje nie stoją w sprzeczności z uprawnieniami obywateli wynikającymi z zasady swobodnego przepływu pracowników?

2. Czy Komisja rozważy wyrażenie własnego stanowiska wobec tych postulatów?

3. Czy i jakie działania ze strony instytucji europejskich zostaną zainicjowane w celu zapobieżenia utracie przysługujących obywatelom uprawnień wspólnotowych?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(26 lutego 2014 r.)

Komunikat Komisji z 2013 r. ([1]) w sprawie prawa obywateli UE do swobodnego przemieszczania się i przebywania na terytorium innego państwa członkowskiego określa pięć praktycznych działań, których Komisja się podejmie, aby pomóc państwom członkowskim skuteczniej stosować przepisy dotyczące swobodnego przepływu. Ponadto Rada i Parlament Europejski osiągnęły w grudniu 2013 r. porozumienie odnośnie do dyrektywy w sprawie środków ułatwiających korzystanie z przysługujących pracownikom praw w kontekście swobody przepływu pracowników, w której wyjaśniono także pojęcie „członka rodziny", zawarte już w dyrektywie 2004/38/WE.

Przepisy UE dotyczące koordynacji systemów zabezpieczenia społecznego określone w rozporządzeniu (WE) nr 883/2004 ([2]) są najważniejszą częścią istniejących ram prawnych wspierających swobodę przepływu osób. Przepisy dotyczące świadczeń rodzinnych zakładają, że pracownik ma prawo do wypłacania mu tych świadczeń przez państwo, w którym pracuje, w odniesieniu do członków rodziny przebywających w innym państwie członkowskim. Są one zgodne z zasadą zawartą w przepisach dotyczących koordynacji, że to państwo, w którym dana osoba pracuje i odprowadza składki, jest zwyczajowo odpowiedzialne za wypłacanie wszelkich świadczeń.

Komisja zwróciła uwagę na trwające w Zjednoczonym Królestwie dyskusje na temat zmian w uprawnieniach obywateli UE do otrzymywania świadczeń na dzieci od Zjednoczonego Królestwa. Jak do tej pory jednak nic nie wskazuje na to, że Zjednoczone Królestwo przestanie stosować obowiązujące przepisy dotyczące płatności świadczeń rodzinnych.

([1]) „Swobodny przepływ obywateli UE i ich rodzin – pięć skutecznych działań" (COM(2013) 837 final z dnia 25 listopada 2013 r.).
([2]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (WE) nr 883/2004 z dnia 29 kwietnia 2004 r. w sprawie koordynacji systemów zabezpieczenia społecznego, Dz.U. L 166 z 30.4.2004.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000095/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: UK Government statements regarding changes to immigration policy

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is calling for restrictions on the free movement of workers in the European Union, which is one of the four fundamental freedoms on which the EU is based. David Cameron has stated that one of the key demands in the planned renegotiation of the UK's terms of membership of the EU will be a stop to large-scale migration.

One of the main problems is the manner in which family benefits are paid. The UK authorities argue that they should not be paid to workers from other countries whose children are permanently based in their home countries. This would mean discriminating against certain taxpayers.

The statements made by the UK authorities in this connection must be viewed as a matter for concern.

1. What is the Commission's assessment of Mr Cameron's arguments in this matter, in the light of current EU legislation in this area? Are such proposals not in breach of citizens' rights under the principle of freedom of movement for workers?

2. Is the Commission considering commenting on these proposals?

3. What steps, if any, are the European institutions going to take to ensure that citizens are not deprived of their EU rights?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The 2013 Commission Communication ([1]) on the right of EU citizens to move to and reside freely in another Member State outlines five practical actions that the Commission will take to help the Member States effectively apply the EU free movement rules. In addition to this, the Council and the European Parliament reached an agreement in December 2013 on a directive on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of free moment of workers which also clarify the definition of 'family member' as already contained in Directive 2004/38/EC.

The EU rules on the coordination of social security set out in Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 ([2]) are a key part of the existing framework in support of free movement of persons. The rules on family benefits provide that a worker is entitled to family benefits payable by the State where he or she works in respect of family members residing in another Member State. Those rules follow the principle laid down in the coordination rules whereby the State where a person works and pays contributions is normally responsible for paying all benefits.

The Commission has noted the discussion in the UK on changes to EU nationals' entitlement to UK child benefits. However, so far there is no suggestion that the UK will not comply with the existing rules on the payment of family benefits.

([1]) 'Free movement of EU citizens and their families: Five actions to make a difference' (COM(2013) 837 final of 25 November 2013).
([2]) Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems, OJ L 166, 30.4.2004.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000096/14
do Komisji
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Nowe przepisy dotyczące wędlin

We wrześniu br. wchodzą w życie nowe, bardziej restrykcyjne regulacje dotyczące stosowania substancji smolistych w żywności. Problem ten dotyka producentów tradycyjnych wędlin, ponieważ praktycznie niemożliwe stanie się wędzenie mięs przy użyciu drewna. Wielu z nich zmuszonych zostanie do ograniczenia, bądź wręcz likwidacji działalności. Szacuje się, że w branży mięsnej w Polsce zagrożonych jest co najmniej 100-150 firm, co przekłada się na los kilkuset dalszych przedsiębiorstw współpracujących. Tymczasem w sytuacji rosnącego bezrobocia w UE nie należy podejmować działań mogących powodować dalszy upadek przedsiębiorstw.

Wobec powyższego zwracam się z prośbą o informacje:

1. Czy na etapie opracowywania wzmiankowanych przepisów przeprowadzono stosowne konsultacje z przedstawicielami branży wędliniarskiej?

2. Jakie stanowisko na gruncie negocjacji prezentowali przedstawiciele polskich władz w odniesieniu do zaostrzenia norm zawartości substancji smolistych w produktach żywnościowych?

3. Czy planowane są jakiekolwiek działania ochronne (przynajmniej przejściowe) względem producentów wędlin zagrożonych utratą możliwości kontynuowania produkcji?

4. Czy Komisja rozważy aktualizację rozporządzenia celem wprowadzenia regulacji dotyczących specjalnego traktowania mięsnych produktów regionalnych i tradycyjnych? Mogłoby to umożliwić przynajmniej części przedsiębiorstw dalsze funkcjonowanie na dotychczasowych zasadach.

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(7 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja uprzejmie prosi szanownego Pana Posła o zapoznanie się z odpowiedzią na pytanie pisemne nr E-000044/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=PL

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000096/14
to the Commission
Adam Bielan (ECR)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: New legislation on smoked meats

New, more restrictive legislation regarding tarry substances in food is coming into force in September this year. This issue affects producers of traditional smoked meat products, as it will be practically impossible to continue smoking meat using wood. Many of them will be forced to scale down or even close their businesses. It is estimated that at least 100-150 meat sector firms in Poland are under threat, and this will impact upon a further several hundred cooperating businesses. At a time when unemployment is rising across the EU, no measures should be taken that could cause further businesses to fail.

1. Were representatives of the smoked meats sector properly consulted during the drafting of this new legislation?

2. What position did the Polish authorities adopt during negotiations on the tightening of standards on tarry substances in food products?

3. Are any (at least interim) protective measures planned for smoked meat producers who may find themselves unable to continue production?

4. Is the Commission considering modifying the regulation to bring in rules on special treatment for regional and traditional meat products? This could enable at least some of the businesses concerned to continue operating under the existing rules.

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(7 March 2014)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-000044/2014 ([1]).

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/QP-WEB/application/home.do?language=EN

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000097/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 janvier 2014)

Objet: Élection au Bangladesh

Le Bangladesh s'enfonce dans une crise provoquée, entres autres, par des élections législatives boycottées par l'opposition et endeuillées par une nouvelle flambée de violences, alors que la grève générale a été reconduite.

Le résultat du scrutin ne faisait aucun doute, l'Awami League au pouvoir, et ses alliés, se présentant sans adversaires dans 153 circonscriptions sur 300.

Le parti de la première ministre Sheikh Hasina Wajed a remporté au moins 86 des 147 sièges restants sur 116 dont les résultats étaient connus lundi matin, ses alliés ou des indépendants s'adjugeant la différence.

Mais la mort d'au moins 18 personnes dans des émeutes qui auront vu des milliers de manifestants attaquer des centaines de bureaux de vote, saccagés ou détruits par le feu, élargit la fracture politique dans cette jeune démocratie qui a connu une vingtaine de coups d'État depuis son indépendance en 1971.

Nous étions vivement préoccupés par le risque d'embrasement dans ce pays à la veille des élections, qu'en est-il à présent?

Comment les autorités européennes réagissent-elles officiellement?

Que comptent-elles faire?

Réponse donnée par Mme Ashton, Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante au nom de la Commission
(28 février 2014)

La situation politique au Bangladesh est préoccupante pour l'UE. Malheureusement, les partis politiques principaux n'ont pas réussi à se mettre d'accord sur des conditions propices à des élections libres. Le Parti nationaliste du Bangladesh (BNP) a décidé de boycotter le scrutin, tandis que la Ligue Awami a décidé de continuer le processus en se présentant seule aux élections.

À la suite des élections du 5 janvier, la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante a publié une déclaration au nom de l'UE dans laquelle elle exigeait la cessation immédiate des violences et exhortait les dirigeants du BNP et de la Ligue Awami à trouver un accord mutuellement acceptable en vue d'organiser des élections crédibles, transparentes et libres, en faisant primer les intérêts des Bangladais.

Les dirigeants politiques du Bangladesh devront prendre leurs responsabilités pour trouver une solution. L'UE restera mobilisée et continuera de surveiller la situation de près.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000097/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Elections in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is becoming mired in a crisis triggered, among other things, by parliamentary elections that have been boycotted by the opposition and marred by a new wave of violence, just as the general strike has been extended.

The result of the ballot was never in doubt: the Awami League and its allies retained power, standing uncontested in 153 out of 300 constituencies.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed's party won at least 86 of the remaining 147 seats, with the results for 116 seats already known on Monday morning; her allies or independent candidates took the remaining seats.

Yet the death of at least 18 people during clashes that saw thousands of protesters attack hundreds of polling stations, which were ransacked or burned to the ground, has widened the political gap in this young democracy, which has seen some 20 coups d'état since it gained independence in 1971.

We were very concerned by the risk of unrest in this country on the eve of the elections — what is the situation at present?

What is the official response of the European authorities?

What do they plan to do?

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

The political situation in Bangladesh is of concern for the EU. Regrettably, the main political parties failed to agree on conditions conducive to inclusive elections. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) decided to boycott the vote, while the Awami League (AL) decided to go ahead with the one-sided elections.

Following the 5 January elections, the HR/VP issued a Declaration on behalf of the EU calling for an immediate end to the violence and urging the leaders of the AL and the BNP to agree on a mutually acceptable way forward to hold transparent inclusive and credible elections, putting the interests of the people of Bangladesh first.

The political leaders in Bangladesh will have to take their responsibility for finding a solution. The EU will stay engaged and continue to monitor the situation closely.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000100/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 janvier 2014)

Objet: Domaine skiable

Il existe une différence préjudiciable d'acception de ce qu'est un domaine skiable. Dans certains pays, il comprend les zones hors piste, dans d'autres pas.

Cela pousse également certaines stations à ne pas interdire certaines zones hors pistes pour pouvoir les comptabiliser. Ces stations préfèrent alors afficher des indications telles que «à vos risques et périls».

1. La Commission pourrait-elle étudier la question?

2. La Commission pourra-t-elle proposer une harmonisation des règles en matière de domaine skiable?

Réponse donnée par M. Mimica au nom de la Commission
(19 février 2014)

La réglementation et le contrôle des questions de sécurité dans la pratique du ski, à l'instar d'autres activités de loisir en extérieur à la disposition des consommateurs, demeurent de la responsabilité des autorités nationales au titre du principe de subsidiarité.

La Commission n'a pas connaissance d'éléments prouvant que la diversité des définitions de la notion de domaine skiable entre les États membres pourrait justifier une action au niveau de l'Union. Par conséquent, elle ne prévoit pas de proposer des mesures d'harmonisation concernant la sécurité des activités de ski.

La Commission serait heureuse de recevoir de la part des honorables membres du Parlement des informations utiles qu'ils pourraient détenir relatives à des disparités de sécurité auxquelles les consommateurs européens seraient exposés. En outre, elle aimerait renvoyer les auteurs de la question au rapport intitulé «Les stations de ski en Europe 2012-2013» ([1]) du réseau des Centres européens des consommateurs ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/ski_resorts_europe_2012-2013_en.pdf (un rapport coordonné et écrit par le Centre européen des consommateurs d'Autriche, au nom du Réseau des Centres européens des consommateurs).

([2]) Le réseau CEC est cofinancé par la direction générale de la santé et de la protection des consommateurs de la Commission européenne, et par les États membres.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000100/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Skiable area

The definition of the term 'skiable area' differs from one country to the next in a potentially harmful way. In some countries, the skiable area includes off-piste descents, while in others it does not.

This is leading some resorts not to prohibit access to certain off-piste descents, so that they can be counted as part of the skiable area. These resorts choose instead to put up signs saying things such as 'at your own risk'.

1. Could the Commission examine the issue?

2. Could the Commission propose a harmonisation of the rules concerning skiable areas?

Answer given by Mr Mimica on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The regulation and control of safety issues in relation to skiing activities, similarly to other outdoor leisure activities offered to consumers, remain the responsibility of national authorities respecting the subsidiarity principle.

The Commission has no evidence on the impact of divergent definitions of skiable areas across Member States which might justify taking action at Union level. It therefore does not envisage proposing any harmonisation measures related to safety of skiing activities.

The Commission would welcome any relevant data that the Honorable Members might have as regards uneven levels of safety for European consumers. In addition, it would like to refer the Honourable Members to the report 'Ski resorts in Europe 2012/2013' ([1]) of the European Consumer Centres Network ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/ecc/docs/ski_resorts_europe_2012-2013_en.pdf, a report coordinated and written by ECC Austria on behalf of the European Consumer Centres Network.

([2]) The ECC-Net is co-funded by the European Commission DG Health and Consumer Protection and by the Member States.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000102/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 janvier 2014)

Objet: Tax shelter

Le système du tax shelter, un potentiel fiasco financier? C'est en tout cas ce que rapportent ce samedi De Tijd et l'Écho. Certains auraient profité des failles du système pour mettre en place une fraude.

Lancé il y a dix ans maintenant, le tax shelter est un incitant fiscal destiné à encourager la production d'œuvres audiovisuelles et cinématographiques. Une société souhaitant soutenir une production peut investir dans celle-ci en échange d'une exonération fiscale à hauteur de 150 % de la somme engagée.

À priori, le système semble plutôt positif puisque tout le monde paraît gagnant. La production de films, en Belgique par exemple, a été multipliée par trois depuis sa mise en place.

Mais selon nos confrères du Tijd et de l'Écho, le tax shelter cache en réalité un système opaque où se mêlent rendements irréalistes (16 % ou plus), absence de contrôles, détournements d'argent, voire fraudes fiscales caractérisées.

1. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur ce type de système?

2. Quelle est la position de la Commission sur la viabilité de celui-ci et sur les faitsdénoncés ci-dessus?

Réponse donnée par M. Šemeta au nom de la Commission
(5 mars 2014)

1. Les États membres sont libres de concevoir leurs systèmes de fiscalité directe de la façon qu'ils jugent la plus appropriée. Toutefois, ils doivent exercer cette compétence dans le respect du droit de l'Union. En particulier, ils ne doivent ni adopter ni maintenir une législation qui implique une aide d'État incompatible ou une discrimination contraire aux libertés fondamentales.

Le 13 mai 2003, la Commission a adopté une décision de ne pas soulever d'objections aux aides d'État («tax shelter» ([1])) notifiées par la Belgique visant à soutenir la production cinématographique. Les prorogations ultérieures de ces aides d'État ont été approuvées par la Commission. Le 8 novembre 2013 ([2]), la Commission a également approuvé les modifications apportées au système du tax shelter ayant pour objectif de résoudre les problèmes soulevés par l'Honorable Parlementaire. Ces mesures sont applicables jusqu'au 31 décembre 2015. La mise en œuvre de mesures fiscales demeure de la compétence de l'État belge. À ce titre, la Belgique peut prendre des mesures visant à garantir un allègement fiscal qui réponde aux besoins des productions cinématographiques en Belgique et à prévenir les abus des bénéficiaires de ces mesures, par exemple, sous la forme de fraude fiscale ou de détournement d'argent. Toutefois, lors du suivi de la mise en œuvre des régimes d'aide, un exercice «ex post» s'appuyant sur un échantillon de cas autorisés, la Commission peut identifier des situations de mise en œuvre incorrecte d'une aide et exiger qu'elle soit récupérée.

2. La Commission sait que la Belgique compte rationaliser davantage le système du tax shelter. Ces modifications seront notifiées à la Commission qui déterminera si elles peuvent être considérées comme compatibles avec le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne.

([1]) aide n° 410/2002.
([2]) dossier SA.36655: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=3_SA_36655.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000102/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Tax shelter

Does the tax shelter regime represent a potential financial fiasco? This is, in any case, what Belgian newspapers De Tijd and l'Écho suggested on Saturday. Some individuals have allegedly exploited the system's flaws in order to commit fraud.

Now in its tenth year of existence, the tax shelter is a tax incentive intended to promote the production of audiovisual works and films. A company that wishes to support a production can invest in the latter, in return for a tax exemption corresponding to 150% of the amount invested.

In principle, the system appears rather beneficial, as everyone seems to gain. The production of films, in Belgium for example, has tripled since the system was set up.

However, according to our colleagues from the De Tijd and l'Écho, the truth is that the tax shelter regime conceals an opaque system characterised by unrealistic yields (16% or more), lack of controls, embezzlement, and even blatant tax fraud.

1. What is the Commission's position with regard to this type of system?

2. What is the Commission's position with regard to its reliability and the facts outlined above?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

1. Member States are free to design their direct tax systems in the manner which they consider most appropriate. Nonetheless, they must exercise this competence consistently with Union law. In particular, they must not introduce or maintain legislation which involves incompatible state aid or discrimination that is contrary to the fundamental freedoms.

On 13 May 2003, the Commission adopted a decision to raise no objections to the state aid measures to support cinema production which were notified by Belgium and known as 'tax shelter' ([1]). The subsequent extensions of these state aid measures were approved by the Commission. On 8 November 2013 ([2]), it also approved the amendments to the tax shelter which have the objective to address the issues mentioned by the Honourable Member. These measures are applicable until 31 December 2015. The implementation of the tax measures remains the competence of the Belgian State. As such, Belgium may take measures in order to guarantee that the tax relief meets the needs of film productions in Belgium and to prevent abuse from beneficiaries of these measures, for example in the form of fraud or embezzlement. However, in monitoring the implementation of aid schemes, which is an *ex-post* exercise based on a sample of authorised cases, the Commission may identify instances of incorrect implementation of an aid and order its claw-back.

2. The Commission is aware that Belgium intends to further streamline the tax shelter system. These modifications will be notified to the Commission which will then assess whether they can be considered compatible with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

([1]) aid No 410/2002.
([2]) case SA.36655: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/elojade/isef/case_details.cfm?proc_code=3_SA_36655.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000103/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) et Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 janvier 2014)

Objet: Interdiction du procédé au mercure

Le 10 octobre 2013 a été signée la convention «Minamata» sur l'usage et les émissions de mercure. Cet accord, désormais ouvert à la ratification des États, vise à réduire au niveau mondial les émissions de mercure, très toxiques pour la santé et l'environnement, mais aussi la production et les utilisations du mercure, en particulier dans la fabrication de produits et lors de processus industriels. Cette convention prévoit notamment qu'en 2020, les produits utilisant du mercure devront avoir disparu et les procédés industriels être remplacés par des procédés n'utilisant pas de mercure. Selon l'article 5, chaque partie devra faire en sorte, en prenant des mesures appropriées, qu'aucun mercure ou composé du mercure ne soit utilisé dans les procédés de fabrication après la date d'abandon définitif spécifiée pour chaque procédé. Chaque État doit également prendre des mesures pour limiter l'utilisation de mercure ou de composés du mercure dans les procédés. Au plus tard cinq ans après la date d'entrée en vigueur de la convention, la Conférence des parties examine l'Annexe B et peut envisager de la modifier.

La production de méthylate ou d'éthylate de sodium ou de potassium est concernée par ces obligations de réduction puis d'interdiction.

1. La Commission convient-elle toujours de la nécessité d'interdire le procédé au mercure pour la fabrication du méthylate de sodium?

2. L'objectif initial était de réduire puis de faire disparaître l'utilisation de mercure au plus tard 10 ans après l'entrée en vigueur de la convention. La Commission est-elle toujours bien en adéquation avec ce calendrier?

3. Les autorités européennes mettent-elles en place des outils précis de contrôle des engagements des États en la matière?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000297/14
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(14 janvier 2014)

Objet: Ratification de la convention de Minamata sur l'usage et les émissions de mercure

La toxicité et la grave dangerosité du mercure pour l'environnement et la santé sont aujourd'hui unanimement reconnues mais restent un défi mondial, régional et national, comme le constatait le Programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement dans son étude intitulée «L'Évaluation mondiale du mercure 2013». Le 10 octobre 2013 à Minamata, au Japon, a été signée la convention sur l'usage et les émissions de mercure. Cet accord, désormais ouvert à la ratification des États, vise à réduire au niveau mondial les émissions de mercure très toxiques pour la santé et l'environnement, mais aussi la production et les utilisations du mercure, en particulier lors de la fabrication de produits et lors de processus industriels. Cette convention prévoit notamment qu'en 2020 des produits utilisant du mercure devront avoir disparu et que les procédés industriels devront être substitués par des procédés n'utilisant pas de mercure.

1. La Commission a engagé des travaux pour élaborer un instrument de ratification et les nécessaires dispositions d'application de l'Union. Quel est son calendrier pour lancer les consultations à ce sujet en 2014?

Au titre de la convention de Minamata, la production de méthylate ou d'éthylate de sodium ou de potassium est concernée par les obligations de réduction puis d'interdiction du mercure. Le méthylate de sodium est un composé principalement utilisé comme catalyseur pour la fabrication des biodiesels de 1^{e} et 3^{e} génération. Selon les dispositions de l'annexe, les mesures devant être prises par les parties pour la production de méthylate ou d'éthylate de sodium ou de potassium consistent, entre autres, à «réduire l'utilisation de mercure dans le but de la faire cesser le plus rapidement possible et au plus tard 10 ans après l'entrée en vigueur de la Convention». Il est à noter que dans l'Union européenne, seules deux unités de fabrication basées en Allemagne utilisent encore une technologie polluante au mercure, alors qu'à La Rochelle, en France, un site de fabrication de méthylate de sodium utilisant une écotechnologie vient d'être inauguré fin 2013.

2. Compte tenu de la convention de Minamata et de la législation de l'Union européenne sur les émissions industrielles (imposant des permis fondés sur les meilleures techniques disponibles), la Commission est-elle déterminée à interdire dans les meilleurs délais le procédé au mercure pour la fabrication du méthylate de sodium dans l'Union, et en tout état de cause avant la fin de l'échéance des 10 ans?

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000445/14
à la Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(17 janvier 2014)

Objet: Ratification par l'UE de la convention de Minamata

Le 10 octobre 2013 a été signée la convention de Minamata sur l'usage et les émissions de mercure. Cet accord, désormais ouvert à la ratification des États, vise à réduire au niveau mondial les émissions de mercure, qui présentent un niveau élevé de toxicité pour la santé et l'environnement. L'objectif principal est de diminuer la production et l'utilisation du mercure, en particulier lors de la fabrication de produits et lors de processus industriels.

Les productions de méthylate ou d'éthylate de sodium ou encore de potassium sont concernées par ces obligations. Ces procédés sont encore en majorité à base de mercure sur notre continent, là où le reste du monde les a d'ores et déjà interdits.

L'Union européenne perd ici en crédibilité à l'échelle internationale, où elle n'hésite pourtant pas dans d'autres domaines à appeler ses partenaires à faire preuve d'ambition en matière environnementale. La réduction et la suppression in fine des procédés au mercure doivent nécessairement faire partie intégrante des priorités de la Commission européenne dans sa politique environnementale.

La Commission a récemment informé le Parlement européen qu'elle examinait actuellement «les actions nécessaires» pour que l'Union européenne ratifie la convention de Minamata.

La Commission peut-elle être plus précise sur les mesures qu'elle compte prendre et dans quels délais, et peut-elle clarifier ses intentions quant à la suppression des procédés et produits au mercure, en particulier dans le cas de la production de méthylate?

Réponse commune donnée par M. Potočnik au nom de la Commission
(24 février 2014)

La Commission réalise actuellement une analyse d'impact qui servira de base pour décider des mesures nécessaires au respect de la convention Minamata. Cette analyse couvre toutes les dispositions de la convention, y compris celles qui s'appliquent à la production de méthylate ou éthylate de sodium ou de potassium. Des consultations publiques seront menées dans le cadre du processus préparatoire.

Par la suite, la Commission compte présenter ses propositions pour la ratification de la convention Minamata début 2015.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000103/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D) and Jean Louis Cottigny (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Prohibition of mercury-based manufacturing processes

The 'Minamata' Convention on the use and emissions of mercury was signed on 10 October 2013. This agreement, which is now open for ratification by the signatory states, aims to reduce the global level of mercury emissions, which are highly toxic to human health and the environment, but also the production and uses of mercury, particularly in the manufacture of products and as part of industrial processes. This Convention stipulates in particular that products that use mercury must have been phased out by 2020 and industrial processes must have been replaced with processes that do not use mercury. In accordance with Article 5, each Party must not allow, by taking appropriate measures, the use of mercury or mercury compounds in the manufacturing processes after the phase-out date specified for the individual processes. Each Party must also take measures to restrict the use of mercury or mercury compounds in the processes. No later than five years after the date of entry into force of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties shall review Annex B and may consider amendments to that Annex.

The manufacture of sodium or potassium methylate or ethylate is subject to those obligations for reduction and then prohibition.

1. Does the Commission still agree with the need to prohibit the use of mercury in the manufacture of sodium methylate?

2. The initial objective was to reduce and then eradicate the use of mercury no later than 10 years after the date of entry into force of the Convention. Does the Commission still believe this to be a suitable deadline?

3. Are European authorities putting in place precise tools to verify the Member States' commitment to meeting this objective?

Question for written answer E-000297/14
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(14 January 2014)

Subject: Ratification of the Minamata Convention on mercury use and emissions

The toxicity and extremely hazardous nature of mercury are unanimously recognised nowadays in terms of its environmental and health impact, but they remain a challenge at a global, regional and national level, a fact confirmed by the United Nations Environment Programme in its study entitled 'Global Mercury Assessment 2013'. On 10 October 2013, a convention was signed in Minamata, Japan, on mercury use and emissions. This agreement, now open to ratification by the signatory states, aims to reduce global mercury emissions, which are highly toxic to health and the environment, and also the production and uses of mercury, particularly in product manufacture and industrial processes. This convention provides in particular for products using mercury to be completely eliminated by 2020 and for industrial processes to be replaced by processes which do not use mercury.

1. The Commission has begun drawing up a ratification instrument and the necessary EU implementing provisions. What is its timetable for launching consultations on this topic in 2014?

Under the Minamata Convention, the production of sodium or potassium methylate or ethylate is affected by the requirements to reduce and subsequently eliminate mercury. Sodium methylate is a compound used mainly as a catalyst in the manufacture of 1st and 3rd generation biodiesels. According to the provisions of the annex, the measures to be taken by the parties for the production of sodium or potassium methylate or ethylate involve, among other things, 'reducing the use of mercury aiming to phase out this use as fast as possible and within 10 years of the entry into force of the Convention'. It should be noted that in the European Union, only two manufacturing units based in Germany still use technology which creates mercury pollution, while in La Rochelle, France, a sodium methylate plant using ecotechnology has just been opened in late 2013.

2. In view of the Minamata Convention and the European Union legislation on industrial emissions (under which permits are issued on the basis of the best available technologies), is the Commission committed to banning the use of mercury in the manufacture of sodium methylate within the Union as soon as possible, and in any event before the 10-year deadline?

Question for written answer E-000445/14
to the Commission
Michel Dantin (PPE)
(17 January 2014)

Subject: Ratification by the EU of the Minamata Convention

The Minamata Convention on mercury use and emissions was signed on 10 October 2013. The aim of this agreement, which is now open for ratification by the States, is to reduce the worldwide level of mercury emissions, which are extremely harmful to health and the environment. The main objective is to reduce the production and use of mercury, particularly in product manufacture and in industrial processes.

Production of sodium or potassium methylate or ethylate are affected by these obligations. In Europe, these processes are still mostly based on mercury, while the rest of the world has already prohibited them.

In this respect, the European Union is losing credibility internationally, despite having no qualms in calling on its partners to look to the future in other environmental matters. The reduction and, ultimately, elimination of mercury processes must form an integral part of the European Commission's priorities in its environmental policy.

The Commission recently informed the European Parliament that it was in the process of examining the 'necessary action' for the European Union to ratify the Minimata Convention.

Could the Commission be more specific as to what measures it intends to take and when, and could it clarify its intentions with regard to the elimination of mercury processes and products, particularly in the case of methylate production?

Joint answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The Commission is currently undertaking an impact assessment that will be the basis for deciding on measures necessary to comply with the Minamata Convention. This assessment covers all provisions of the Convention including those applying to the production of sodium or potassium methylate or ethylate. Public consultations will be carried out as part of the preparatory process.

Thereafter, the Commission intends to come forward with its proposals for ratification of the Minamata Convention early in 2015.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000104/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Avales para empresas que participan en concursos

El **Grupo Unidos por el Canal** (GUPC), liderado por la empresa española Sacyr, anunció que suspenderá las obras de ampliación el próximo día 20 si la Autoridad del Canal de Panamá (ACP) no reconoce «sobrecostes» por más de 1 600 millones de dólares. Este hecho ha provocado un conflicto diplomático que ha puesto de relieve algunos detalles de la concesión de esta obra.

En concreto, el Tribunal de Cuentas ha cuestionado en un informe el «respeto al marco legal contractual» de un aval de cerca de 160 millones de euros que otorgó la Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE) en el 2009 a Sacyr en el marco del concurso para optar a las obras del canal de Panamá. La CESCE y la constructora española acordaron que esta reembolsaría el importe de la indemnización en caso de que llegara a producirse el pago de la misma. Además, la CESCE está participada en un 50,25 % por el Estado español.

A la luz de lo anterior,

¿Ha analizado la Comisión si este aval cumple con el artículo 107 sobre ayudas de estado?

¿No cree la Comisión que este aval vulneró la competencia con las otras empresas europeas para la adquisición del contrato?

¿Cree la Comisión que el conflicto entre GUPC y el Gobierno de Panamá puede acarrear pérdidas a los contribuyentes españoles y por lo tanto aumentar la deuda del Estado español?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de marzo de 2014)

Hasta la fecha, la Comisión no ha recibido notificación o información alguna de ninguna garantía que implique supuestamente ayuda estatal concedida en favor de la empresa de construcción española SACYR por el Estado español a través de la Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE). Por tanto, la Comisión no está en condiciones de pronunciarse sobre esta cuestión.

No obstante, a la vista de la información facilitada, la Comisión señala que, aunque los Estados miembros son responsables de velar por el cumplimiento de las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE, el cumplimiento de los requisitos de procedimiento nacionales no es necesariamente relevante para la evaluación con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE. La Comisión observa que una garantía proporcionada a través de los recursos del Estado, pero en condiciones de mercado, no constituye ayuda estatal.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000104/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Guarantees for companies participating in tendering procedures

The Grupo Unidos por el Canal (GUPC) consortium, led by the Spanish company Sacyr, has announced that it will halt expansion works on 20 January 2014 unless the Panama Canal Authority (PCA) accepts additional costs of more than USD 1.6 billion. This announcement has sparked a diplomatic incident, which has brought to light some of the details concerning how this contract was awarded.

Specifically, in a report, the Spanish Court of Auditors has questioned the 'compliance with the contractual legal framework' of a guarantee of some EUR 160 million granted to Sacyr in 2009 by the Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE) in 2009 in relation to the tendering procedure for awarding the work on the Panama Canal. The CESCE and the Spanish construction company agreed that the latter would pay back the amount of this guarantee in the event of it being called in. Furthermore, the CESCE is 50.25% owned by the Spanish State.

In view of the above,

Has the Commission investigated whether or not this guarantee complies with Article 107 on state aid?

Does the Commission not agree that this guarantee damaged the competitiveness of other European companies with regard to obtaining the contract?

Does the Commission feel that the conflict between the GUPC and the government of Panama could result in losses for Spanish taxpayers and, consequently, increase the level of Spain's national debt?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

To date, the Commission has not been notified or informed of any guarantee allegedly entailing state aid provided to the Spanish construction company SACYR by the Spanish state through the Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE). Therefore, the Commission is not able to take a view on this issue.

Nevertheless, in view of the information provided, the Commission notes that, whereas Member States are responsible for ensuring compliance with EU State aid rules, compliance with national procedural requirements is not necessarily material for the assessment under EU State aid rules. The Commission notes that a guarantee provided through State resources but on market conditions does not constitute state aid.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000105/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Bloqueo de la evaluación del anillo ferroviario de Antequera

En su respuesta a mi pregunta E-004869/2013, el Comisario Hahn, en nombre de la Comisión Europea, afirmaba que dicha institución abrió una investigación sobre si el proyecto del anillo ferroviario de Antequera cumplía el Derecho de la UE, pero que la misma se encontraba interrumpida debido a que las autoridades españolas no habían aportado la información solicitada.

Según las palabras del Comisario de Política Regional, «habida cuenta de que solo se ha respondido parcialmente a dicha carta, sigue interrumpido el procedimiento de evaluación de la solicitud en relación con dicho proyecto». Esto implica que el comportamiento de las autoridades españolas, que no aportan la información solicitada sobre el proyecto del anillo, está bloqueando el proceso de investigación iniciado por la Comisión.

Un proyecto de estas características, que provoca tantas consecuencias nefastas para los habitantes de la zona, no podría realizarse sin la garantía de la financiación procedente de los fondos europeos debido a la oposición de los propios habitantes de la comarca. Para ello, resulta necesario un dictamen de una institución «garante de los Tratados» como es la Comisión Europea, puesto que aún no ha emitido un posicionamiento claro sobre las Directivas europeas que podría incumplir el presente proyecto, pese a las preguntas presentadas desde 2011.

¿Han presentado las autoridades españolas la información necesaria para continuar el proceso de evaluación del proyecto del anillo ferroviario de Antequera?

¿Considera la Comisión que el proyecto se ajusta a las Directivas de la UE citadas en sus anteriores respuestas sobre el anillo ferroviario?

¿Instará la Comisión a España a que acelere la puesta a disposición de información para que la Comisión pueda tomar una decisión sobre la financiación del proyecto?

¿Podría indicar la Comisión si se ha puesto a disposición algún fondo de la Unión Europea para financiar dicho proyecto?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(7 de marzo de 2014)

Las autoridades españolas retiraron el proyecto mencionado por Su Señoría en julio de 2013. Sin embargo, el proyecto se reformuló y se volvió a presentar a la Comisión en octubre del mismo año.

La Comisión está evaluando actualmente la solicitud relativa al proyecto y, por tanto, está pendiente que adopte una decisión respecto a la cofinanciación de este proyecto con cargo al Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional.

A fecha de 17 de febrero de 2014, la Comisión no ha aportado fondos de la UE para la financiación de este proyecto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000105/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Obstruction of the assessment of the Antequera railway test circuit

Replying on behalf of the Commission to Question E-004869/2013, Commissioner Hahn confirmed that the European Commission opened a case concerning the Antequera railway test circuit project and its compliance with EC law, but that the investigation in question had been interrupted due to the fact that the Spanish authorities had not provided the requested information.

In the words of the European Commissioner for Regional Policy, 'As this letter was only partially answered, the assessment procedure for this project application remains suspended'. This statement implies that the behaviour of the Spanish authorities, who are not providing the requested information concerning the test circuit project, is obstructing the investigation process opened by the Commission.

A project with such characteristics, which has such harmful effects for the people living in the area, could not be completed without the guarantee of finance from European funds due to opposition by those living in the region. Therefore, an opinion is required from a 'guardian of the Treaties' institution, such as the European Commission, given that it has not yet adopted a clear stance on the European Directives of which this project could be in breach, in spite of the Questions put forth since 2011.

Have the Spanish authorities provided the information required to continue the assessment process for the Antequera railway test circuit project?

Does the Commission feel that the project complies with the EU Directives cited in its previous answers concerning the railway test circuit?

Will the Commission urge Spain to provide the information more quickly to enable the Commission to reach a decision regarding finance for the project?

Could the Commission state whether or not it has provided any European Union funding to finance this project?

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

The project mentioned by the Honourable Member was withdrawn by the Spanish authorities in July 2013. However, it has been reformulated and submitted again to the Commission in October 2013.

The project application is currently under evaluation by the Commission and therefore a Commission decision concerning the co-funding of this project by the European Regional Development Fund is pending.

As of 17 February 2014, the Commission has not provided any EU funding to finance this project.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000107/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: VAT on pitch rental at fairs

In the UK, pitch rental at antiques fairs and other similar events was previously exempt from VAT on the basis that such rentals represented 'supply of land'.

However, following discussions in the EU VAT Committee on reducing cross-border VAT, the UK Government has proposed a new interpretation of existing laws and has instructed fair organisers to begin charging VAT on pitch rental.

The UK Government argues that pitch rental is indivisible from the cost of add-on services such as event promotion and the provision of power and security, which are already liable for VAT.

This decision has sparked protest from antiques fair organisers, who argue that it will essentially amount to an increase of 20% in costs for people who take part in antiques fairs, as the majority are not VAT-registered and therefore in a position to claim tax back.

The UK Government is not proposing to charge VAT on pitch rental for car boot sales and markets.

Can the Commission confirm:

1. Whether it believes that this interpretation is in line with EC law on VAT?

2. Whether it believes that the decision goes against Article 135 (j) and (k) of Directive 2006/112/EC?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

Article 14(1) of the VAT Directive ([1]) defines the supply of goods as the transfer of the right to dispose of tangible property (which includes immovable property) as owner.

As pitch rental at antiques fairs and other similar events does not entail the transfer of the aforementioned right, it cannot be seen as a supply of goods. Therefore, it does not constitute the supply of goods but rather the supply of services, in the same way as the letting of dwellings or offices.

The VAT Committee, in guidelines from its 93rd meeting ([2]), agreed almost unanimously that the provision of a stand location on a fair or exhibition site together with other related services to enable the exhibitor to display items, is a service not covered by Article 47 of the VAT Directive (which refers to services connected with immovable property). These guidelines have been integrated in Article 31a(3)(e) of Council Implementing Regulation 282/2011 ([3]). That Article, which will enter into force on 1 January 2017, clarifies that the provision of a stand location on a fair or exhibition is a service that is not connected to immovable property.

Even before that date, in line with the interpretation of the VAT Committee, pitch rental at antiques fairs and other similar events cannot qualify as a supply of land, and therefore must be treated as a supply of services and taxed accordingly.

For the same reason, the exemptions provided for in Article 135(1)(j) and (k) of the VAT Directive cannot be applied to pitch rentals at fairs as those exemptions refer to the supply of buildings or land but not to the supply of services.

([1]) Council Directive 2006/112/EC of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax.
([2]) The guidelines of the VAT Committee are published in DG TAXUD website.
([3]) Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 282/2011 of 15 March 2011 laying down implementing measures for Directive 2006/112/EC on the common system of value added tax as amended by Council Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1042/2013 of 7 October 2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000108/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Animali «dopati»: indagine del Corpo Forestale italiano con sequestro di più di 17.000 farmaci veterinari nel Nord-Italia

All'inizio di novembre 2013 è scoppiato in Italia lo scandalo degli animali «dopati». L'operazione denominata «Muttley» del Corpo Forestale italiano delle Regioni Lombardia e Emilia Romagna ([1]) ha portato alla scoperta di un'associazione a delinquere dedita alla distribuzione e alla vendita di farmaci provenienti dal mercato clandestino e destinati a «gonfiare» vitelli e maiali del Nord-Italia. I farmaci in questione venivano somministrati tanto agli animali ammalati, al fine di curarli per spedirli infine agli allevatori finali. Quanto a quelli sani per accrescerne la massa muscolare, il tutto nella più totale assenza di controlli medico-veterinari, in quanto, non venivano registrati.

Nel contesto dell'indagine sono state eseguite perquisizioni in vari comuni delle province di Mantova, Padova, Brescia, Parma, Sondrio, Torino e infine Cuneo. Le operazioni hanno portato al sequestro di 17.100 confezioni di farmaci veterinari per un valore complessivo di 2,5 milioni di euro.

Attualmente risultano indagate 160 persone, in larga parte residenti a Mantova, tra le quali grossisti di farmaci, allevatori, responsabili di attività commerciali zootecniche, farmacisti, veterinari e altri.

L'organizzazione sembrerebbe avere ramificazioni anche all'estero (Principato di Monaco, Romania, San Marino). È opportuno segnalare, infine, che secondo quanto riferito dalla stampa locale dalle indagini sinora svolte è emerso con certezza che la carne «dopata» è finita sulle tavole dei consumatori ([2]).

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. È a conoscenza dell'indagine esposta sopra e dei sequestri di farmaci ai quali ha condotto?

2. Può chiarire se si siano verificati scandali analoghi in altri Stati membri dell'Unione Europea?

3. Può riferire se e quali iniziative intende intraprendere l'Unione europea per contrastare simili pratiche illegali?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(17 febbraio 2014)

La direttiva 96/23/CE ([3]) stabilisce che le misure di enforcement in merito al trattamento illecito degli animali per accelerarne la crescita non dovrebbero coprire soltanto le aziende che detengono animali, ma anche tutte le fasi di produzione e distribuzione dei mangimi e dei farmaci veterinari. I controlli devono mirare a rivelare il possesso o la presenza di sostanze o prodotti vietati che potrebbero essere destinati al trattamento illecito degli animali.

In questo caso specifico, le misure hanno portato alla scoperta di una rete che deteneva importanti quantità di farmaci veterinari illeciti. Le autorità competenti degli Stati membri sono tenute a effettuare tali indagini ogniqualvolta nutrano anche solo il sospetto dell'esistenza di trattamenti illeciti. Qualora un trattamento illecito sia confermato, le autorità competenti sono tenute ad adottare tutte le misure necessarie per salvaguardare la salute del pubblico (ad esempio, vietare il movimento degli animali dalle aziende, dichiarare inadatte al consumo umano le carcasse o i prodotti …).

Tuttavia, a meno che la rete individuata si estenda al territorio di altri Stati membri, l'obbligo di notifica alla Commissione che incombe alle autorità competenti è soddisfatto allorché tale informazione è inclusa nelle loro relazioni annuali. Le relazioni annuali sono oggetto di compilazione e figurano in una comunicazione annuale della Commissione al Parlamento europeo e al Consiglio. Le comunicazioni più recenti sono direttamente accessibili sul sito della DG Salute e consumatori:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/index_it.htm

([1]) Operazione coordinata dalla Procura di Mantova e alla quale ha partecipato anche il Comando Provinciale del Corpo Forestale di Mantova.
([2]) Cfr.: http://gazzettadimantova.gelocal.it/cronaca/2013/11/07/news/vitelli-e-maiali-gonfiati-80-mantovani-tra-i-160-nuovi-indagati-la-procura-la-carne-dopata-finiva-sulla-tavola-dei-consumatori-1.8070602
([3]) Direttiva 96/23/CE del Consiglio, del 29 aprile 1996, concernente le misure di controllo su talune sostanze e sui loro residui negli animali vivi e nei loro prodotti e che abroga le direttive 85/358/CEE e 86/469/CEE e le decisioni 89/187/CEE e 91/664/CEE (GU L 125 del 23.5.1996, pag. 10).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000108/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: 'Doped' animals: investigation conducted by the Italian Forestry Corps, leading to the seizure of more than 17 000 veterinary drugs in northern Italy

A scandal involving 'doped' animals came to light in Italy in early November 2013, when 'Operation Muttley' — an investigation launched by the Italian Forestry Corps in the regions of Lombardy and Emilia Romagna ([1]) — uncovered an organised crime syndicate that was distributing and selling drugs sourced from the black market that were intended for use in 'fattening up' calves and pigs reared in northern Italy. The drugs in question were administered not only to sick animals, in order to treat them so that they could then be sent on to farmers, but also to healthy animals in order to increase their muscle mass. In all cases the administering of drugs to healthy animals was carried out illegally, with no veterinary supervision.

As part of the investigation, searches were carried out in various towns and cities in the provinces of Mantua, Padua, Brescia, Parma, Sondrio, Turin and Cuneo, leading to the seizure of 17 100 packages of veterinary drugs with a total value of EUR 2.5 million.

In all, 160 people are currently being investigated, including drugs wholesalers, livestock farmers, animal traders, pharmacists, veterinarians and others. Most of them are resident in Mantua.

The organisation also appears to be active outside Italy (Monaco, Romania, San Marino). Lastly, it should be pointed out that, according to local press reports concerning the investigations carried out to date, 'doped' meat has certainly ended up on consumers' plates ([2]).

1. Is the Commission aware of the investigation referred to above, and of the drug seizures that it has led to?

2. Can it specify whether any similar scandals have occurred in other EU Member States?

3. Can it say whether the European Union intends to take any steps to combat similar illegal practices, and, if so, what these steps will involve?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

Directive 96/23/EC ([3]) stipulates that enforcement measures related to illegal treatment of animals for growth promotion purposes should not only cover farms containing animals, but also all stages of animal feed and veterinary drugs production and distribution. Checks must be targeted to detecting the possession or presence of prohibited substances or products intended for illegal treatment of animals.

In this specific case, the measures have led to the discovery of a network covering important quantities of illegal veterinary drugs. Member State competent authorities are required to perform such investigations whenever they even only suspect the existence of illegal treatment. In case illegal treatment is confirmed, the competent authorities are obliged to take all necessary measures to safeguard public health (e.g. prohibit animals to leave the farms, declare unfit for human consumption carcasses or products…).

However, unless the uncovered network expands to the territory of other Member States, the competent authorities reporting obligation towards the Commission are fulfilled when this information is included in their annual reports. These annual reports are compiled into an annual communication of the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council. The most recent communications are directly accessible on the website of DG Health and Consumers:
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

([1]) Operation coordinated by the Mantua Public Prosecutor's Office, with the involvement of the Provincial Headquarters of the Forest Corps of Mantua.
([2]) cf. http://gazzettadimantova.gelocal.it/cronaca/2013/11/07/news/vitelli-e-maiali-gonfiati-80-mantovani-tra-i-160-nuovi-indagati-la-procura-la-carne-dopata-finiva-sulla-tavola-dei-consumatori-1.8070602
([3]) Council Directive 96/23/EC on measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof in live animals and animal products and repealing Directives 85/358/EEC and 86/469/EEC and Decisions 89/187/EEC and 91/664/EEC (OJ L 125, 23.5.1996, p. 10).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000110/14
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(8 januari 2014)

Betreft: Ongevallenstatistieken 2013

In 2001 stelde de Europese Commissie als doelstelling om tegen 2010 het aantal verkeersslachtoffers te halveren. In 2010 werd het aantal dodelijke slachtoffers teruggebracht naar 30 800, een daling van 43 % ten opzichte van 2001. Een aanzienlijke vermindering, ook al werd de doelstelling niet gehaald. Daarom bevestigde de Commissie in 2011 opnieuw het voornemen om tegen 2020 het aantal verkeersslachtoffers te halveren. Op termijn wil de Commissie het aantal slachtoffers zelfs tot nul reduceren.

In 2012 daalde het aantal verkeersdoden in de EU met 9 %, het laagste cijfer in de EU sinds hierover statistieken worden bijgehouden.

1. Heeft de Commissie cijfers over het aantal verkeersslachtoffers in 2013 voor de Europese Unie in zijn geheel en cijfers per lidstaat?

2. Beschikt de Commissie over cijfers met betrekking tot het aantal slachtoffers jonger dan 18 jaar en het aantal bij ongevallen betrokken voetgangers en fietsers?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(24 februari 2014)

1. De eerste voorlopige gegevens over het totale aantal verkeersslachtoffers in de EU in 2013 zullen waarschijnlijk in maart 2014 beschikbaar zijn. Na afloop van een kalenderjaar is er immers nog wat tijd nodig voor de consolidatie van gegevens uit verschillende bronnen, de kwaliteitscontrole van de gegevens en het versturen van de informatie.

2. Volgens de recentste gedetailleerde gegevens, die dateren van 2012, maakt het aantal dodelijke slachtoffers onder de 18 jaar 6% uit van alle verkeersslachtoffers. Ongeveer 21% van alle dodelijke verkeersslachtoffers in de EU zijn voetgangers, 8% zijn fietsers. De volledige reeks gegevens, waaronder gedetailleerde statistieken, is beschikbaar op de website van de Commissie ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000110/14
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Accident statistics for 2013

In 2001, the European Commission set itself the target of halving the number of casualties on the roads by 2010. In 2010, the number of road deaths fell to 30 800, representing a drop of 43% compared with 2001. Although this represented a substantial reduction, it still fell short of the target. In 2011, the Commission therefore resolved anew to halve the number of casualties on the roads by 2020, with its ultimate aim being to eliminate such casualties altogether.

In 2012, the number of road deaths in the EU fell by 9% to the lowest figure in the EU since records began.

1. Does the Commission have in its possession figures relating to the number of casualties on the roads in 2013 for the European Union as a whole and also broken down into figures for each Member State?

2. Does the Commission have in its possession figures relating to the number of casualties under the age of 18 and the number of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

1. The first preliminary data on the total of casualties on EU roads in 2013 are expected to be available by March 2014, as some time after the end of the calendar year is required to consolidate data from different sources, perform data quality control and for the transmission of the information.

2. In 2012, the last detailed dataset available, fatalities under the age of 18 represented 6% of all road victims.Around 21% of all who died on EU roads were pedestrians and 8% were cyclists. A complete set of data including more detailed statistics is available on the Commission's website ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/specialist/statistics/index_en.htm

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000111/14
do Komisji
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Standardy w zakresie reflektorów samochodowych

Do mojego biura trafiła w ostatnim czasie wiadomość od jednego z użytkowników aut dotycząca standardów w zakresie produkcji i użytkowania żarówek samochodowych. Problem z pozoru błahy, ale jak wskazuje autor tej wiadomości mogący mieć ogromny wpływ na bezpieczeństwo na europejskich drogach.

Na przykładzie Polski widać jak ogromny problem z ustawieniem świateł mają kierowcy. Badania pokazują, że 99 % kierowców ma źle ustawione światła samochodowe. W moim przekonaniu nie wynika to jedynie z faktu, że kierowcy zapominają o prawidłowym ustawieniu oświetlenia w autach, ale także z faktu, że brak w UE jednolitych standardów w zakresie produkcji reflektorów. Ich budowa jest często skomplikowana, przez co kierowca nie jest w stanie odpowiednio wymienić zużytych żarówek, a także odpowiednio wyregulować kąta ich oświetlania. Uproszczenie budowy reflektorów samochodowych oraz odpowiedni instruktaż w zakresie montażu i regulacji świateł mogłyby być bardzo użyteczne i zapewne ratujące życie wielu kierowcom oraz pozostałym uczestnikom ruchu drogowego.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z następującymi pytaniami:

1. Czy UE monitoruje ilość zdarzeń drogowych wywołanych brakiem oświetlenia w autach lub złą regulacją reflektorów w samochodach?

2. Czy Komisja pracuje nad odpowiednimi regulacjami w omawianym zakresie?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Antonia Tajaniego w imieniu Komisji
(10 marca 2014 r.)

Komisja jest świadoma kwestii zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa, do jakiego doprowadzić może nieprawidłowe ustawienie reflektorów pojazdów. Kwestia ta wchodzi głównie w zakres kompetencji służb krajowych przeprowadzających okresowe kontrole techniczne, jak również kontrole drogowe. Rzetelne informacje na temat wypadków drogowych spowodowanych olśnieniem nie są jednak dostępne.

Od 2006 r. wymagane jest, by nowe typy pojazdów wyposażonych w światła z wymiennymi źródłami światła były projektowane tak, by źródła te mogły być montowane i demontowane bez użycia narzędzi. Przepisy w tym zakresie uszczegółowiono w 2008 r. ([1]), dzięki czemu obecnie instrukcje obsługi pojazdu zawierają instrukcje wymiany źródeł światła.

Ponadto UE jest stroną porozumienia EKG ONZ ([2]) z 1958 r. dotyczącego opracowania międzynarodowych regulaminów w odniesieniu do pojazdów, a w szczególności stroną stosującą regulamin nr 48 ([3]) w zakresie instalacji urządzeń oświetleniowych.

Zgodnie z rozporządzeniem w sprawie bezpieczeństwa ogólnego ([4]) od listopada 2014 r. regulaminy EKG ONZ ([5]) zastąpią kilka unijnych aktów prawnych dotyczących oświetlenia ([6]).

W regulaminie nr 48 w wersji zmienionej serią poprawek nr 6 określono wymogi mające zapewnić automatyczną regulację ustawienia i poziomowanie reflektorów oraz wykorzystanie fotodetektorów w nowych typach pojazdów, a tym samym zapobiec zjawisku olśnienia i doprowadzić do zwiększenia stopnia bezpieczeństwa ruchu drogowego.

Wymogi te mają jednak zastosowanie tylko do nowych typów pojazdów, dlatego też zarówno sytuacja w kwestii łatwego dostępu do żarówki, jak i w kwestii ponownego ustawienia reflektora we właściwej pozycji po naprawie będzie ulegać poprawie wraz z wymianą floty pojazdów.

([1]) Sprostowanie 1 do zmiany 4 regulaminu EKG ONZ nr 48 (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/2008/85).
([2]) Europejska Komisja Gospodarcza Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych.
([3]) Regulamin nr 48 Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych (EKG ONZ) – Jednolite przepisy dotyczące homologacji pojazdów w odniesieniu do urządzeń oświetleniowych i sygnalizacji świetlnej, Dz.U. L 323 z 6.12.2011, s. 46.
([4]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (WE) nr 661/2009 wraz ze zmianami w zakresie włączenia niektórych regulaminów Europejskiej Komisji Gospodarczej Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych dotyczących homologacji typu pojazdów silnikowych, ich przyczep oraz przeznaczonych dla nich układów, części i oddzielnych zespołów technicznych, Dz.U. L 200 z 31.7.2009, s. 1.
([5]) Do celów homologacji typu UE regulaminy te, przestrzegane w państwach członkowskich Unii, uznawane są za równoważne w stosunku do odpowiadających im dyrektyw cząstkowych.
([6]) Między innymi dyrektywę 76/756/EWG, dalsze informacje na temat stosowania regulaminów EKG ONZ i relacji między nimi a prawem unijnym dostępne są na następującej stronie internetowej:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/documents/unece/application/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000111/14
to the Commission
Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa (PPE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Car headlamp standards

My office has recently been contacted by a motor vehicle user regarding standards relating to the production and use of motor vehicle light bulbs. The issue may at first appear trivial but, as the motor vehicle user pointed out, it may have an enormous impact on European road safety.

Based on Poland's experience, it is apparent that drivers have great difficulty in setting their lights. Surveys show that 99% of drivers have their car lights wrongly adjusted. In my opinion this is due not only to the fact that drivers forget to set their car lights correctly, but also to the lack of uniform EU standards on headlight production. The construction of these lights is often highly complex, meaning that drivers are unable to replace burnt-out bulbs as they should and are unable to set the angle of the beam. Simplifying the construction of motor vehicle headlamps and providing suitable instructions for the mounting and adjustment of lights could prove extremely useful and would surely save the lives of many drivers and other road users.

1. Does the EU monitor the number of road accidents caused by a lack of car lights or by poor adjustment of the headlamps in motor vehicles?

2. Is the Commission working on new legislation in this matter?

Answer given by Mr Tajani on behalf of the Commission
(10 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of potential safety issues due to misalignment of vehicle headlamps. This issue falls mainly within the responsibility of national services carrying-out periodic technical checks, as well as road-side inspections. However, there is no available solid information on road-accidents due to glaring.

It has been required since 2006 that new types of vehicles fitted with replaceable light sources are designed so that these can be inserted and removed without tools. The provisions were further clarified in 2008 ([1]) and now vehicle handbooks provide replacement instructions.

In addition, the EU is a contracting party of the 1958 agreement at the UNECE ([2]) regarding the development of international regulations for vehicles and in particular Reg No 48 ([3]) for the installation of lighting devices.

UNECE regulations ([4]), according to the General Safety Regulation ([5]), will replace from November 2014 ([6]) a number of EU lighting regulations.

The amendment of the 06 series of Reg. 48 sets out requirements providing for the automated adjustment and levelling of headlamps and the use of light sensors in new types of vehicles, thus avoiding glaring and providing increased road safety levels.

However, since these requirements apply to new types of vehicles, both the situation regarding bulb accessibility as well as the issue of re-adjustment of head-lamps after a repair will improve as the vehicle fleet is renewed.

([1]) Corrigendum 1 to Revision 4 of UNECE Regulation No 48 (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/2008/85).
([2]) The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.
([3]) Regulation No 48 of the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations (UN/ECE) — Uniform provisions concerning the approval of vehicles with regard to the installation of lighting and light-signalling devices, OJ L323, 06.12.2011, p.46.
([4]) Adhered to by the EU, are considered to be equivalent to their corresponding, separate directives for the purpose of EU type-approval.
([5]) Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the inclusion of certain Regulations of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on the type-approval of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor, OJ L 200, 31.7.2009, p. 1.
([6]) i.e. such as the 76/756/EEC, further information on the application of UNECE Regulation and their relationship to EC law can be found on the following page: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/automotive/documents/unece/application/index_en.htm

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000112/14
alla Commissione
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(8 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Opportunità di istituire un'imposta di solidarietà sulle rimesse verso paesi extracomunitari

Nel corso del 2012 le rimesse degli immigrati partite dall'Italia verso paesi terzi ammontavano a circa 6,8 miliardi di euro.

Considerato il periodo economico che stiamo attraversando, il fatto che un tale ammontare di denaro venga esportato rappresenta una cagione alle economie degli Stati membri.

Inoltre i costi della gestione dei flussi immigratori sono ingenti (basti pensare all'operazione Mare Nostrum in Italia, ai costi sanitari e di gestione dei CIE).

Poiché in Italia ci sono circa 7.000 intermediari abilitati al «money transfer» presso cui si possono effettuare rimesse in contanti fino a EUR 999, è evidente come alcuni immigrati irregolari possano, attraverso dei prestanome, spedire del contante guadagnato anche in nero.

Al fine di far emergere il lavoro nero, incentivare la permanenza di liquidità all'interno degli Stati membri e aiutare gli stessi, in particolare l'Italia, a sostenere gli ingenti costi derivanti dall'immigrazione clandestina, ritiene la Commissione opportuno che su tali rimesse venga istituita un'imposta di solidarietà?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(5 febbraio 2014)

In linea di principio, in assenza di una legislazione armonizzata gli Stati membri sono liberi di decidere quale regime fiscale adottare e, in particolare, di determinare chi, cosa e come sottoporre a tassazione. Tuttavia in base alla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia dell'Unione europea gli Stati membri sono tenuti al rispetto degli obblighi e dei principi sanciti dal trattato sul funzionamento dell'UE (TFUE). Tra le varie disposizioni, l'articolo 63 del TFUE vieta agli Stati membri tutte le restrizioni ai movimenti di capitali tra Stati membri nonché tra Stati membri e paesi terzi.

Inoltre, le rimesse degli emigrati, indipendentemente dalla loro posizione migratoria, costituiscono un'importante fonte di reddito estero per molti paesi in via di sviluppo. È comprovato che tali pagamenti contribuiscono in maniera diretta alla riduzione della povertà delle famiglie che ne beneficiano. Una nuova imposta di solidarietà per il trasferimento delle rimesse potrebbe anche rischiare di porsi in contrasto con le politiche dell'UE in materia di migrazione e di sviluppo, nonché con l'impegno assunto dall'UE tramite il G20 a favore della riduzione dei costi medi complessivi del trasferimento delle rimesse dal 10 % al 5 % entro il 2014.

La direttiva sulle sanzioni nei confronti dei datori di lavoro ([1]) è volta a contrastare l'impiego di cittadini di paesi terzi il cui soggiorno è irregolare. Tale direttiva impone agli Stati membri di comminare sanzioni e attuare misure nei confronti dei datori di lavoro che impiegano lavoratori di paesi terzi non in regola con il permesso di soggiorno, nonché di procedere a ispezioni efficaci e adeguate al fine di monitorare tale situazione. La Commissione sta valutando le modalità di attuazione della direttiva negli Stati membri e si riserva di prendere provvedimenti in caso di non conformità.

([1]) Direttiva 2009/52/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000112/14
to the Commission
Matteo Salvini (EFD)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Desirability of imposing a solidarity tax on remittances to countries outside the EU

In 2012, remittances from Italy to third countries by immigrants amounted to some EUR 6.8 bn.

In view of the current economic circumstances, the export of so much money is a cause for concern for Member States.

Moreover, managing immigration costs a huge amount of money (one need only think of the Mare Nostrum operation in Italy and the health and management costs of identification and expulsion centres).

In Italy there are some 7 000 intermediaries authorised to make money transfers, whose services can be called upon to make cash remittances of up to EUR 999, so it is clear that some illegal immigrants can use front persons to send cash abroad even if it has been earned clandestinely.

In order to detect clandestine employment, encourage money to remain within the Member States and help them — especially Italy — to bear the enormous costs arising from illegal immigration, does the Commission consider it desirable to impose a solidarity tax on such remittances?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 February 2014)

In principle, Member States are, in the absence of harmonised legislation, free to decide on their tax regimes and, in particular, on who, what and how to tax. Nevertheless, according to ECJ case-law, Member States must respect the obligations and principles laid down in the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFUE). Among these, Article 63 of the TFUE prohibits Member States to restrict the movement of capital between Member States and third countries.

Furthermore, the private transfers of money by immigrants — regardless of their status — constitute an important source of foreign income for many developing economies and have been proven to contribute directly to poverty reduction for receiving households. A new solidarity tax on remittance transfers may well be contradictory to the EU migration and development policies, as well as the commitment the EU has taken through the G20 to work towards reducing the global average costs of transferring remittances from 10% to 5% by 2014.

The Employer Sanctions Directive ([1]) has been designed to help bring to an end the employment of illegally-staying third-country nationals. Under the directive Member States need to have in place sanctions and measures against employers of illegally-staying third-country nationals, and to carry out effective and adequate inspections to control the employment of illegally-staying third-country nationals. The Commission is currently assessing the implementation of the directive in the Member States, and in cases of non-conformity, reserves its right to take the necessary action.

([1]) Directive 2009/52/EC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000113/14
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin / Hohe Vertreterin)
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Proteste in Kambodscha

Die derzeitige Lage in Kambodscha ist äußerst besorgniserregend. Die Streiks für bessere Arbeitsbedingungen der Textilarbeiterinnen und Textilarbeiter wurden mit gewaltsamen Maßnahmen niedergeschlagen. Scharfe Munition gegen Arbeiter und Arbeiterinnen einzusetzen, ist nicht akzeptabel. Besonders vor dem Hintergrund, dass die Europäische Union der wichtigste Geldgeber Kambodschas ist, muss sich die EU klar positionieren.

1. Warum gab es vonseiten der Hohen Vertreterin bisher noch keine offizielle Erklärung, in der der Einsatz scharfer Munition gegen die Proteste und die Erschießung von streikenden Arbeiterinnen und Arbeitern verurteilt wird?

2. Gedenkt die Kommission, durch wirtschaftliche Sanktionen oder die Kürzung von Hilfsgeldern Druck auf die Machthaber auszuüben, friedlich auf Proteste zu reagieren?

3. Wie steht die Kommission zu der Forderung, ein europäisches Gütesiegel für fair produzierte Kleidung einzuführen, um mehr Transparenz für Konsumenten und Konsumentinnen zu schaffen?

4. Welche Maßnahmen wurden bisher als Reaktion auf die Entschließung des Europäischen Parlaments vom 26. Oktober 2012 zur Lage in Kambodscha (2012/2844(RSP)) ergriffen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(26. Februar 2014)

1. In einer vor Ort abgegebenen Erklärung brachte die EU am 4. Januar ihre tiefe Besorgnis über die exzessive Anwendung von Gewalt zum Ausdruck. Seit den Parlamentswahlen im Juli hat die EU die Regierung wiederholt dazu aufgefordert, friedlich auf die zahlreichen von der Opposition organisierten Proteste zu reagieren, und seit Januar die uneingeschränkte Wiederherstellung der Versammlungsfreiheit gefordert.

2. Nach den jüngsten Ereignissen wurden die politischen Optionen der EU im Einklang mit den laufenden Entwicklungen sowie im besten Interesse des kambodschanischen Volkes sorgfältig geprüft.

3. Die EU hat sich für die jüngste Vereinbarung zwischen der Regierung und der Industrie eingesetzt, das IAO-Programm „Better factories“ zu verlängern, mit dem die Arbeitsbedingungen in der Textilindustrie überwacht werden. Die EU wird auch weiterhin die Schritte auf dem Weg zum sozialen Zusammenhalt, einschließlich des sozialen Dialogs unterstützen. Sie stellt bereits Mittel zur Stärkung der Kapazität von Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft bereit, die die Einhaltung der Menschen- und Arbeitnehmerrechte überwachen. Dies umfasst eine spezifische Unterstützung der Gewerkschaften, um diese in die Lage zu versetzen, verstärkt mit anderen Akteuren im Bereich der Arbeitsbeziehungen zusammenzuarbeiten. Hinsichtlich der Einführung eines Gütesiegels verweist die Kommission den Herrn Abgeordneten auf ihre Antworten auf die Anfragen zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-6345/2013 und E-013545/2013.

4. Die in seinen Entschließungen von 2012 und 2014 geäußerten Bedenken des Europäischen Parlaments wurden den kambodschanischen Behörden, auch auf höchster Ebene stets übermittelt. Einige positive Entwicklungen sind zu verzeichnen, wie die Freilassung des Menschenrechtsaktivisten Mom Sonando Anfang 2013, oder die sichere Rückkehr des Oppositionsführers Sam Rainsy aus dem Exil im Juni 2013. Die EU wird die Lage in Kambodscha auch in Zukunft äußerst aufmerksam beobachten.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000113/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Josef Weidenholzer (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Protests in Cambodia

The current situation in Cambodia is alarming. Protests by textile workers striking for better working conditions have been put down violently. The use of live ammunition against workers is unacceptable. As Cambodia's primary aid provider, the EU must make its position clear.

1. Why has the High Representative not yet issued an official statement condemning the use of live ammunition against striking workers and demonstrators?

2. Is the Commission planning its own peaceful response to the protests, in the form economic sanctions or cuts in aid, in order to put pressure on the Cambodian regime?

3. What view does the Commission take of the call to introduce a European quality label for ethically produced clothing, so that consumers know exactly what they are buying?

4. What measures have been taken so far in response to Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2012 on the situation in Cambodia (2012/2844(RSP))?

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

1. The EU, in a local statement on 04/01, expressed its deep concern about the excessive use of force. Since the July parliamentary elections, the EU has urged the government to ensure a peaceful management of the many demonstrations which have been organised by the opposition, and since January, for the restoration of the full freedom of assembly.

2. Following these recent events, EU policy options have been considered carefully, in line with the ongoing developments and with the best interest of the Cambodian people in mind.

3. However, the EU has facilitated the recent agreement between the governments, and the industry to renew an ILO-implemented programme ('Better Factories') for monitoring labour conditions in the garment industry. The EU will continue to promote steps towards social cohesion, including social dialogue. It is already providing funds to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations to monitor Human and labour Rights. This includes a specific support to Trade Unions to increase their capacity to better engage with other stakeholders in industrial relations. As to labelling, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the replies to written questions E-6345/2013 and E-013545/2013.

4. Concerns expressed by the European Parliament in its 2012 and 2014 resolutions have been constantly relayed to the Cambodian authorities, including at the highest level. Some positive elements can be mentioned, such as the release of the Human Rights activist Mom Sonando early 2013, or the safe return of the opposition leader Sam Rainsy from exile in June 2013. The EU will remain continue to monitor extremely closely the situation in Cambodia.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000114/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Desempleo juvenil

La Garantía Juvenil —el fondo europeo destinado a luchar contra el desempleo entre los menores de 25 años— asciende a 6 000 millones de euros, de los que el Estado español recibirá 1 800 millones.

Los países con una tasa de desempleo juvenil superior al 25 % debían entregar a la Comisión Europea, antes de que acabase el año 2013, un plan con las medidas que llevarán a cabo para luchar contra el desempleo juvenil. El Estado español, el segundo país europeo con un porcentaje mayor (54,7 %), anunció que lo presentaría el pasado 23 de diciembre, durante el Consejo de Empleo. Hasta el momento, solo nueve Estados lo habían presentado. El Comisario de Empleo, László Andor, pidió al resto de países, entre ellos al Estado español, que lo hicieran «con urgencia y cuanto antes» ([1]).

¿Puede indicar la Comisión si el Estado español ha presentado este plan?

En caso afirmativo:

— Según los expertos, hay un riesgo elevado de que haya una generación perdida de jóvenes porque están en una situación de desempleo de larga duración. ¿Ha seguido el Estado español las recomendaciones de la Comisión ([2]) para revertir esta situación?

— ¿Tiene previsto la Comisión hacer un seguimiento de la eficacia de este plan?

Respuesta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(4 de marzo de 2014)

Al adoptar la Recomendación del Consejo sobre el establecimiento de la Garantía Juvenil ([3]), los veintiocho Estados miembros de la UE se comprometieron a garantizar que todos los jóvenes menores de veinticinco años recibieran una buena oferta de empleo, formación permanente, formación de aprendiz o período de prácticas en un plazo de cuatro meses tras acabar la educación formal o quedar desempleados. Dicho compromiso es independiente de que el Estado miembro pueda o no optar a recibir financiación adicional a través de la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil, el instrumento de 6 000 millones de euros de apoyo a la Garantía Juvenil.

El 19 de diciembre de 2013, España presentó un plan de aplicación de la Garantía Juvenil. Al hacerlo, dio un paso para seguir una de las recomendaciones específicas por país que se le transmitieron en junio de 2013 ([4]). En la actualidad, la Comisión está evaluando dicho plan, cuya aplicación supervisará dentro del marco del Semestre Europeo. Asimismo, abordará la cuestión de los preparativos que se están llevando a cabo de cara al acuerdo de asociación para el uso de los Fondos Estructurales y de Inversión Europeos en España y de los programas operativos cofinanciados mediante el Fondo Social Europeo y los recursos de la Iniciativa sobre Empleo Juvenil.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/12/09/empleo/1386618880_621721.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:ES:PDF
([4]) En concreto, la REP 5: «Aplicar y hacer un seguimiento estrecho de la eficacia de las medidas de lucha contra el desempleo juvenil expuestas en la Estrategia de Emprendimiento y Empleo Joven 2013-2016, por ejemplo mediante una garantía juvenil. […]»
http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=Es&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2010656%202013%20REV%201&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst10%2Fst10656-re01.en13.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000114/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Youth unemployment

The Youth Guarantee — the European fund aimed at combating unemployment amongst under 25s — is increasing to EUR 6 billion; of this, Spain will receive EUR 1.8 billion.

Countries with a youth unemployment rate of more than 25% were required to submit a plan to the European Commission by the end of 2013, outlining measures that would be carried out to combat youth unemployment. Spain — the country with the second-highest youth unemployment rate in Europe, at 54.7% — informed the Employment Council that it would present this plan on 23 December last year. So far, only nine States have presented such a plan. The Commissioner for Employment, László Andor, has asked the remaining countries, including Spain, to do this 'urgently and as soon as possible' ([1]).

Could the Commission specify whether Spain has presented this plan?

If so:

— Experts believe there is an increased risk of a lost generation of young people, as they find themselves in long-term unemployment. Has Spain followed the Commission's recommendations ([2]) in order to turn this situation around?

— Does the Commission plan to keep track of how effective this plan is?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

By adopting a Council Recommendation on establishing a Youth Guarantee ([3]), all 28 EU Member States committed to ensure that all young people under 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. This commitment is independent from whether or not the Member State is eligible for additional support under the Youth Employment Initiative, the EUR 6 billion instrument to support Youth Guarantee schemes.

Spain submitted a national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan on 19 December 2013. As such, Spain took a step to follow one of the country-specific recommendations addressed to the country in June 2013 ([4]). The Commission is currently assessing the plan and will monitor its implementation within the framework of the European Semester. It will also address the issue in the on-going preparations of the Partnership Agreement for the use of European Structural and Investment funds in Spain and Operational Programmes to be co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative resources.

([1]) http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2013/12/09/empleo/1386618880_621721.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([3]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF
([4]) Namely CSR 5: 'Implement and monitor closely the effectiveness of the measures to fight youth unemployment set out in the Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment Strategy 2013-2016, for example through a Youth Guarantee. […].'
http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2010656%202013%20REV%201&r=http%3A%2F%2Fregister.consilium.europa.eu%2Fpd%2Fen%2F13%2Fst10%2Fst10656-re01.en13.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000117/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Movilidad de 70 000 vehículos e Y vasca

En respuesta a mi pregunta escrita E-012069/2013 el Sr. Kallas contesta textualmente:

«La Y vasca contribuirá también de manera directa a la mejora de la red de transportes locales y regionales, permitiendo la movilidad de más de 70 000 vehículos cada día entre las tres capitales vascas».

El diagnóstico de la movilidad en la Comunidad Autónoma Vasca (CAV) de 2003, señalaba que el 97 % de los desplazamientos eran intracomarcales y que la mayoría de ellos se hacen en automóvil (Departamento de Transportes y Obras Públicas del Gobierno Vasco. 2003. Estudio de la movilidad en la CAV). Sólo un 0,7 % de estos desplazamientos se hacen entre las tres capitales. En datos de 2007, los desplazamientos diarios entre las tres capitales suman 21 423 que se incrementan a 47 000 si se tienen en cuenta las comarcas de influencia.

¿Me podría aclarar la Comisión qué quiere decir exactamente con la frase «permitiendo la movilidad de más de 70 000 vehículos cada día entre las tres capitales vascas»?

¿Quiere decir que la Y vasca eliminará 70 000 vehículos diariamente de las carreteras vascas que circulan entre las capitales?

Si la respuesta es afirmativa, ¿en qué datos se basa la Comisión para dar la cifra de 70 000 vehículos diarios?

Teniendo en cuenta que más del 95 % de los desplazamientos en la CAV son intracomarcales, ¿cómo piensa la Comisión que la Y vasca mejorará la red de transportes locales y regionales?

Respuesta del Sr. Kallas en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de febrero de 2014)

La frase que menciona Su Señoría se refiere al flujo transfronterizo que atraviesa el tramo de autopista San Sebastián-Irún, sobre la base de los datos facilitados por el Observatorio del tráfico en los Pirineos.

La línea mixta de alta velocidad comúnmente conocida como «Y vasca» no solo garantizará la conexión interoperable de las redes RTE-T francesas y españolas en el corredor atlántico, sino que también permitirá la prestación de servicios de trenes de alta velocidad entre las tres capitales vascas, desviará de las carreteras el tráfico que cruza la región, y garantizará la conexión ferroviaria de los puertos de la RTE-T de la región, proporcionando de este modo una alternativa modal eficaz para el transporte de mercancías.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000117/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Movement of 70 000 vehicles and the Y Vasca

In answer to my Question E-012069/2013, Mr Kallas stated as follows:

'Y-Basque will directly contribute also to improving the local and regional transport, with more than 70 000 vehicles moving daily between the three Basque capitals'.

The 2003 Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) mobility study revealed that 97% of journeys were intra-regional and that the majority of these intra-regional journeys were by car (Basque Government Department of Transport and Public Works. 2003. Study on mobility within the BAC). Only 0.7% of these journeys were between the three capitals. Data from 2007 revealed that daily journeys between the three capitals totalled 21 423, a figure that rises to 47 000 if the surrounding areas are taken into consideration.

Could the Commission please clarify what exactly it means by the phrase 'more than 70 000 vehicles moving daily between the three Basque capitals'?

Does the Commission mean that the Y Vasca will remove 70 000 vehicles daily from the Basque roads that link the capitals?

If so, what data has the Commission used to arrive at the figure of 70 000 vehicles daily?

Given that over 95% of journeys within the BAC are intra-regional, is the Commission of the opinion that the Y Vasca will improve the local and regional transport network?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The phrase mentioned by the Honourable Member refers to the cross border flow crossing the San Sebastian -Irun motorway section, the data on which were provided by the observatory for the traffic across the Pyrenees.

The mixed high-speed line commonly referred to as 'Y Basque' will not only ensure the interoperable connection of the French and Spanish TEN-T Networks along the Atlantic corridor: it will also allow the provision of high-speed rail services between the three Basque Capitals, divert traffic crossing the Region from road, and ensure the rail connection of the TEN-T Ports of the Region, thus providing an efficient modal alternative for freight transport.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000121/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Gesunde Ernährung, die als Luxus betrachtet wird

Jüngsten Meldungen zufolge ist gesundes Essen zum Luxus für Familien und Alleinerziehende geworden. Dies ist besonders insofern Besorgnis erregend, als sich wohl kaum einer noch Gedanken über die Notwendigkeit gesunder Ernährung macht.

Gesunde Ernährung kann in Österreich circa 130 EUR mehr im Monat kosten — für manche Familie oder Alleinerziehende ein Luxus, von dem sie nur träumen kann.

1. Ist der Kommission dieser Umstand bekannt? Wenn ja: Was gedenkt sie den Mitgliedstaaten zu empfehlen, um allen einen Zugang zu gesunder Ernährung ermöglichen zu können — auch Familien und Alleinerziehenden?

2. Hat die Kommission Kenntnis davon, wie die Thematik gesunder Ernährung und tatsächlicher Leistbarkeit in anderen EU-Mitgliedstaaten aussieht, beziehungsweise gibt es bereits eine solche Studie, die einen EU-Durchschnittswert ermittelt hat? Wenn ja: Was sind die Maßnahmen, um Gesundheit und gesunde Ernährung entsprechend zu fördern und gerade durch Prävention die allgemeinen Gesundheits- und Sozialkosten in den Mitgliedstaaten zu senken?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(25. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission verweist die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-013584/2013.

Ihr ist bekannt, dass der Zusammenhang zwischen gesunder Ernährung und der Verfügbarkeit gesunder Lebensmittel zu erschwinglichen Preisen derzeit erforscht wird ([1]).

Im Weißbuch „Ernährung Übergewicht, Adipositas: Eine Strategie für Europa“ von 2007 ([2]) werden eine ausgewogene Ernährung und ein aktiver Lebensstil für alle Bürgerinnen und Bürger propagiert. Im Rahmen dieser Strategie werden Aktions-Partnerschaften unter Einbeziehung der 28 EU-Mitgliedstaaten (Hochrangige Gruppe für Ernährung und Bewegung ([3])) und der Zivilgesellschaft (Europäische Aktionsplattform für Ernährung, körperliche Bewegung und Gesundheit ([4])) gefördert.

Im Bericht zur Auswertung der Strategie von 2013 ([5]) wurde vorgeschlagen, jeweils mit Bedacht zu prüfen, wie sich ergriffene Maßnahmen auf wirtschaftlich benachteiligte Bevölkerungsschichten auswirken.

In Zusammenarbeit mit den Mitgliedstaaten arbeitet die Kommission daran, gesundes Essen leichter zugänglich und erschwinglicher zu machen. Über das EU-weite Schulobstprogramm ([6]) und die Europäische Schulmilchregelung ([7]) trägt die Kommission dazu bei, Schulkindern gesündere Essgewohnheiten beizubringen.

Außerdem hat die Kommission zwei Pilotprojekte ([8]) ins Leben gerufen, mit denen erreicht werden soll, dass Bevölkerungsgruppen, deren Haushaltseinkommen weniger als 50 % des EU-Durchschnitts beträgt, mehr frisches Obst und Gemüse verzehren.

Die Hochrangige Gruppe gestaltet einen von den Mitgliedstaaten durchzuführenden Aktionsplan zur Bekämpfung von Adipositas bei Kindern. Hiermit soll u. a. für den Verzehr von Obst und Gemüse sensibilisiert und die Verfügbarkeit gesunder Lebensmittel verbessert werden, und es wird besonders auf die Bedürfnisse wirtschaftlich benachteiligter Bevölkerungsgruppen eingegangen.

([1]) „Do healthier foods and diet patterns cost more than less healthy options? A systematic review and meta-analysis“ (Sind gesündere Lebensmittel und Ernährungsgewohnheiten teurer als ungesündere Varianten? Eine systematische Überprüfung und Metaanalyse) http://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/12/e004277.full.pdf+html?sid=a6d56515-bb30-4ed5-9aec-306652914400
([2]) KOM(2007)279.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_de.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_de.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/pheiac_nutrition_strategy_evaluation_en.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_de.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_de.htm
([8]) SANCO/2011/C4/01 und SANCO/2013/C4/02.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000121/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Healthy food regarded as a luxury

According to recent reports, healthy food is now a luxury for families and single parents. This news is particularly worrying because it seems to suggest that hardly anyone gives any thought to the need to eat healthily any more.

In Austria, eating healthily can cost roughly an extra EUR 130 per month — for many families or single parents an unimaginable luxury.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation? If so, what recommendations does it intend to make to the Member States in an effort to ensure that everyone — including families and single parents — has access to healthy food?

2. Is the Commission aware of the situation as regards healthy eating and the affordability of healthy food in other EU Member States, or does such a study already exist which has established an average value across the EU? If so, what measures are needed to promote health and healthy eating and what preventive measures can be taken to reduce overall health and welfare costs in the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

The European Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its Written Question E-013584/2013.

The Commission is aware of ongoing research on the link between healthy eating and affordability of healthy food ([1]).

The 2007 Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues ([2]) promotes a balanced diet and active lifestyles for all. The strategy encourages action-oriented partnerships involving the 28 EU Member States (High Level Group for Nutrition and Physical Activity ([3])) and civil society (EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health ([4])).

The 2013 Evaluation of the strategy ([5]) suggested a careful consideration of the effects that any implemented initiatives have on lower socioeconomic groups.

In cooperation with the Member States the Commission works on facilitating the access to and affordability of healthy food. Through the EU School Fruit Scheme ([6])and the School Milk Scheme ([7]) the Commission contributes to establishing healthier eating habits among school children.

The Commission has launched two pilot projects ([8]) that aim to increase consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in communities where the household income is below 50% of the EU average.

The High Level Group is shaping a Member States-led Action Plan to tackle childhood obesity that addresses, among other elements, the promotion of the consumption of fruit and vegetables and the availability of healthy foods, with a special concern for lower socioeconomic groups.

([1]) 'Do healthier foods and diet patterns cost more than less healthy options? A systematic review and meta-analysis' http://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/3/12/e004277.full.pdf+html?sid=a6d56515-bb30-4ed5-9aec-306652914400
([2]) COM(2007) 279.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/high_level_group/index_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/platform/index_en.htm
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/docs/pheiac_nutrition_strategy_evaluation_en.pdf
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sfs/index_en.htm
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk/school-milk-scheme/index_en.htm
([8]) SANCO/2011/C4/01 and SANCO/2013/C4/02.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000122/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Zinspapiere aus Südeuropa und deren Entwicklung

Die Zinsen für italienische, spanische und griechische Zinspapiere sind zwar gesunken (wobei festzuhalten ist, dass Griechenland seit dem Schuldenschnitt keine neuen aufgelegt hat), aber es finden sich für die Zinspapiere Italiens und Spaniens auch Käufer.

1. Wie beurteilt die Kommission die in diesem Jahr anstehenden Entwicklungen, wenn man berücksichtigt, dass die Staatsverschuldung zugenommen hat, die Wirtschaft geschrumpft ist und die EZB Geld „fast gratis" hergibt?

2. Wie schätzt die Kommission die Risiken einer solchen Situation auf die kurz- und langfristige Entwicklung der wirtschaftlichen Situation in der EU und insbesondere in der Eurozone ein?

3. Wie wird sich das nach Einschätzung der Kommission in der Folge auf den Anleihemarkt einerseits und auf die Investoren und schlussendlich die Steuerzahler andererseits auswirken?

Antwort von Herrn Rehn im Namen der Kommission
(21. Februar 2014)

Die anfälligeren südlichen EU-Mitgliedstaaten haben in den letzten Jahren bei ihren Strukturreformen und bei der Konsolidierung ihrer öffentlichen Finanzen beträchtliche Fortschritte erzielt. Auch wenn die Reformen nicht immer einfach und vielfach mit schwierigen Entscheidungen verbunden waren, zeigen sich nun doch allmählich positive Ergebnisse. Das entschlossene Vorgehen dieser Länder zugunsten der Haushalts- und Finanzstabilität wird von den Anlegern gewürdigt, was zur Folge hat, dass die Renditen und Zinsaufschläge für Staatsanleihen dieser Mitgliedstaaten im vergangenen Jahr merklich gesunken sind. Die Lage an den europäischen Staatsanleihemärkten ist heute weitaus besser als in den letzten Jahren und niedrigere Risikoprämien dank gesunder öffentlicher Finanzen kommen auch dem Steuerzahler zugute.

Ungeachtet dieser positiven Entwicklungen müssen die Reformen jedoch noch weitergehen, um den wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung und den dauerhaften Zugang zu den Finanzierungsmärkten zu sichern. Die Anleihetätigkeit der Mitgliedstaaten wird von der Europäischen Kommission nach wie vor aufmerksam verfolgt. Hierbei kommt dem neuen Rahmen der wirtschaftspolitischen Steuerung besondere Bedeutung zu, unter anderem der in der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 473/2013 enthaltenen Vorschrift, nach der die Mitgliedstaaten des Euro-Währungsgebiets ihre Planung für Schuldtitelemissionen und deren Zinssätze im Voraus mitteilen müssen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000122/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Bonds issued by southern European Member States and economic developments

Although interest rates on Italian, Spanish and Greek bonds have fallen (in which connection it should be noted that Greece has not issued any new bonds since the 'debt haircut'), Italy and Spain can still find buyers for their government debt.

1. What developments does the Commission expect to see over the coming year, bearing in mind that public debt has increased, the economy has shrunk and the ECB is handing out money 'almost for free'?

2. In the Commission's view, what risks does this situation pose for the short-term and long-term development of the economy of the EU, and of the eurozone in particular?

3. What impact does the Commission believe this will have on the bond markets, on the one hand, and on investors and, ultimately, on taxpayers, on the other?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(21 February 2014)

Over past couple of years vulnerable southern European Member States have made considerable progress in terms of structural reforms and fiscal consolidation. While these reforms have not always been easy and on many instances involved difficult choices, they have started to yield positive results. Investors appreciate the determination in improving fiscal and financial stability in these countries and, as a result, yields and spreads of government bonds of these Member States have markedly come down over the past year. The situation on the European government bond markets is much better now that it was over past few years and lower risk premia due to sound public finances benefits taxpayers as well.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, the reforms have to continue to secure the economic recovery and lasting access to funding markets. The European Commission continues to monitor debt issuance in Member States on regular basis. The new reinforced economic governance framework is very instrumental in this respect, including the obligation, as enshrined in Regulation 473/2013, by euro area Member States to report *ex-ante* their planned issuance of government bonds and yields.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000123/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Ausblicke auf die Finanzierbarkeit von Rentensystemen, vor allem in Österreich und Deutschland

Gibt es Berechnungen der Kommission, wie hoch das reale Einkommen der Arbeitnehmer in den nächsten 10/20/30/50 Jahren noch steigen kann, wenn der Beitragssatz zum Rentensystem in Ländern wie zum Beispiel Deutschland und Österreich bis zu 30/40 % des Lohnes wird betragen müssen — oder möglicherweise betragen könnte —, damit das Rentensystem in diesen Zeitabschnitten überhaupt noch finanziert werden kann?

Gibt es Berechnungen dazu, wie die Situation im EU-Durchschnitt aussehen wird?

Welche Maßnahmen werden seitens der Kommission vorgeschlagen, um die Lebenshaltungskosten der Ruhegehaltsempfänger einerseits und auch vor allem einen „gewissen" Lebensstandard andererseits zu sichern?

Antwort von Herrn Andor im Namen der Kommission
(26. Februar 2014)

Im Bericht über die demografische Alterung 2012 ([1]) analysierten die Kommission und der Ausschuss für Wirtschaftspolitik die wirtschaftlichen und finanziellen Auswirkungen der Bevölkerungsalterung bis 2060. Der Bericht enthält Projektionen der Pensionsausgaben auf der Grundlage einer Reihe makroökonomischer Annahmen ([2]). Die Arbeitsproduktivität und das Reallohnwachstum ([3]) dürften bis zu den 2020er-Jahren ansteigen und anschließend für die EU-27 relativ stabil bei rund 1,5 % liegen.

Bei unveränderter Politik und unveränderten Beitragssätzen sieht der Bericht über die demografische Alterung für die EU-27 zwischen 2010 und 2060 einen Anstieg der staatlichen Pensionsausgaben um 1,5 Prozentpunkte vor. Für Österreich und Deutschland liegt der prognostizierte Anstieg über dem EU-Durchschnitt (2,0 Prozentpunkte beziehungsweise 2,6 Prozentpunkte).

Gleichzeitig hat der Bericht zur Angemessenheit der Renten- und Pensionshöhe 2012 ([4]) der Kommission und des Ausschusses für Sozialschutz gezeigt, dass sich die jüngsten Reformen zur Kompensation des Ausgabenwachstums negativ auf die Angemessenheit der Leistungen auswirken.

Im Weißbuch zu Pensionen und Renten ([5]) schlug die Kommission zwei Hauptaktionsbereiche vor, die unter Berücksichtigung der demografischen Alterung angemessene und nachhaltige Pensionen sichern sollen: 1) Ausgleich der Arbeits- und Pensionszeit, indem Frauen und Männer dabei unterstützt werden, länger zu arbeiten, 2) Verbesserung der zusätzlichen Altersvorsorge. Im Weißbuch wird die Bedeutung eines ganzheitlichen Ansatzes zur Förderung einer längeren Lebensarbeitszeit, einschließlich Pensionspolitik-, Arbeitsmarkt- und Gesundheitsmaßnahmen, hervorgehoben.

Es wurden Initiativen der Kommission ins Leben gerufen, um den demografischen Wandel im Rahmen der Europäischen Innovationspartnerschaft im Bereich „Aktivität und Gesundheit im Alter" zu bewältigen. Das Kernziel ist, bis 2020 das Leben der EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger um zwei gesunde Lebensjahre zu verlängern und die Lebensqualität älterer Menschen in der EU zu verbessern.

([1]) Die Europäische Kommission (GD ECFIN) und der Ausschuss für Wirtschaftspolitik (2012) „2012 Ageing Report: Economic and budgetary projections for the 27 EU Member States", European Economy 2/2012, EC, Brüssel.
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm

([2]) für Arbeitskräfte, BIP usw.

([3]) Im Bericht über die demografische Alterung wird davon ausgegangen, dass die Reallöhne im Einklang mit der Arbeitsproduktivität steigen.

([4]) Pension Adequacy in the European Union 2010-2050.
http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7805&langId=en

([5]) KOM(2012)55 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000123/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Future funding of pension systems, in particular in Austria and Germany

Has the Commission calculated how much higher workers' real incomes can rise over the next 10/20/30/50 years, given that pension contributions in countries such as Germany and Austria will — or might — have to amount to 30/40% of wages if pension systems are still to be funded over those periods of time?

Have calculations been carried out to determine what the situation will be on average across the EU?

What measures is the Commission proposing in order to ensure, firstly, that pensioners have enough to live on, and, secondly, and more importantly, that everyone enjoys a reasonable standard of living?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

In the 2012 Ageing Report ([1]), the Commission and the Economic Policy Committee analysed the economic and budgetary impact of ageing populations up to 2060. The report includes projections of pension expenditure, based on a set of macroeconomic assumptions ([2]). Labour productivity and real wage growth ([3]) is projected to increase in the period to the 2020s and remain fairly stable at around 1.5% thereafter for EU-27.

Assuming no policy change, including as regards contribution rates, the Ageing Report projects a 1.5pp increase of public pension expenditure in EU-27 between 2010 and 2060. For Germany and Austria, the projected increase is above EU average (2.6pp and 2.0pp respectively).

At the same time, the 2012 Pension Adequacy Report ([4]) of the Commission and the Social Protection Committee showed that recent reforms aimed at offsetting the expenditure growth are having a negative impact on the adequacy of benefits.

In the White Paper on Pensions ([5]), the Commission suggested two main directions of action, aimed at safeguarding adequate and sustainable pensions against the background of ageing populations: 1. balancing the time spent in work and retirement by enabling and encouraging men and women to work longer; 2. enhancing complementary retirement savings. The White Paper stresses the importance of a holistic approach to promoting longer working lives, comprising pension policy, labour market and healthcare measures.

Commission initiatives have been launched to address demographic change, within the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy ageing, the headline target is to add two healthy life years to the life of EU citizens by 2020 and to improve the quality of life of older people living in the EU.

([1]) European Commission (DG ECFIN) and Economic Policy Committee (AWG), 2012, '2012 Ageing Report: Economic and budgetary projections for the 27 EU Member States', European Economy, No 2/2012, EC, Brussels.
http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2012/2012-ageing-report_en.htm
([2]) for labour force, GDP etc.
([3]) The Ageing Report assumes that real wages will grow in line with labour productivity.
([4]) Pension Adequacy in the European Union 2010-2050, http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7805&langId=en
([5]) COM(2012) 55 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000124/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Online-Boom soll auch in Europa ankommen

Jüngsten Berichten zufolge wird in Amerika in diverse Internet-Modelle sehr viel investiert — dieser Online-Boom soll nun auch nach Europa übergreifen. Nicht zuletzt bezeichnet der Seriengründer Oliver Samer den Wandel vom Offline- zum Online-Handel auch für 2014 als den „weltweit größten Wirtschaftstrend".

1. Ist der Kommission diese Einschätzung bekannt? Wenn ja, was sind ihre Beobachtungen und ihre vorsichtigen Ausblicke auf diese Entwicklung konkret in Bezug auf die Europäische Union?

2. Hat die Kommission diesbezüglich konkrete Zahlen für die EU beziehungsweise für den Euro-Raum vorliegen?

2a. Wenn ja, in welchen Bereichen des Handels gab es in den letzten Jahren hier deutliche Zunahmen und wie machten sich diese konkret bemerkbar?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(3. März 2014)

Die Kommission verfolgt aufmerksam die Entwicklungen im Einzelhandel, insbesondere im Online-Handel.

Der elektronische B2C-Handel ist in der Europäischen Union ein Tätigkeitsbereich mit hohen Zuwachsraten, und die Unternehmen entwickeln ihr Modell immer mehr zu Multikanalstrategien. Allerdings betreiben lediglich 20 % der Handelsunternehmen Online-Handel (gegenüber 54 % der Unternehmen im Hotelgewerbe), wobei der Online-Handel nur 5,5 % des Einzelhandels ausmacht (gegenüber 3,4 % im Jahr 2010) ([1]). Die Märkte einiger Mitgliedstaaten (UK, SU, DE, FR) gelten als reif. Der Online-Handel ist in den Bereichen Elektronik, Kulturprodukte, Tourismus und Bekleidung besonders ausgeprägt.

Anhand der aktuellen Daten lassen sich keine allgemeinen Rückschlüsse ziehen über die Folgen der Entwicklung des Online-Handels. Beispielsweise sinkt offenbar die Zahl der Videoverleihe, wohingegen die Zahl der Reisebüros steigt und bei Buchhandlungen die Lage stabil ist ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/docs/9th_edition_scoreboard_de.pdf
([2]) Quelle: Planet Retail.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000124/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Online boom set to occur in Europe too

According to recent reports, vast amounts are being invested in various Internet models in America — this online boom is now set to spread to Europe too. Indeed, Oliver Samer, who has founded a series of businesses, has said that the switch from offline to online sales will also be the biggest economic trend worldwide for 2014.

1. Is the Commission aware of this assessment? If so, what are its observations and its circumspect view with regard to how this will develop, specifically with regard to the European Union?

2. Does the Commission have concrete figures in this regard for the EU or for the Eurozone?

2a. If it does, in which retail sectors have there been significant increases in this regard over the last few years, and how have these manifested themselves in concrete terms?

(Version française)

Réponse donnée par M. Barnier au nom de la Commission
(3 mars 2014)

La Commission suit avec attention les évolutions du commerce de détail et du commerce électronique en particulier.

Le commerce électronique B2C est au sein de l'Union européenne une activité en forte croissance, et les entreprises font de plus en plus évoluer leur modèle vers des stratégies multicanaux. Cependant, seules 20 % des entreprises de commerce vendent en ligne (contre 54 % pour l'hôtellerie) et le commerce électronique ne représente encore que 5.5 % des ventes au détail (contre 3.4 % en 2010) ([1]). Le marché est considéré comme mûr dans certains EM (UK, SU, DE, FR). Le commerce électronique est particulièrement développé dans la vente d'électronique, produits culturels, services de tourisme, habillement.

Les données disponibles actuellement ne permettent pas de tirer des conclusions générales sur les conséquences du développement du commerce électronique. Par exemple, elles semblent montrer une diminution du nombre de magasins de location de vidéos, mais une augmentation de celui des agences de voyage, et une stabilité des librairies ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/consumer_research/editions/docs/9th_edition_scoreboard_en.pdf
([2]) Source : Planet retail.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000125/14
an die Kommission
Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl (PPE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Freihandelsabkommen EU — Kanada und die Rechte indigener Völker

Am 18. Oktober 2013 gelangten die Europäische Union und Kanada zu einer politischen Einigung bezüglich des Freihandelsabkommens CETA. Einzelne Bereiche des Abkommens werden noch verhandelt. Die Zustimmung des Parlaments steht noch aus. Vor dem Hintergrund, dass die Achtung der Menschenrechte ein Grundpfeiler der Europäischen Union ist, vor dem Hintergrund, dass die Erklärung der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte der indigenen Völker (61/295) sowohl von den europäischen Mitgliedstaaten als auch von Kanada angenommen wurde, vor dem Hintergrund immer wieder auftretender Menschenrechtsverletzungen zulasten von Personen indigener Abstammung durch kanadische Unternehmen in Drittstaaten wie Mexiko oder Guatemala sowie vor dem Hintergrund, dass die EU zweitwichtigster Handelspartner Kanadas ist, ergeben sich folgende Fragen:

1. Hat die Kommission im Laufe der Verhandlungen mit Kanada über ein Freihandelsabkommen die Rechte indigener Völker und die Verletzung dieser Rechte durch kanadische Handelsunternehmen thematisiert und falls ja mit welchem Ergebnis?

2. Plant die Kommission die Rechte indigener Völker in dem Freihandelsabkommen zu benennen bzw. einen Bezug zur Erklärung der Vereinten Nationen über die Rechte der indigenen Völker zu verankern?

3. Sieht die Kommission die Möglichkeit, diese und/oder jede weitere Handelspartnerschaft an die generelle Achtung der Menschenrechte zu binden, und welche konkreten Maßnahmen schlägt die Kommission diesbezüglich vor?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(20. Februar 2014)

Als gleichgesinnte Partner, die der Förderung und dem Schutz der Menschenrechte weltweit verpflichtet sind, haben die EU und Kanada gemeinsame Werte und arbeiten eng zusammen. Dies gilt auch für multilaterale Menschenrechtsforen, insbesondere die Vereinten Nationen, wo sie die Initiativen der jeweils anderen Seite unterstützen. Dieses gemeinsame Konzept spiegelt sich auch in regelmäßigen Konsultationen über Menschenrechtsfragen, bei denen u. a. Fragen zu indigenen Bevölkerungsgruppen einschließlich indigener Rechte erörtert werden. In diesem Zusammenhang hatte die EU in der Vergangenheit Gelegenheit, unterstützende Empfehlungen hinsichtlich der Situation der Aborigenes zu formulieren.

Die Menschenrechte werden auch in den Gesprächen über das Abkommen über strategische Partnerschaft zwischen der EU und Kanada thematisiert. Verhandelt wird auf der Grundlage des „Gemeinsamen Ansatzes für die Verwendung politischer Klauseln“ ([1]), der Wortlaut des Abkommens über strategische Partnerschaft ist aber noch nicht endgültig.

Im Hinblick auf das Verhalten von Unternehmen fördert die Kommission die Verbreitung von Verfahren zur Umsetzung des Konzepts der sozialen Verantwortung der Unternehmen (CSR) einschließlich der Einhaltung der international anerkannten Leitlinien und Grundsätze, wie etwa der OECD-Leitlinien für multinationale Unternehmen, die sich auch auf die Menschenrechte beziehen. In diesem Zusammenhang verfolgt die Kommission auch die Aufnahme von Bestimmungen über die soziale Verantwortung der Unternehmen in die Handelsabkommen der EU, z. B. das umfassende Wirtschafts- und Handelsabkommen (CETA) mit Kanada.

Was den im Bereich Handel und Menschenrechte allgemein verfolgten Ansatz betrifft, so verweist die Kommission die Frau Abgeordnete auf ihre Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage E-012975/2013.

([1]) Ausschuss der Ständigen Vertreter (Coreper) 10491/1/09 vom 2. Juni 2009.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000125/14
to the Commission
Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl (PPE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: EU-Canada free trade agreement and the rights of indigenous peoples

On 18 October 2013, the European Union and Canada reached a political agreement on a comprehensive economic and trade agreement (CETA). Specific areas of the agreement are still being negotiated, and Parliament has not yet given its approval. Given that respect for human rights is a fundamental European Union principle, that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (61/295) has been accepted by the EU Member States and by Canada, that the human rights of people of indigenous origin are repeatedly being violated by Canadian companies in countries such as Mexico or Guatemala, and that the EU is Canada's second most important trading partner, the following questions arise:

1. In the course of the negotiations with Canada on a free trade agreement, did the Commission raise the issue of the rights of indigenous peoples and the violation of these rights by Canadian companies, and, if so, with what outcome?

2. Does the Commission plan to set out the rights of indigenous peoples in the free trade agreement or to include a reference to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

3. Does the Commission see any scope for making this and/or any other trade partnership contingent on respect for human rights in general, and what specific measures is the Commission proposing in this regard?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

As like-minded partners committed to the promotion and protection of human rights around the world, the EU and Canada share common values and work closely together. There is considerable cooperation in multilateral human rights fora, notably the UN, and support to each other's initiatives. This shared approach is also reflected in regular consultations on human rights during which indigenous issues including indigenous rights are also being discussed. In this context, the EU had in the past the opportunity to formulate supportive recommendations concerning the situation of Aboriginals.

The issue of human rights is also part of the discussions for the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the EU and Canada. While negotiations are conducted based on the 'Common Approach to the use of political clauses' ([1]), the SPA is not yet finalised.

With regard to the behaviour of companies, the Commission actively promotes the uptake of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices, including adherence to internationally recognised guidelines and principles, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises which also cover human rights issues. In this context, the Commission also pursue the inclusion of provisions addressing CSR in the EU trade agreements, such as the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Canada.

As regards the approach to trade and human rights more generally, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to its reply to Written Question E-012975/2013.

([1]) Coreper 10491/1/09 of 2 June 2009.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000126/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(8 januari 2014)

Betreft: Uitleg over de mogelijke harmonisering van de academische kalender

Voor universiteitsstudenten is het een meerwaarde om (een deel van) hun studie aan een buitenlandse Europese universiteit te volgen via het Erasmusprogramma. Er ontstaat echter een probleem wanneer de examenmomenten tussen de verschillende Europese universiteiten niet op hetzelfde moment vallen.

Wanneer de student niet aanwezig is op het examenmoment in zijn thuisuniversiteit, wegens opstart van het nieuwe academiejaar/semester in zijn gastuniversiteit, kan hij/zij conform het respectievelijk studiecontract mogelijkerwijs niet geëvalueerd worden. Soms dient een student bovendien te voldoen aan een minimum quotum aanwezigheid waardoor het probleem nog meer escaleert.

In ieder geval aan de KULeuven is het de regel dat voorrang dient gegeven te worden aan de regels van de thuisuniversiteit (KULeuven dus). Zo gebeurt het bijvoorbeeld soms dat een student een examen niet aflegt in eerste zittijd en kiest voor de tweede zittijd, zodat zijn/haar buitenlands avontuur niet in het gedrang komt.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Erkent de Commissie dit probleem?

2. Plant de Commissie Europese afspraken om de opstart van het academiejaar/semesteraanvraag of examenperiodes gelijk te schakelen?

3. Worden er specifiek afspraken gemaakt tussen de thuis — en gastuniversiteit over de examenperiode van de Erasmusstudenten?

Antwoord van mevrouw Vassiliou namens de Commissie
(26 februari 2014)

Het intergouvernementele Bolognaproces heeft geleid tot een reeks hervormingen met als doel de hogeronderwijsstelsels in Europa coherenter te maken en beter op elkaar af te stemmen. Het is echter niet de doelstelling van de Europese Unie één enkel model voor het hoger onderwijs in de Unie te bevorderen of in te stellen. Nationale overheden zijn zelf verantwoordelijk voor de organisatie van hun onderwijs- en opleidingsstelsels en individuele hogeronderwijsinstellingen organiseren zelf hun curricula en studentenbeoordelingen.

De Commissie ondersteunt hogeronderwijsinstellingen bij de modernisering van zowel hun onderwijsaanbod als hun manier van functioneren. Om het verwerven van studiepunten in het buitenland voor studenten te vergemakkelijken, beveelt de Commissie aan dat de hogeronderwijsinstellingen in de ontwerpfase al perioden of ruimte voor mobiliteit in de structuur van het curriculum opnemen. Dit maakt het mogelijk om vast te stellen in welk semester of jaar een studieperiode of stage in het buitenland het best in het programma zou passen en bij welke partnerinstellingen of -organisaties vergelijkbare of complementaire leerresultaten kunnen worden bereikt.

Het nieuwe programma Erasmus+ voorziet in verdere verbeteringen op het gebied van erkenning. De studie-overeenkomsten die voor vertrek door de studenten en de thuis- en de gastinstellingen worden ondertekend, moeten een overzicht bevatten van alle studiepunten die de student in het buitenland zal behalen en door de thuisinstelling zullen worden erkend zonder verdere cursussen of examens. Het interinstitutioneel akkoord tussen de uitzendende en ontvangende instellingen bevat ook informatie over het geplande tijdschema voor de uitwisselingen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000126/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Explanation in relation to the possible harmonisation of the academic calendar

University students see added value in the opportunity to undertake (part of) their studies at a university in another European country via the Erasmus programme. However, a problem arises when the examination periods at the various universities across Europe do not coincide.

If students are not in attendance during the examination period at their home university, due to starting the new academic year/semester at their host university, they may potentially not be assessed in accordance with their respective study contract. It is sometimes the case that students are also required to meet a minimum attendance quota, which escalates the problem even further.

At Leuven Catholic University, at all events, the rules at the home university (i.e. Leuven) are, as a rule, given precedence. It may therefore be the case, for example, that students sometimes do not sit an examination in the first examination period and opt to do so in the second examination period, in order to avoid jeopardising their studies abroad.

In view of this, I ask the following questions:

1. Does the Commission recognise this problem?

2. Is the Commission planning EU-wide arrangements to bring the start date of the academic year/start of the semester or examination periods into line?

3. Are arrangements being made specifically between the home and host universities in relation to the examination period for Erasmus students?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The inter-governmental Bologna Process has led to a range of reforms aiming to make higher education systems in Europe more coherent and compatible. However, it is not the objective of the European Union to promote or impose a single model of higher education in the Union. National governments are responsible for the organisation of their education and training systems, and individual higher education institutions organise their own curricula and student assessment.

The Commission supports higher education institutions in their efforts to modernise, both in terms of the courses they offer and the way they operate. In order to facilitate student credit mobility abroad, the Commission recommends that higher education institutions foresee mobility periods or 'slots' in the structure of the curricula at the design stage. This enables the identification of the semester or year when a period of study and/or traineeship abroad would best fit into the programme, as well as the partner institutions or organisations where compatible or complementary learning outcomes could be achieved.

The new Erasmus+ programme provides further improvements in the area of recognition. The Learning Agreements signed by students and the home and host institutions before departure must identify all the credits that the student will earn abroad and which will be recognised by the home institution without any further courses or exams. The interinstitutional agreement between the sending and receiving institutions also contains information about the planned calendar for mobility exchanges.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000127/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(8 januari 2014)

Betreft: Uitleg naar aanleiding van de organisatie van de kinderopvang in Vlaanderen

Kinderopvang in België wordt vandaag deels gesubsidieerd. Daarnaast zijn er ook zelfstandigen, goed voor zo'n 25 000 plaatsen.

In Vlaanderen is het zo dat de kinderopvang inkomensgerelateerd geregeld is. Iemand met een hoger inkomen betaalt dus meer voor de kinderopvang dan iemand met een lager inkomen. Daardoor kan de opvangprijs die de ouder aan de onthaalouder betaalt, aanzienlijk hoger liggen (27 euro) dan de uitkering die de onthaalouder ontvangt (18,77 euro). De overheid bepaalt daarnaast ook hoeveel kinderen (max. 8) de onthaalouder kan opvangen (al naargelang de voorzieningen). Met andere woorden: de overheid vraagt een dienst aan de onthaalouder. Maar het probleem daarbij voor de onthaalouder is dat zij op die manier geen (sociale) rechten kan opbouwen. Wie dus na een tijd stopt, kan die ervaring bijvoorbeeld niet meepakken naar een volgende job.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Kan het dat een overheid een dienstverlening vergoedt aan een onthaalouder, maar dat die op zijn/haar beurt geen sociale rechten als zelfstandige kan opbouwen?

2. Hoe is dat geregeld in de andere Europese lidstaten? Hanteren ze daar een gelijkaardig systeem of hebben ze daar een ander systeem ingevoerd?

Antwoord van de heer Andor namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2014)

1. De vaststelling van de hoogte van de socialezekerheidsbijdragen en -uitkeringen voor de verschillende categorieën werknemers behoort hoofdzakelijk tot de bevoegdheid van de lidstaten.

2. Meer informatie over de organisatie van onderwijs en opvang voor jonge kinderen (OOJK) in de EU is te vinden in het onderzoek over sociale diensten van algemeen belang ([1]), dat in oktober 2011 door de Europese Commissie is gepubliceerd. In het onderzoek wordt er onder meer op gewezen dat in de meeste landen de lokale autoriteiten voor de organisatie van de OOJK-diensten verantwoordelijk zijn, maar de nationale overheid die diensten grotendeels financiert. Uit het onderzoek komt tevens naar voren dat er grote verschillen tussen de lidstaten bestaan wat betreft de financieringsbronnen voor de dienstverlening. De Europese Commissie heeft in november 2013 een uitwisseling van goede praktijken op het gebied van kinderopvang georganiseerd, waar het Franse systeem van gastouders is besproken ([2]). Tijdens de jaarlijkse conventie van het Europees platform tegen armoede van eind november heeft zij eveneens een workshop over goede praktijken op het gebied van de financiering van kinderopvang georganiseerd ([3]).

([1]) Beschikbaar via: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=794&langId=nl.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2013/reconciliation_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en & catId=88&eventsId=927&furtherEvents=yes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000127/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Explanation further to the organisation of childcare services in Flanders

Childcare services in Belgium are currently being partly subsidised. There are also a number of self-employed childminders, who are sufficient to provide around 25 000 places.

The situation in Flanders is that childcare is organised on an income-related basis. Someone with a higher income therefore pays more for childcare services than someone with a lower income. As a result, the price for childcare that a parent pays to the childminder may be considerably higher (27 euros) than the payment received by the childminder (18.77 euros). The Flemish government also determines how many children (max. 8) may be provided with childcare by the childminder (depending on the facilities). In other words, the government requires a service of the childminder. But the problem for childminders is that this does not enable them to build up any rights or social security entitlements. Therefore, those who cease work as a self-employed childminder after a time will find that any time spent in that job will not afford them any rights or entitlements associated with years of service that can be taken into account in the event that they later take up another job, for example.

In view of this, I ask the following questions:

1. Is it permissible for a government to pay a childminder for a service, but for that childminder to be unable to build up any social security entitlements as a self-employed person?

2. How is this organised in the other EU Member States? Do they employ a similar systemfor childcare or have they introduced a different system for this?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

1. The rates of social security contributions and benefits for various categories of workers fall primarily within Member States' competences.

2. More information on the organisation of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in the EU can be found in the Study on Social Services of General Interest ([1]) published in October 2011 by the European Commission. Among others, the study highlights that responsibility for the organisation of ECEC service provision is in most countries at local level, while the framework for financing services mostly lies with the national level. The study also shows large variations across Member States as regards the financing sources for service provision. The European Commission organised an exchange of good practices on the childcare services in November 2013 where the French child minder system was discussed ([2]). During the annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty at the end of November, it also organised a workshop on good practices on the financing of childcare services ([3]).

([1]) Available here: http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=794&langId=en
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/other-institutions/good-practices/review-seminars/seminars_2013/reconciliation_en.htm
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=88&eventsId=927&furtherEvents=yes

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000128/14
do Komisji
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Zmiana przepisów dotyczących metod wędzenia

Zgodnie z rozporządzeniem Komisji Europejskiej od września 2014 r. zostaną zaostrzone dopuszczalne limity substancji smolistych w żywności, między innymi w mięsie, wędlinach czy rybach. Według przedstawicieli przedsiębiorstw stosujących tradycyjne metody wędzenia swoich wyrobów w obliczu wprowadzonych norm ich działalność stanie się niemożliwa.

W związku z tym pragnę zapytać Komisję:

1. Czy zmiany obejmą wszystkich producentów, niezależnie od wielkości produkcji? Czy Komisja uwzględniła listę zastrzeżonych produktów tradycyjnych, np. oscypka czy kiełbasy lisieckiej?

2. Jakie argumenty stały za wprowadzeniem niniejszej regulacji? Czy zanotowano w tej sprawie aktywność lobbingową konkurencji? Czy w powyższej sprawie zajmował stanowisko rząd RP?

3. Czy zostały przeanalizowane takie skutki zdrowotne tej decyzji, jak na przykład zwiększenie się rynkowego udziału produktów „chemicznie wędzonych" za pomocą tzw. „dymu w płynie"?

4. Jakie działania podejmą instytucje UE, aby chronić tradycyjne polskie receptury i zabezpieczyć małe firmy wykorzystujące tradycyjne receptury przed bankructwem?

5. Czy zmiany dotyczą także małych producentów?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Tonia Borga w imieniu Komisji
(27 lutego 2014 r.)

1. Zmiany obejmują wszystkich producentów, niezależnie od wielkości produkcji. Unijne, najwyższe dopuszczalne poziomy dotyczące wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych (WWA) nie mają zastosowania do oscypka, ponieważ na poziomie UE nie ustanowiono żadnych najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów dla wędzonego sera. Najwyższe dopuszczalne poziomy WWA w wędzonym mięsie i produktach mięsnych wędzonych mają także zastosowanie do tradycyjnych specjalności z wędzonego mięsa, takich jak kiełbasa lisiecka.

2. WWA są substancjami rakotwórczymi działającymi genotoksycznie, a ich obecność w żywności może stanowić zagrożenie dla zdrowia ([1]). Konieczne jest zatem ustanowienie najwyższych dopuszczalnych poziomów na najniższym, racjonalnie możliwym do osiągnięcia poziomie.

W dniu 8 kwietnia 2011 r. zwrócono się do Stałego Komitetu ds. Łańcucha Żywnościowego i Zdrowia Zwierząt o wydanie opinii w sprawie projektu rozporządzenia zmieniającego – w odniesieniu do WWA – rozporządzenie (WE) nr 1881/2006 ustalające najwyższe dopuszczalne poziomy niektórych zanieczyszczeń w środkach spożywczych ([2]). Projekt rozporządzenia otrzymał pozytywną opinię Komitetu – za jego przyjęciem głosowały wszystkie państwa członkowskie (w tym Polska), z wyjątkiem Łotwy i Estonii, które wstrzymały się od głosu. Nie podniesiono żadnych kwestii dotyczących wędzenia mięsa i produktów mięsnych.

3. Przy zastosowaniu dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych osiągnięcie obniżonych dopuszczalnych poziomów WWA w mięsie wędzonym i produktach mięsnych wędzonych możliwe jest również w przypadku tradycyjnego wędzenia drewnem.

4. Na wniosek właściwych organów Komisja mogłaby służyć pomocą w zakresie stosowania dobrych praktyk wędzarniczych.

5. Zmiany dotyczą także małych producentów.

([1]) Opinia naukowa panelu ds. środków trujących w łańcuchu żywnościowym wydana na wniosek Komisji Europejskiej, dotycząca wielopierścieniowych węglowodorów aromatycznych w żywności. Dziennik EFSA (2008) 724, 1-114. Dostępna na stronie internetowej: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/724.pdf

([2]) Sprawozdanie jest dostępne na stronie: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/sum_08042011_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000128/14
to the Commission
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Changes to legislation concerning food smoking methods

Under a new Commission regulation, as of September 2014 the maximum permissible limits for tarry substances in food, including meat, smoked meats and fish, are to be lowered. Businesses which use traditional methods for smoking their products maintain that it will be impossible for them to carry on under the new legislation.

1. Will the changes apply to all producers regardless of their production volume? Has the Commission taken proper account of the list of traditional specialities guaranteed, such as *oscypek* and *kiełbasa lisiecka*?

2. What were the arguments in favour of introducing this regulation? Was there any lobbying by competitors in this matter? Did the Polish Government give its views on the matter?

3. Has a thorough assessment been made of the health impact this decision will have by, among other things, increasing the market share of products that have been 'chemically smoked' using 'liquid smoke'?

4. What steps will the EU institutions take to safeguard traditional Polish recipes and protect small businesses using traditional recipes from bankruptcy?

5. Do the changes also apply to small producers?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

1. The changes apply to all producers regardless their production volume. No maximum levels for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) are applicable at EU level for oscypek, as no maximum level has been established at EU level for smoked cheese. The maximum level for PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products is also applicable to traditional smoked meat specialities such as kielbasa lisiecka.

2. PAHs are genotoxic carcinogens and their presence in food is of health concern ([1]). Maximum levels have therefore to be established at a level as low as reasonably achievable.

The draft Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in food as regards PAH was submitted for opinion to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on 8 April 2011 ([2]). The draft Regulation received a favourable opinion from the Committee, all Member States, including Poland, voting in favour, with only Latvia and Estonia abstaining. No concerns as regards the smoking of meat and meat products were raised.

3. By applying good smoking practices, also with traditional wood-smoking, the lower maximum levels for PAH in smoked meat and smoked meat products are achievable.

4. The Commission is considering providing assistance, if requested by the competent authority, for the application of the good smoking practices.

5. The changes also apply to small producers.

([1]) Scientific Opinion of the Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain on a request from the European Commission on Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Food. The EFSA Journal (2008) 724, 1-114. Available at: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/doc/724.pdf

([2]) Report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/committees/regulatory/scfcah/toxic/sum_08042011_en.pdf

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-000129/14
aan de Commissie
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(8 januari 2014)

Betreft: Stemming Europees Parlement op 9 oktober 2013 over vluchttijdbeperkingen — follow-upvraag

Tijdens zijn toespraak in de plenaire vergadering van het Europees Parlement op 8 oktober 2013 stelde commissaris Kallas dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest. In haar antwoord op mijn schriftelijke vraag P-013171/2013 stelt de Commissie evenwel dat de EU-voorschriften betreffende paraatheidsdiensten thuis zodanig zijn opgesteld dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest.

Kan de Commissie bevestigen dat haar antwoord op mijn vraag P-013171 zo moet worden begrepen dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst heeft na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest, in overeenstemming met de toespraak van commissaris Kallas in Straatsburg op 8 oktober j.l.?

Antwoord van de heer Kallas namens de Commissie
(27 januari 2014)

Wat betreft paraatheidsdiensten buiten de luchthaven, is de Commissie van mening dat de combinatie van vluchtdiensten met andere paraatheidsdiensten, zoals paraatheid thuis, gecontroleerd zal worden door paraatheidsdiensten tot maximaal 6 uren te beperken indien zij worden gevolgd door een vluchtdienst. De EU-regelgeving betreffende paraatheidsdiensten thuis is zodanig opgesteld dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst zal hebben na 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest. De Commissie zal het EASA vragen zijn certificeringsspecificaties zodanig vast te stellen dat geen enkel bemanningslid vluchtdienst zal hebben na meer dan 18 uur wakker te zijn geweest.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000129/14
to the Commission
Saïd El Khadraoui (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: European Parliament vote of 9 October 2013 on flight time limitations — follow-up question

Follow-up question to Written Question P-013171/2013

Commissioner Kallas stated in his speech during the plenary session in Strasbourg on 8 October 2013 that 'no crew member will be on flight duty after more than 18 hours awake.' However, in its answer to my written question concerning the European Parliament vote on 9 October 2013 on flight time limitations (P-013171/2013), the Commission said in response to my second question that 'the EU rules on home standby have been developed in such a way that no crew member should be on flight duty after more than 18 hours awake.'

Can the Commission confirm that its written answer to Question P-013171/2013 should be understood to mean that no crew member will be on flight duty after more than 18 hours awake, in accordance with the speech given by Commissioner Kallas in Strasbourg on 8 October?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(27 January 2014)

Regarding standby other than airport standby the Commission considers that the combination of other standby such as home standby with flight duty will be controlled by limiting standby as a rule to 6 hours when it is followed by a flight duty. The EU rules on home standby have been developed in such a way that no crew member will be on a flight duty after more than 18 hours awake. The Commission will request EASA to adopt its certification specifications in such a way that no crew member will be on a flight duty after more than 18 hours awake.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-000130/14
do Komisji
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(8 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Wykorzystanie funduszy europejskich

Według informacji dot. wykorzystania funduszy europejskich dostępnych na portalu polskiego Ministerstwa Infrastruktury i Rozwoju, Kościół i polskie organizacje kościelne otrzymały 61 499 178,14 PLN dotacji unijnych na projekty z zakresu polityki równości szans płci.

Istnieje podejrzenie, iż projekty te nie uwzględniały specyfiki sytuacji kobiet i mężczyzn, nie odnosiły się do istniejących nierówności oraz nie proponowały konkretnych działań wspierających równość szans płci. Projekty te prawdopodobnie w żaden sposób nie realizowały zasady równości, przez co nie kwalifikowały się do wsparcia unijnego.

Kościół i organizacje kościelne postrzegają kobiety wyłącznie przez pryzmat tradycyjnego podziału ról, przez co nie tylko nie przyczyniają się do zwalczania istniejących nierówności, ale przede wszystkim działają na rzecz utrwalania stereotypów płciowych i segregacji płci.

1. Jakie działania Komisja planuje przedsięwziąć w celu wyjaśnienia podejrzenia niewłaściwego dysponowania środkami finansowymi na projekty gender mainstreaming?

2. Jakie środki zapobiegawcze zastosuje Komisja w celu dopilnowania, aby w przyszłości beneficjenci projektów genderowych nie wstępowali publicznie przeciwko celom równościowym?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(7 lutego 2014 r.)

Równość kobiet i mężczyzn jako podstawowe prawo i wspólna zasada Unii Europejskiej jest również zasadą horyzontalną, której należy przestrzegać, prowadząc działania w ramach funduszy strukturalnych. Ponadto Komisja będzie kontynuować ścisłe monitorowanie postępu państw członkowskich w zakresie równości płci w ramach europejskiego semestru. W celu dostosowania polityki spójności i celów strategii „Europa 2020" zalecenia dla poszczególnych krajów ([1]) w sprawie równości płci powinny być strategicznymi punktami odniesienia przy programowaniu umowy o partnerstwie oraz programów operacyjnych, których celem jest wzmocnienie praw społecznych i gospodarczych kobiet.

Ponadto pomoc w ramach funduszy strukturalnych jest udzielana na zasadzie zarządzania dzielonego między Komisją Europejską a państwami członkowskimi w granicach właściwych kompetencji każdego partnera.

W przypadku niewłaściwego wykorzystania funduszy unijnych Komisja zwraca się do instytucji zarządzającej o dodatkowe informacje na temat podnoszonych kwestii dotyczących określonego projektu, i prosi o sprawdzenie, czy projekt został wybrany zgodnie z kryteriami dotyczącymi danego programu, a także czy zostały osiągnięte jego cele. Wobec braku bardziej szczegółowych informacji dotyczących projektu i rodzaju zaangażowanych funduszy Komisja nie jest w stanie wyrazić swojej opinii.

Odnośnie środków zapobiegawczych podejmowanie odpowiednich kroków w celu zapobiegania wszelkiej dyskryminacji między innymi ze względu na płeć jest wymogiem prawnym zarówno dla państw członkowskich, jak i Komisji ([2]). Komisja zapewnia rozpatrywanie kwestii równości kobiet i mężczyzn oraz właściwego uwzględniania problematyki płci podczas oceny polityki i interwencji w czasie przygotowania i realizacji dokumentów programowych, w tym w odniesieniu do monitorowania, sprawozdawczości i oceny.

([1]) W zeszłym semestrze 11 państw członkowskich otrzymało zalecenia dotyczące równości płci. http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/

([2]) Art. 7 rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1303/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000130/14
to the Commission
Joanna Senyszyn (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Deployment of European funds

According to information on the deployment of European funds published on the web page of the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure and Development, the Church and Polish Church organisations received PLN 61 499 178.14 in EU subsidies for projects in the area of equal opportunities for men and women.

There are suspicions that these projects did not take into account the specific nature of men's and women's situations, address existing inequalities, or propose specific actions in support of equal opportunities for men and women. It is likely that these projects did not help the cause of gender equality in any way and were thus ineligible for EU support.

The Church and Church organisations perceive women solely through the prism of traditional gender roles. They therefore not only fail to help combat existing inequalities — they also act to perpetuate gender stereotypes and gender segregation.

1. What steps does the Commission plan to take in order to investigate suspicions that funds for gender mainstreaming projects have been improperly used?

2. What preventive measures will the Commission apply in order to ensure that genderproject beneficiaries do not publicly oppose gender targets in the future?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(7 February 2014)

Equality between men and women, a fundamental right and a common principle of the European Union, is also a horizontal principle to be ensured by all actions undertaken by Structural Funds (SF). Furthermore, the Commission will continue to closely monitoring the Member States' progress on gender equality through the European Semester. For aligning the Cohesion Policy and the Europe 2020 targets the country-specific recommendations ([1]) on gender equality should be strategic reference points for the programming of the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes to strengthen women's social and economic rights.

In addition the assistance under the SF is provided according to shared management between the European Commission and the Member States, with due regard for their respective powers.

In case of improper use of the EU funds, the Commission asks the managing authority to provide more information about the alleged facts on a particular project and asks them to check whether the project was selected in line with the criteria for this programme and whether it achieved its objectives. In the absence of more precise information on project and type of Funds engaged, the Commission is not in a position to comment.

With regards to the preventive measures, taking appropriate steps preventing from any discrimination based *inter alia* on sex is a regulatory requirement both for the MS and the Commission ([2]). The Commission ensures that equality between women and men and the proper integration of gender perspective are taken into account, throughout assessment of policies and interventions during the preparation and implementation of programming documents, including in relation to monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

([1]) During the last Semester 11 Member States have received country-specific recommendations on gender equality: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/country-specific-recommendations/

([2]) Article 7of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000131/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Arquitectura internacional del gobierno de internet

El pasado 7 de octubre, los líderes de las organizaciones encargadas de la gestión técnica de internet acordaban en la Declaración de Montevideo la conveniencia de reforzar sustancialmente los mecanismos de la gestión de internet y convenían en la necesidad de acelerar la globalización de las funciones de la ICANN y la IANA hacia un sistema en el que todas las partes interesadas, incluidos los Gobiernos, participen en igualdad de condiciones.

Recientemente, el Gobierno de Brasil, tras mostrar su preocupación por las denuncias de espionaje de Estados Unidos, ha anunciado la organización de una cumbre internacional en abril de 2014 sobre el futuro de la administración internacional de internet, con el mandato de elaborar nuevos principios y reglas de gestión y de desarrollar una nueva arquitectura institucional para el gobierno de internet que podría sustituir la supervisión de los EE.UU. sobre la ICANN.

La conferencia anunciada pretende reunir a los diferentes sectores interesados y ligados a internet y se desarrollará al margen del marco de Naciones Unidas (del IGF).

Por todo ello, pregunto a la Comisión:

1. ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión la convocatoria realizada por el Gobierno de Brasil?

2. ¿Piensa la Comisión participar en la misma y en qué términos?

Respuesta de la Sra. Kroes en nombre de la Comisión
(21 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión considera que la «Reunión multilateral mundial sobre la gobernanza de Internet» prevista para abril de 2014 en Sao Paulo constituye una valiosa oportunidad para seguir reforzando el diálogo internacional necesario para lograr un mayor consenso internacional sobre una cuestión tan importante como el futuro de la gobernanza de Internet. La Comisión continúa jugando un papel significativo en el diálogo internacional en torno a este aspecto fundamental. Habida cuenta de la firme manifestación de interés y apoyo al proceso por parte de la Comisión, la vicepresidenta de la Comisión responsable de la Agenda Digital ha sido invitada a asistir a la Conferencia, a lo que ha accedido. La posición de la Comisión figura en la Comunicación sobre política y gobernanza de Internet ([1]) adoptada el 12 de febrero de 2014, y, sobre esta base, la Comisión velará por que todo resultado tenga debidamente en cuenta las prioridades acordadas por la UE en cuanto a la gobernanza de Internet. Se trata, en particular, de la necesidad de mantener una Internet abierta, a fin de promover la libertad de expresión y el respeto de los derechos humanos, además de garantizar que los distintos mecanismos multilaterales que actualmente se ocupan de la gobernanza de Internet sean inclusivos y representativos de los intereses de los usuarios de Internet en todos los países del mundo.

([1]) COM(2014) 72 de 12.2.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000131/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: International Internet governance architecture

On 7 October 2013, the leaders of organisations responsible for the technical management of the Internet collectively acknowledged in the Montevideo Statement that Internet management mechanisms should be substantially strengthened and agreed on the need to speed up the globalisation of ICANN and IANA functions towards an environment in which all stakeholders, including governments, participate on an equal footing.

Recently, after expressing its concerns about reports of US spying activity, the Brazilian government announced its intention to organise an international summit in April 2014 on the future of the international administration of the Internet, with the mandate of creating new principles and rules for managing and developing a new institutional architecture for Internet governance that could replace US monitoring of ICANN.

The aim of the proposed conference is to bring together the various sectors associated with the Internet that also have a vested interest in it. The conference is to be held outside the aegis of the United Nations (the IGF).

May I therefore ask the Commission:

1. What is the Commission's opinion of the conference called by the Brazilian government?

2. Is the Commission thinking about participating, and if so on what terms?

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

The Commission views the 'Global Multistakeholder meeting on Internet governance' scheduled for Sao Paulo in April 2014 as an important opportunity to further enhance the level of international dialogue that is needed to achieve a better international consensus on the important issue of the future of Internet governance. The Commission continues to play a significant role in the international dialogue on this important issue. On the basis of the Commission's strong expression of interest and support for the process, the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda has been invited — and has accepted — to attend the Conference. The Commission's position is set out in the communication on Internet Policy and Governance ([1]) adopted on 12 February 2014, and on this basis the Commission shall seek to ensure that any outcome takes appropriate account of the EU's agreed priorities for Internet governance. These include the need to maintain an open Internet, to promote free speech and human rights and to ensure that the various multistakeholder mechanisms that currently ensure the governance of the Internet are inclusive and representative of the interests of Internet users in all the countries of the world.

([1]) COM(2014) 72, 12.2.2014.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000132/14
an die Kommission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Relativierung der sogenannten „Zockerbremse“ für Banken

Der Eigenhandel der Banken war in der Finanzkrise ein wesentlicher Grund, warum zahlreiche Banken Milliardenverluste schreiben mussten. Laut Medienberichten ist die derzeitige Formulierung in der geplanten Verordnung derart weit auslegbar, dass zahlreiche Schlupflöcher für Banken bestehen.

1. Inwiefern ist es tatsächlich laut der Kommission zutreffend, dass der Eigenhandel nun offenbar wesentlich weniger stark reguliert werden soll?

2. Es gibt verschiedene nationale Regelungen, beispielsweise in Deutschland, die im Vergleich wesentlich invasiver in diesem Bereich sind. Welche Prioritäten setzt die Kommission bei der Erstellung der Inhalte der betreffenden Verordnung, nachdem in den Medien von möglichst hoher Kompromissfähigkeit derselben die Rede ist?

3. Ist die Kommission der Ansicht, dass die möglichst einfache Anwendung der Verordnung gleichwertig ist mit den offenbar notwendigen Beschränkungen für Teilbereiche von Banken zur Sicherung der Stabilität der Finanzmärkte?

Antwort von Herrn Barnier im Namen der Kommission
(25. Februar 2014)

1. Der Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Verordnung über strukturelle Maßnahmen zur Erhöhung der Widerstandsfähigkeit von Kreditinstituten in der Union wurde am 29. Januar 2014 angenommen. Diese Verordnung verbietet großen Kreditinstituten und Bankengruppen in der EU, Eigenhandel in Finanzinstrumenten und Waren sowie bestimmte damit zusammenhängende Tätigkeiten über eigene Abteilungen zu betreiben. Diese Tätigkeiten tragen kaum zur Finanzierung der Realwirtschaft bei.

2. Einige Mitgliedstaaten haben bereits Strukturreformen ihres nationalen Bankensystems verabschiedet oder sind dabei, dies zu tun. Viele dieser Banken sind grenzüberschreitend tätig. Ohne einen EU-weiten Ansatz wären Banken gezwungen, ihre Struktur und ihre Geschäfte an nationale Grenzen anzupassen, wodurch sie noch komplexer würden und die Fragmentierung zunähme. Uneinheitliche einzelstaatliche Bestimmungen könnten auch die Bemühungen um ein für den gesamten Binnenmarkt geltendes einheitliches Regelwerk und die Schaffung einer wirksamen Bankenunion unterlaufen, da sie den einheitlichen Aufsichtsmechanismus und einen künftigen einheitlichen Abwicklungsmechanismus in ihrer Wirksamkeit beschränken würden. Ein Vergleich der verschiedenen Reformmaßnahmen ist schwierig, doch dürfte der für die EU vorgeschlagene Ansatz weiter gehen als die meisten derzeitigen nationalen Regelungen.

3. Der vorgeschlagene EU-Strukturreformansatz ist ausgewogen. Er gewährleistet eine effektive Beseitigung übermäßiger Risiken im Bankensystem und vermeidet gleichzeitig komplexe Definitionsprobleme bei der Unterscheidung zwischen riskanten Handelsgeschäften und solchen, die für die Realwirtschaft nützlich sein können, wie etwa Marktpflege und Emissionsübernahmen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000132/14
to the Commission
Angelika Werthmann (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Toning down restrictions on speculative investments by banks

During the financial crisis, proprietary trading by banks was a major reason why many of them posted losses in the billions. According to media reports, the current wording in the planned regulation can be interpreted so broadly that there are numerous loopholes for banks.

1. To what extent is it actually correct, according to the Commission, that proprietary trading is now apparently to be much less stringently regulated?

2. Various national rules in this area, for example in Germany, are much more invasive by comparison. What are the Commission's priorities as regards the content of the regulation concerned, since the media are saying that it represents the greatest possible compromise?

3. Is the Commission of the opinion that making the regulation as straightforward as possible to apply is just as important as the evidently necessary constraints on parts of banks in order to secure financial market stability?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

1. The Commission proposal for a regulation on structural measures improving the resilience of EU credit institutions was adopted on 29 January 2014. The proposed Regulation prohibits large EU credit institutions and banking groups from carrying out, through dedicated desks, proprietary trading in financial instruments and physical commodities and certain related activities. These activities have little added value to the financing of the real economy.

2. Some Member States have adopted or are in the process of putting in place structural reform measures for their national banking systems. Many of these banks operate cross border. Without an EU-wide approach banks would be forced to adapt their structure and operation along national boundaries, thereby making them even more complex and increasing fragmentation. Inconsistent national legislation could also undermine efforts to achieve a single rulebook applicable throughout the internal market and the creation of an effective Banking Union, as it would have the effect of limiting the effectiveness of the Single Supervisory Mechanism and the future Single Resolution Mechanism. It is difficult to compare the various reforms undertaken but the proposed EU approach is likely to go further than most of current national rules in some respects.

3. The proposed EU approach to structural reform is balanced. Whilst ensuring an effective way of eliminate inappropriate risks in the banking system, it avoids creating difficult definition problems in terms of distinguishing between risky trading activities and activities that can be useful for the real economy such as market making and underwriting.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000133/14
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Equal access to education and training schemes for unemployed citizens

When applying for jobseeker's allowance and jobseeker's credits, former self-employed citizens who become unemployed in Ireland are means-tested for the purposes of determining eligibility for the abovementioned social welfare benefits.

Those deemed ineligible are subsequently not allowed to register as unemployed on the Live Register for Unemployment. They are thus unable to access any retraining and education schemes made available to unemployed citizens.

Having regard to the European Union's contribution to such programmes through the Structural Funds, could the Commission indicate whether such a lack of ability to access education and training opportunities on the part of unemployed citizens who are not included in the Live Register for Unemployment constitutes a form of discrimination under EC law?

If not, could the Commission further indicate how those citizens can access education and training schemes provided through public and EU resources?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

In the absence of harmonisation at Union level, it is for the legislation of each Member State to lay down the conditions under which social security benefits are granted, as well as the amount of such benefits. EC law does not therefore affect the competence of the Irish authorities to make payment of a jobseeker's allowance or other unemployment benefit subject to a means test.

Structural Funds programmes fall within the scope of shared management, the responsibility for implementing the programmes is thus with the Member States. Therefore, it is the MS who sets the conditions and criteria for eligibility when selecting projects.

The ESF allocation for the period 2007-2013 to Ireland is EUR 375 million, which is less than EUR 54 million per year. The ESF contribution to Ireland's expenditure for active labour market policy is thus limited to a small range of interventions. However, there are national programmes, as Springboard, in place that explicitly confirm the eligibility of previously self-employed people.

EC law does not cover discrimination on the grounds of a person being self-employed. EC law covers discrimination on grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000135/14
to the Commission
Ashley Fox (ECR)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: EU aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Further to my previous question on the treatment of stray dogs at shelters in Bosnia and Herzegovina (E-011063/2012), I add that I have been shown information suggesting that EU funds designated for animal welfare projects are being misappropriated by the local authorities.

Whilst the welfare of stray dogs and cats does not fall under the competence of the EU, the involvement of EU funds in this matter warrants further investigation by the Commission. The EU allocated EUR 47.26 million in financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013 to aid the country with its pre-accession reforms. Of this figure, how much was attributed to spending on animal shelters? Was this amount fully accounted for?

In its answer to Question E-011063/2012, the Commission stated that Bosnia and Herzegovina's animal welfare law had not yet been fully implemented.

What action is the Commission taking to ensure that the existing law is fully enforced?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

As mentioned in the Commission's reply to Written Question E-011063/2012, the animal welfare of stray dogs/cats is not part of the EU *acquis*. The Commission deals with animal welfare requirements on farms as part of its activities on the implementation of the food safety and veterinary *acquis*. The Commission has engaged in a series of events through TAIEX to assist in implementing an EU-compliant horizontal food and feed control system. Regarding animal welfare issues of stray dogs, there will be a TAIEX event on this issue in 2014 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similar events have been also conducted in other countries in the region.

The EU also supports the veterinary sector with a 5-year programme of animal disease eradication, targeted towards rabies, brucellosis and classical swine fever, which indirectly helps to improve the economic potential of the livestock sector by eradicating diseases that are public and animal health risk. Some EUR 6 million supplies of vaccines and technical assistance are already committed for the period of 2011-2014.

In December 2013, the Commission adopted the national programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina under IPA, which amounts to EUR 41.9 million. The programme focuses on support to the justice sector, the fight against money laundering, support for refugees and IDPs, social inclusion in education, demining, Roma and SME development. Another EUR 5.3 million was allocated to cross-border programmes. No funds have been allocated to animal shelters under IPA 2007-2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000137/14
alla Commissione
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(8 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Gara EC Link

— Con avviso pubblico n. 2012/S 223-366462 del 20.11.2012 la Commissione europea, in nome e per conto della Repubblica Popolare Cinese, ha indetto una gara con procedura ristretta per l'assistenza tecnica al progetto «Urbanizzazione sostenibile. Europa-Cina eco-cities link» il cui oggetto consisteva nel fornire servizi di assistenza tecnica al Ministero dello sviluppo urbano e delle aree rurali cinese per il trasferimento delle buone pratiche europee in tema di politiche di urbanizzazione e riduzione delle emissioni dei gas ad effetto serra.

— Alla gara ha anche partecipato, un raggruppamento italiano denominato SHAREWICH (SHARing best practices WIth China)

— Con nota del 05.06.2013 n. DELCHN/FCT(2013)D/803 della rappresentanza della CE a Pechino veniva comunicata la cancellazione della gara per l'assenza di offerte qualitativamente valide;

— La Commissione Europea ha quindi affidato a trattativa diretta l'appalto a una società tedesca, GIZ Gmbh, la quale aveva preso parte alla gara ma con altra compagine consortile.

1. Ritiene la Commissione tale affidamento diretto di lavori di assistenza tecnica per un importo di oltre 9.000.000,00 EUR, con possibilità di estensione del contratto per ulteriori quattro anni, dopo che è stata esperita una gara costosa, laboriosa e articolata, conclusasi per carenza qualitativa delle offerte violi la normativa di cui alla Practical Guide (par. 2.4.13) con la quale si consente la negoziazione diretta esclusivamente con un «tenderer» e non con una cooptazione forzata al consorzio aggiudicante di partner partecipanti ad altri consorzi candidati?

2. Ritiene inoltre che un simile atteggiamento sia in palese contrasto con i principi di trasparenza, pari opportunità, libera concorrenza e fair play che devono contraddistinguere tutte le procedure finanziate dall'UE?

Risposta di Andris Piebalgs a nome della Commissione
(4 marzo 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole deputato alla propria risposta all'interrogazione scritta — P 000564/2014. ([1])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000137/14
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PPE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: EC Link tender procedure

By way of notice No 2012/S 223-366462 of 20 November 2012, the Commission, acting in the name and on behalf of the People's Republic of China, issued a restricted invitation to tender for technical assistance for a project entitled 'Sustainable urbanisation. Europe-China eco-cities link', covering the provision of technical assistance services to the Chinese Ministry of Urban and Rural Development in order to share European best practices in the areas of urbanisation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

An Italian group known as SHAREWICH (SHARing best practices WIth CHina) took part in the tender procedure.

On 5 June 2013 the Commission Representation in Beijing issued memorandum No DELCHN/FCT(2013)D/803 announcing that the tender procedure was to be cancelled owing to a lack of suitable tenders;

The Commission then awarded the contract, by way of direct negotiation, to a German company, GIZ GmbH. Although this company had taken part in the tendering process, it did so as part of a different consortium.

1. Does the Commission believe that this decision to award a contract for technical assistance work worth more than EUR 9 000 000, with the option of extending the contract by a further four years, by means of direct negotiation, following a costly, arduous and contracted tender procedure which was then halted owing to a lack of suitable tenders, represents a breach of the rules laid down in the Practical Guide (Section 2.4.13), which authorise direct negotiations only with a 'tenderer' and not with a consortium on to which other participating firms have been forcibly co-opted?

2. Does it also believe that such an approach is clearly at odds with the principles of transparency, equal opportunities, free competition and fair play with which all EU-financed procedures must comply?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question P-000564/2014. ([1])

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/fr/parliamentary-questions.html;jsessionid=987EC3257DF4C7A682B41123ABBD3EED.node1

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000138/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Salir de la crisis: recomendaciones especificas por el Estado español

El pasado 30 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión publicó unas recomendaciones anuales adaptadas a cada Estado miembro para salir de la crisis económica ([1]). La Comisión subrayó que es urgente aprobar y aplicar con eficacia las reformas pendientes siguiendo un cronograma, de modo que pudieran empezar a producir los efectos positivos previstos en el país.

La Comisión fijó un calendario con medidas concretas. En el caso del Estado español, ¿ha puesto en marcha antes de que termine el año 2013 un organismo presupuestario independiente que supervise, analice y asesore la conformidad de la política presupuestaria con las normas nacionales y las de la UE?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(12 de febrero de 2014)

Se remite a Su Señoría a la Ley Orgánica 6/2013, de 14 de noviembre, de creación de la Autoridad Independiente de Responsabilidad Fiscal en España. La Ley establece el marco jurídico para dicha Autoridad, que será desarrollado en su reglamento interno.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000138/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Getting out of the crisis: specific recommendations for Spain

On 30 May 2013 the Commission published annual recommendations specific to each Member State on how to get out of the economic crisis ([1]). The Commission stressed the urgent need to approve and implement the pending reforms to a fixed schedule so that the positive effects envisioned for the country can start to be felt.

The Commission set out a timetable detailing precise measures to be taken. In the case of Spain, was an independent budgetary agency put in place before the end of 2013 to monitor, analyse and advise on whether budget policy complies with national and EU regulations?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

The honourable Member of Parliament is referred to organic law 6/2013 of 14 November, providing for the creation of an independent fiscal institution (IFI) in Spain. The law also sets out the legal framework for such institution, which remains to be further developed in its own internal statutes.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000139/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Salir de la crisis: recomendaciones específicas por el Estado español

El pasado 30 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión publicó unas recomendaciones anuales adaptadas a cada Estado miembro para salir de la crisis económica ([1]). La Comisión subrayó que es urgente aprobar y aplicar con eficacia las reformas pendientes siguiendo un cronograma, de modo que pudieran empezar a producir los efectos positivos previstos en el país.

La Comisión fijó un calendario con medidas concretas. En el caso del Estado español:

1. ¿Está satisfecha la Comisión de la aplicación de las recomendaciones hechas al Estado español en 2013?

2. ¿Qué medidas cree la Comisión que este Estado miembro debería mejorar de manera urgente?

3. ¿Cree la Comisión que el Estado español ha llevado a cabo las reformas propuestas con relación al déficit de tarifa eléctrica?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(20 de febrero de 2014)

1. España sigue aplicando las recomendaciones específicas por país (REP) de 2013. Si bien se han registrado algunos retrasos respecto al Programa Nacional de Reformas (PNR) de 2013, se ha aprobado definitivamente un gran número de iniciativas emblemáticas. Una evaluación completa del cumplimiento de las REP se realizará con ocasión del Semestre Europeo de 2014.

2. La Comisión ha iniciado el cuarto Semestre Europeo con el Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento de 2014. La Comisión está preparando su evaluación del cumplimiento de las recomendaciones de 2013 y propondrá nuevas recomendaciones, que incluirán prioridades estratégicas para los próximos años, basándose asimismo en el PNR y el Programa de Estabilidad españoles de 2014. La propuesta de la Comisión está prevista ahora para principios de junio de 2014.

3. La reforma del sistema eléctrico español tiene por objeto eliminar el amplio déficit tarifario del sector y garantizar la estabilidad financiera del sistema, de conformidad con las recomendaciones específicas por país y el PNR español.

La reforma tiene por objeto que el sistema alcance el equilibrio y requiere contribuciones de todos los principales interesados (productores de electricidad y empresas de distribución, consumidores y el Estado). No obstante, se trata de una propuesta compleja y no se han adoptado aún definitivamente todos los instrumentos jurídicos.

La Comisión observó la persistencia de un amplio déficit tarifario en 2013, tras la decisión de retirar las transferencias del Estado debido a los riesgos que entrañaban a efectos del cumplimiento del objetivo de déficit presupuestario de 2013.

España debe seguir las directrices de la Comisión sobre la reforma del régimen de ayudas a la energía procedente de fuentes renovables ([2]) e intentar evitar los cambios retroactivos en las condiciones económicas de las inversiones ya hechas en fuentes renovables de energía. La Comisión sigue evaluando la compatibilidad de la reforma del sector eléctrico ([3]) con el Derecho de la UE.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([2]) C(2013) 7243 final.
([3]) Ley 24/2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000139/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Getting out of the crisis: specific recommendations for Spain

On 30 May 2013 the Commission published annual recommendations specific to each Member State on how to get out of the economic crisis ([1]). The Commission stressed the urgent need to approve and implement the pending reforms to a fixed schedule so that the positive effects envisaged for the country can start to be felt.

The Commission set out a timetable detailing precise measures to be taken. In the case of Spain:

1. Is the Commission satisfied that the recommendations made to Spain in 2013 are being implemented?

2. On what measures does the Commission think that Spain needs to make urgent improvements?

3. Does the Commission think that Spain has carried out the reforms proposed in relation to the electricity tariff deficit?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2014)

1. Spain continues to implement the 2013 country specific recommendations (CSR). While there have been some delays relative to the 2013 National Reform Programme (NRP), a considerable number of flagship measures have finally been approved. A full assessment of compliance with the 2013 CSR will be made in the context of the 2014 European Semester.

2. With the AGS 2014, the Commission has started the fourth European Semester. The Commission is preparing its assessment of the implementation of the 2013 recommendations and will propose new recommendations including policy priorities for the coming year(s), based also on an assessment of the 2014 Spanish NRP and Stability Programme. The Commission proposal is currently foreseen for early June 2014.

3. The reform of the Spanish electricity system aims to eliminate the large electricity tariff deficit and to ensure the financial stability of the system, in line with the country specific recommendations and the Spanish NRP.

The reform aims at bringing the system into equilibrium and requires contributions from all the main stakeholders (electricity producers and distribution companies, consumers and the state). However, this is a complex proposal and not all legal instruments have yet been finally adopted.

The Commission took note of a still large electricity tariff deficit in 2013, following the decision to withdraw State transfers due to risks to the 2013 budget deficit target.

Spain should follow the Commission Guidance on renewable energy support scheme reform ([2]), striving to avoid retroactive changes to the economic conditions of existing renewable energy investments. The Commission is currently still assessing the compatibility of the electricity sector reform ([3]) with EU legislation.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([2]) C(2013) 7243 final.
([3]) Act 24/2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000140/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Salir de la crisis: recomendaciones especificas para el Estado español

El pasado 30 de mayo de 2013, la Comisión adoptó las recomendaciones anuales a los Estados miembros destinadas a sacar a Europa de la crisis y a consolidar las bases del crecimiento ([1]). Para su Presidente, José Manuel Barroso, hay que «liquidar los dos legados duraderos de esta crisis: la grave pérdida de competitividad de muchos Estados y el desempleo persistente, con todas sus consecuencias sociales».

La Comisión fijó un calendario con medidas concretas para el Estado español. A principios de 2014, ¿ha entrado en vigor la Ley de Desindexación para reducir la influencia de los precios en el gasto y los ingresos públicos?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(13 de febrero de 2014)

El Consejo de Ministros presentó al Congreso de los Diputados la Ley de desindexación el 27 de diciembre de 2013. Remitimos a Su Señoría a la página web de las Cortes españolas ([2]) para recabar información sobre la tramitación parlamentaria del proyecto de ley.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([2]) http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000140/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Getting out of the crisis: specific recommendations for Spain

On 30 May 2013 the Commission adopted the annual recommendations to the Member States on how to get Europe out of the crisis and reinforce the foundations for growth ([1]). European Commission President José Manuel Barroso believes it is vital that 'the two enduring legacies of this crisis be wiped out: the massive drop in competitiveness in many States and long-term unemployment, along with all its social consequences'.

The Commission set out a timetable detailing precise measures to be taken by Spain. As 2014 gets under way, has the De-indexing Law to reduce the influence of prices on costs and public spending now come into force?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(13 February 2014)

The dis-indexation law was submitted to Parliament by the Council of Ministers on 27 December 2013. The honourable Member of Parliament is referred to the Spanish Cortes' website ([2]) for information on this draft law's parliamentary proceedings.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm
([2]) http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/Congreso

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000141/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(8 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ρυθμίσεις στεγαστικών δανείων στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση

Η οικονομική κρίση μετέβαλε απρόοπτα τις συνθήκες δανεισμού των ευρωπαίων πολιτών. Η αυξανόμενη ανεργία έχει εκμηδενίσει το εισόδημα χιλιάδων νοικοκυριών, με αποτέλεσμα να αδυνατούν να πληρώνουν τις δόσεις των δανείων στις τράπεζες ή σε άλλα χρηματοπιστωτικά ιδρύματα και να αντιμετωπίζουν τον κίνδυνο να εκποιηθεί η πρώτη τους κατοικία.

Παράλληλα, οι μνημονιακές πολιτικές απαιτούν από κράτη όπως η Ελλάδα πλήρη απελευθέρωση στο θέμα της προστασίας της πρώτης κατοικίας.

Το μέτρο αυτό, πέραν του ότι είναι κοινωνικά άδικο, είναι και οικονομικά ατελέσφορο, διότι θα πληγεί τόσο ο τραπεζικός όσο και ο κτηματομεσιτικός τομέας δεδομένου ότι αυτομάτως η αξία των ακινήτων θα φτάσει σε χαμηλότατα επίπεδα· συνάμα, θα επιφέρει βαρύτατο πλήγμα στην κοινωνική συνοχή.

Είναι σημαντικό να διασφαλίσουμε το ανθρώπινο δικαίωμα στην κατοικία, το οποίο προστατεύεται από συνταγματικές διατάξεις και νόμους και από τις ευρωπαϊκές συμβάσεις ανθρωπίνων δικαιωμάτων. «Ο άνθρωπος έχει δικαίωμα να κατοικεί και να προστατεύεται η ιδιωτική του ζωή».

Δεδομένου ότι τα ενυπόθηκα δάνεια αγοράς πρώτης κατοικίας συχνά αποτελούν τη σημαντικότερη και μακροβιότερη οικονομική δέσμευση στην οποία προβαίνει μία οικογένεια, είναι κεφαλαιώδη για την πρόσβαση στην ιδιόκτητη κατοικία (σχεδόν το 70% στην ΕΕ) και έχουν μεγάλη οικονομική και κοινωνική σημασία.

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

— Στο πλαίσιο της συμμετοχής της στην Τρόικα και με βάση τις ιδιαίτερες συνθήκες, ποια μέτρα προτίθεται να λάβει όσο διαρκεί η κρίση, ώστε να προστατευθεί το θεμελιώδες δικαίωμα στην πρώτη κατοικία;

— Με δεδομένο ότι το πρόβλημα αφορά πολλές ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, προτίθεται, στο πλαίσιο της τραπεζικής Ένωσης, να μελετήσει και να προτείνει έναν ευρωπαϊκό κώδικα συμπεριφοράς για τον χειρισμό υποθέσεων δανειοληπτών στεγαστικών δανείων που αντιμετωπίζουν οικονομικές δυσκολίες;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(24 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Η Επιτροπή γνωρίζει πολύ καλά τις συνακόλουθες κοινωνικές επιπτώσεις για πολλά νοικοκυριά που απορρέουν από τις σοβαρές προκλήσεις για την αγορά στέγης σε χώρες του προγράμματος, οι οποίες εκδηλώνονται με τη μορφή μειωμένης διαθεσιμότητας ενυπόθηκων δανείων ή ακόμη και με τη μορφή αποκλεισμού ή κατασχέσεων. Η πρόκληση σε επίπεδο πολιτικής είναι διττή.

Πρώτον, υπάρχει ανάγκη να δοθούν κίνητρα στους δανειστές για την αναδιάρθρωση χρέους των νοικοκυριών που έχουν προσωρινές δυσκολίες πληρωμής αλλά είναι φερέγγυα και γνωρίζουν ότι τα πιο ευάλωτα προστατεύονται.

Δεύτερον, υπάρχει ανάγκη να αποθαρρύνεται η στρατηγική αθέτησης υποχρεώσεων — από τους οφειλέτες που σταματούν να πληρώνουν ακόμη κι αν έχουν τη δυνατότητα να πληρώνουν. Η εν λόγω στρατηγική συμπεριφορά αποτελεί δυνητική απειλή για τη χρηματοοικονομική σταθερότητα.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η Επιτροπή είναι της άποψης ότι κάθε κράτος μέλος θα πρέπει να διαθέτει πλήρες πτωχευτικό κανονιστικό πλαίσιο, το οποίο συμβιβάζει τις ανάγκες για πιθανή ανακούφιση και νέο ξεκίνημα για τον δανειολήπτη με τα δικαιολογημένα συμφέροντα του δανειστή, προκειμένου να αποφεύγεται ο ηθικός κίνδυνος, καθώς και ο πιο γενικευμένος κίνδυνος για τη χρηματοπιστωτική σταθερότητα σε ευρεία κλίμακα. Τα θέματα αυτά υπάγονται κατά κύριο λόγο στην αρμοδιότητα των κρατών μελών.

Στην περίπτωση της Ελλάδας, προκειμένου να βρεθεί ισορροπημένη προσέγγιση με στόχο τόσο τη διαχείριση των υποχρεώσεων των οφειλετών που αντιμετωπίζουν δυσκολίες όσο και τη διαφύλαξη της νοοτροπίας καταβολής των πληρωμών στη χώρα, το ελληνικό Κοινοβούλιο ενέκρινε, τον Δεκέμβριο, τον νόμο 4224/2013 (ΦΕΚ 288/31.12.2013). Το άρθρο 2 του εν λόγω νόμου προβλέπει προσωρινή προστασία των υπερχρεωμένων και ευάλωτων νοικοκυριών από πλειστηριασμούς πρώτης κατοικίας, έως ότου επιτευχθεί διακανονισμός με τους πιστωτές τους.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000141/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Salavrakos (EFD)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Mortgage loans in the European Union

The economic crisis has unexpectedly altered the situation for European borrowers. Rising unemployment has wiped out the income of thousands of households, leaving them unable to repay their loan instalments to banks or other financial institutions and at risk of having their primary residences repossessed.

Meanwhile, under the memorandum of understanding, countries such as Greece are required to dilute legislation on the protection of primary residences.

This measure, besides being socially unfair and economically ineffective — as it will hit both the banking and the real estate sector, automatically drawing down real estate prices to very low levels — will also deal a heavy blow to social cohesion.

It is important to safeguard the right to housing, which is protected by constitutional provisions and laws and by European human rights conventions on. 'People have a right to housing and to privacy protection'.

Given that mortgage loans for the purchase of a primary residence are often the most important and the most long-term financial commitment made by families, they are essential for access to home ownership (almost 70% in the EU) and have a great economic and social importance.

In view of this:

— As member of the Troika and in the light of the particular circumstances, what steps will the Commission take throughout the duration of the crisis to protect the fundamental right to a primary residence?

— Given that the problem affects many European countries, does it intend, in the framework of the Banking Union, to study and propose a European code of conduct to assist mortgage holders in financial difficulties?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The Commission is very well aware of the ensuing social hardship on many households stemming from the serious challenges to the housing market in programme countries, manifested in a form of reduced availability of mortgage lending or even in form of foreclosure or repossessions. The policy challenge is twofold here.

First, there is a need to provide the incentives for the lenders to restructure debt of the households that have temporary payment difficulties but which are solvent and aware that the most vulnerable are protected.

Second, there is a need to discourage strategic defaults — decisions by debtors to stop paying even if they can afford to pay. Such strategic behaviour is a potential threat to the financial sector stability.

Against this background, the Commission is of the view that each Member State should have in place comprehensive bankruptcy framework should be in place in each Member State that reconciles the needs to provide for possible relief and fresh start for the borrower with the justified interests of the lender in order to avoid moral hazard and more generalized risk to financial stability at large. These issues are predominantly under the competence of Member States.

In the case of Greece, in order to find a balanced approach in dealing with liabilities of debtors facing difficulties, while safeguarding the payment culture in the country, the Greek Parliament approved in December Law 4224/2013 (FEK 288/31.12.2013). Article 2 of this Law addresses the situation of distressed and vulnerable households by temporarily protecting them from auctions of primary residences, until a settlement with creditors is achieved.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000142/14
to the Commission
Phil Prendergast (S&D)
(8 January 2014)

Subject: Funding opportunities for pan-European healthcare professional organisations

Could the Commission indicate what sources of EU funding are available to pan-European professional organisations in the field of healthcare, particularly to assist with the setting-up and logistics of international meetings for the purposes of sharing research, know-how, standards and best practice in areas such as perioperative nursing and patient safety and care, as well as cooperation with the World Health Organisation?

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

The third Health Programme (2014-2020) is expected to be adopted in March 2014. According to the political agreement achieved last November between the two co-legislators, with an overall budget of EUR 449.4 million, the programme covers four main objectives: contribute to innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems; facilitate access to better and safer healthcare; prevent diseases and promote good health; and protect citizens from cross-border health threats.

The thematic priorities identified cover a wide range of health issues including patient safety and care, the exchange of best practices in prevention and treatment of diseases.

Support to pan-European organisations is foreseen in the form of operating grants under specific conditions. Organisation can also apply for co-funding of projects. Information on EU funding in the field of health is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm

Furthermore, as partners in collaborative transnational research consortium, pan-European professional organisations in the field of healthcare can apply for funding under the 'health, demographic change and wellbeing' challenge of the new framework programme for research, Horizon 2020. To ensure adequate dissemination of their work, successful applicants will receive funding for the organisation of international conferences and other events to share knowledge and good practice.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000144/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Apoyo público a SACYR Vallhermoso en la ampliación del Canal de Panamá

La compañía multinacional española SACYR Vallhermoso acomete, en consorcio con otras compañías europeas y una panameña, la obra de ampliación del Canal de Panamá. El proyecto le fue concedido al consorcio *«Grupo Unidos por el Canal»* en julio de 2009, que desde entonces recibe el apoyo financiero del sector público.

Durante el mismo 2009 el Gobierno de España concedió, a través de la Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE), un aval de aproximadamente 160 millones de euros a la oferta presentada por SACYR. El aval público fue concedido pese a que los servicios técnicos de la propia CESCE así como del Tribunal de Cuentas habían presentado informes negativos sobre la oferta realizada por la multinacional española.

La oferta presentada por el grupo que lidera SACYR ganó el concurso al plantear unos costes inferiores en 1 000 millones de euros a los de las ofertas presentadas por los demás grupos empresariales que compitieron por el contrato. Fruto de este presupuesto ultrarreducido, el pasado 30 de diciembre el consorcio anunció que si no se pagaban sobrecostes por valor de 1 600 millones de dólares tendría que detener la construcción del canal el próximo 20 de enero. Los retrasos y los problemas de calidad de los materiales empleados para la construcción han provocado un tira y afloja entre la Autoridad del Canal y el consorcio que pone en riesgo la completa realización de la ampliación del canal.

A todas luces, la oferta del grupo liderado por SACYR Vallhermoso especuló con los costes reales del proyecto, produciendo la actual inseguridad sobre el futuro de la ampliación. Sin embargo, la CESCE ha puesto a disposición de la multinacional recursos públicos que en nada beneficiarán a la población española, además de emplear al propio Gobierno como mediador en las negociaciones con la presencia de la Ministra Ana Pastor.

¿Conoce la Comisión el apoyo público a la oferta presentada por SACYR?

¿Considera la Comisión que el Gobierno de España, con el aval ofrecido al proyecto de la citada compañía, está respetando la normativa europea en materia de competencia?, ¿considera que la mediación ministerial puesta a disposición de esta compañía no supone un trato de favor con respecto a otras empresas españolas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de marzo de 2014)

Hasta la fecha, la Comisión no ha recibido notificación o información alguna de ninguna garantía que implique supuestamente ayuda estatal concedida en favor de la empresa de construcción española SACYR por el Estado español a través de la Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE). Por tanto, la Comisión no está en condiciones de pronunciarse sobre esta cuestión.

No obstante, a la vista de la información facilitada, la Comisión señala que, aunque los Estados miembros son responsables de velar por el cumplimiento de las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE, el cumplimiento de los requisitos de procedimiento nacionales no es necesariamente relevante para la evaluación con arreglo a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE. La Comisión observa que una garantía proporcionada a través de los recursos del Estado, pero en condiciones de mercado, no constituye ayuda estatal. Del mismo modo, la supuesta mediación de las autoridades españolas en la mera resolución de un litigio comercial y contractual no implica en sí recursos financieros del Estado que supongan una ayuda estatal con arreglo a las normas de la UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000144/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Public funding of SACYR Vallhermoso in the Panama Canal extension works

The Spanish multinational company SACYR Vallhermoso, in partnership with a number of other European companies and a Panamanian firm, is undertaking works to expand the Panama Canal. The project was awarded to the 'Grupo Unidos por el Canal' consortium in July 2009, which has since received financial support from the public sector.

In the same year, the Spanish Government, through the Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE), issued a guarantee of approximately EUR 160 million for the tender submitted by SACYR. The State guarantee was granted despite the fact that the technical services of the CESCE itself as well as the Court of Auditors had released negative reports about the tender submitted by the Spanish multinational.

The group led by SACYR was awarded the tender by proposing costs that were EUR 1 billion lower than those tendered by the other business groups competing for the contract. As a result of this highly reduced proposal, the consortium announced on 30 December last year that if additional costs of USD 1.6 billion were not paid, it would have to halt construction on the canal on 20 January this year. The delays and problems concerning the quality of the construction materials used have led to a game of tug of war between the Canal Authority and the consortium that is threatening the completion of the canal expansion works.

Clearly, the tender submitted by the group led by SACYR Vallhermoso speculated with the actual costs of the project, which has brought about the current uncertainty surrounding the future of the expansion. However, the CESCE has made public resources available to the multinational, which will in no way benefit people in Spain, on top of the fact that our own government, namely the Minister Ana Pastor, is acting as the mediator in the negotiations.

Is the Commission aware of the publicly-funded support for the tender submitted by SACYR?

Does the Commission believe that the guarantee provided by the Spanish Government for the project undertaken by SACYR is in line with the European regulations on competition? Does it not believe that the mediation provided by the Spanish Government to this company amounts to preferential treatment over other Spanish companies?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

To date, the Commission has not been notified or informed of any guarantee allegedly entailing state aid provided to the Spanish construction company SACYR by the Spanish state through the Compañía Española de Seguros de Crédito a la Exportación (CESCE). Therefore, the Commission is not able to take a view on this issue.

Nevertheless, in view of the information provided, the Commission notes that, whereas Member States are responsible for ensuring compliance with EU State aid rules, compliance with national procedural requirements is not necessarily material for the assessment under EU State aid rules. The Commission notes that a guarantee provided through State resources but on market conditions does not constitute state aid. Likewise, the alleged mediation of the Spanish authorities in the mere resolution of a commercial and contractual dispute does not in itself involve State financial resources entailing state aid under EU rules.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000145/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Pérdida de la cobertura sanitaria de ciudadanos españoles después de tres meses

El pasado 26 de diciembre el Consejo de Ministros del Gobierno de España aprobó una disposición adicional al texto de la Ley General de la Seguridad Social que implica la pérdida del derecho a la asistencia sanitaria para los ciudadanos españoles que se encuentren fuera del país por un periodo superior a tres meses.

Esta modificación tiene lugar en un contexto en el que se está produciendo un flujo de emigración masiva de jóvenes españoles hacia otros países europeos en busca de empleo. El ejecutivo busca vías para ahorrar recursos de la Seguridad Social a costa de empeorar las condiciones de vida de los jóvenes migrantes españoles que se encontrarían en una situación de indefensión ante cualquier problema de salud que pudieran atravesar. La modificación supone la pérdida de la cobertura en tan solo tres meses, periodo que en muchas ocasiones resulta insuficiente para encontrar un trabajo que permita cotizar a la seguridad social de un Estado miembro y, por tanto, garantice una cobertura sanitaria y el derecho fundamental a la salud.

En cuanto a la normativa europea, el Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004 regula las normas de atención a residentes de Estados miembros durante su estancia en otro Estado miembro de la Unión. En la respuesta a la pregunta E-012596/2013, el Comisario Tonio Borg afirmaba que «de conformidad con el Reglamento, una persona asimismo puede ausentarse temporalmente durante un periodo superior a noventa días y seguir manteniendo su residencia habitual en ese Estado».

¿Conoce la Comisión la disposición adicional aprobada el 26 de diciembre?

¿Cómo valora la Comisión la citada disposición adicional con respecto al efecto que puede tener a la hora de garantizar el derecho efectivo a la salud de los miles de ciudadanos españoles que en la actualidad se encuentran en otros países de la Unión Europea?

Atendiendo a las palabras citadas del Comisario Borg, ¿considera la Comisión que con esta disposición el Gobierno de España está cumpliendo con lo establecido en el Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004? En caso de que no lo esté haciendo, ¿qué medidas adoptará la Comisión para que España cumpla con el citado Reglamento y mantenga la cobertura sanitaria a aquellos ciudadanos españoles que se encuentren fuera del país durante más de 90 días?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000259/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) y Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Pérdida de la cobertura sanitaria. Derecho a la protección de la salud y la libre circulación

La Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la UE, en su artículo 35, reconoce el derecho a la «Protección de la salud», al establecer que «Toda persona tiene derecho a la prevención sanitaria y a beneficiarse de la atención sanitaria en las condiciones establecidas por las legislaciones y prácticas nacionales. Al definirse y ejecutarse todas las políticas y acciones de la Unión se garantizará un alto nivel de protección de la salud humana».

Este derecho quedaría violado si un ciudadano del Estado español hace uso de sus derechos de ciudadanía europea de libre movimiento por la UE. Esto se debe a una decisión del Ejecutivo español de retirar la tarjeta sanitaria a las personas que son calificadas de inactivas y que dejen el país durante más de 90 días. Así, los desempleados de larga duración, las personas jóvenes que no han ingresado aún en el mercado laboral o las mujeres que deseen ingresar en el mercado laboral de otro país de la UE podrían quedarse sin cobertura médica al regresar a España.

Esta política ha entrado en vigor gracias a la enmienda que introdujo el grupo del Partido Popular en la Ley de Presupuestos para limitar el derecho a la tarjeta sanitaria de aquellos ciudadanos que ya no residen en España.

Esta realidad contradice el derecho a la libre circulación de las personas y el derecho a la protección de la salud, ya que discrimina a aquellas personas que intenten buscar trabajo en la EU durante más de 90 días.

¿Considera la Comisión que esta medida viola el artículo 35 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales? ¿Cree que limita la libertad de movimiento de las personas en la EU? ¿Considera que esta medida es discriminatoria para aquellos sectores más vulnerables que intentan buscar trabajo fuera de España? ¿Actuará frente a esta discriminación y garantizará la igualdad de acceso a la salud para todos los ciudadanos españoles independientemente de que hayan hecho uso o no de su derecho a la libre circulación por la UE?

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-001087/14
a la Comisión
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(4 de febrero de 2014)

Asunto: Pérdida de la prestación de asistencia sanitaria española en caso de estancia en el extranjero durante más de 90 días

El Gobierno de España, a través de la Ley 22/2013, de 23 de diciembre, ha reformado la legislación relativa al derecho a la prestación de asistencia sanitaria, modificando los criterios para mantener estas prestaciones cuando los beneficiarios se desplacen fuera de las fronteras nacionales. En concreto, introduce una nueva condición respecto del concepto de residencia por la cual se perderá el derecho a la prestación cuando las estancias en el extranjero superen los 90 días en un año natural. Tras este periodo, la Seguridad Social española no se hará cargo de las prestaciones sanitarias servidas en el territorio de otro Estado miembro de la UE.

Entendemos que esta nueva normativa atenta a la libertad de circulación de trabajadores y personas de la UE, y de forma aún más grave por cuanto quienes van a sufrir, sobre todo, son los jóvenes españoles que se desplazan buscando empleo a otros Estados miembros.

Es obvio que esta legislación española vulnera el concepto de residencia habitual establecido en el artículo 11 del Reglamento (CE) n° 987/2009 por el que se adoptan las normas de aplicación del Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004 sobre la coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social, según el cual, la residencia tiene otros criterios de calificación, listados en dicho artículo, y nunca por el mero transcurso de un plazo de días fijo. El Comisario Borg así lo ha recordado en respuesta a la pregunta parlamentaria E-012596/2013: «[…] una persona puede ausentarse temporalmente durante un periodo superior a noventa días y seguir manteniendo su residencia habitual […] esto depende de una evaluación global de la situación personal del interesado, teniendo en cuenta distintos factores que determinan su centro de interés real». En la misma dirección se ha pronunciado una reiterada jurisprudencia del TJUE (entre otros C-76/76 del TJUE), y es fundamental que se mantenga, pues, si se validara la legislación española, todos los ciudadanos comunitarios cuyo derecho a la asistencia sanitaria esté vinculado al criterio de residencia podrían perder la misma si la legislación española se generalizara en otros Estados miembros.

Por todo ello, y porque estimamos que el Gobierno de España ha infringido el Derecho comunitario y el principio de libre circulación, y que esa legislación española debe ser revocada, pedimos y preguntamos lo siguiente:

¿Va la Comisión a iniciar un expediente de infracción contra el Gobierno de España en virtud de lo dispuesto en el artículo 258 del TFUE por causa de la disposición final 4,7 de la Ley 22/2013 que colisiona con los Reglamentos de coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social y con la jurisprudencia del TJUE?

Respuesta conjunta del Sr. Andor en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2014)

De conformidad con el artículo 35 de la Carta de los Derechos Fundamentales de la Unión Europea «Toda persona tiene derecho a la prevención sanitaria y a beneficiarse de la atención sanitaria en las condiciones establecidas por las legislaciones y prácticas nacionales». Los Estados miembros tienen la obligación de garantizar que la aplicación de la legislación de la UE a nivel nacional se ajusta a la Carta de la UE.

La legislación de la UE prevé la coordinación de los sistemas de seguridad social, no su armonización; esto significa que los Estados miembros pueden determinar libremente las particularidades de su sistema nacional de seguridad social, incluidos los criterios de concesión, las prestaciones que concede, el cálculo de las mismas y cómo han de abonarse las cotizaciones. La legislación de la UE establece normas y principios comunes que las autoridades nacionales deben cumplir al aplicar la legislación nacional.

De conformidad con el Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004, en caso necesario, una persona asegurada en un Estado miembro tiene derecho a recibir asistencia sanitaria durante una estancia en otro Estado miembro. La tarjeta sanitaria europea certifica este derecho.

Las personas no activas están sujetas a la legislación del Estado miembro de residencia, que se identifica con el centro de interés habitual de una persona. Para decidir si una persona cumple las condiciones de «residencia habitual», la institución competente debe llevar a cabo una evaluación global. Tal como se expone en la respuesta de la Comisión a la pregunta escrita E-012596-13 ([1]), una persona puede ausentarse temporalmente durante un período superior a noventa días y seguir manteniendo su residencia habitual en ese Estado.

Por lo que se refiere a las implicaciones de la nueva legislación española para la aplicación del Reglamento (CE) n° 883/2004, la Comisión se pondrá en contacto con las autoridades españolas a fin de que se le proporcione toda la información disponible en relación con el tema descrito.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-012596&language=ES

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000145/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Loss of healthcare cover by Spanish citizens after three months

On 26 December last year, the Spanish Government's Council of Ministers adopted an additional provision to the General Law on Social Security, which involves Spanish citizens who are out of the country for more than three months losing the right to healthcare.

This amendment comes at a time when a huge number of young people are emigrating from Spain to other European countries in search of work. The Spanish Government is seeking ways to save on social security resources, at the expense of worsening living conditions for young people emigrating from Spain, who would find themselves defenceless if they developed any health problems. The amendment represents a loss of healthcare cover after just three months, a period that is often insufficient to find a job that can pay for social security in a Member State and, therefore, guarantee healthcare cover and the fundamental right to health.

With regard to European legislation, Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 regulates healthcare legislation for residents of Member States during their stay in another EU Member State. In answer to Question E-012596/2013, Commissioner Tonio Borg confirmed that 'In accordance with this regulation, a person may also be temporarily absent for a period exceeding 90 days and still maintain his/her habitual residence in that State'.

Is the Commission aware of the additional provision adopted on 26 December?

What is the Commission's assessment of this additional provision in terms of the effect that it may have on ensuring the effective right to health for the thousands of Spanish people who are currently in other countries in the European Union?

In view of the words of the Commissioner Mr Borg, does the Commission believe that the Spanish Government's additional provision complies with those laid down in Regulation (EC) No 883/2004? If not, what measures will the Commission take to ensure that Spain complies with this regulation and that healthcare cover remains in place for Spanish citizens who are abroad for more than 90 days?

Question for written answer E-000259/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) and Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(13 January 2014)

Subject: Loss of health cover. Right to healthcare and free movement

Article 35 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights recognises the right to 'Healthcare' and states that 'Everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices. A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all the Union's policies and activities'.

That right would be violated if a Spanish citizen used his or her right to free movement within the EU as a European citizen, thanks to the Spanish Government's decision to revoke the medical card of anyone classed as 'inactive' who has been out of the country for over 90 days. Because of this, the long-term unemployed, young people who have not yet entered the job market and women who want to enter the job market in another EU country may find themselves with no medical cover when they come back to Spain.

This policy came into force by virtue of the amendment made by the Partido Popular to the Budget Law to restrict citizens' rights to a medical card if they no longer live in Spain.

This contradicts people's rights to free movement and healthcare, as it discriminates against people who want to leave the country for over 90 days to look for work elsewhere in the EU.

Does the Commission consider this measure to be a violation of Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights? Does it believe that it restricts people's freedom of movement within the EU? Does it think that this measure discriminates against the most vulnerable sections of the population who want to look for work outside of Spain? Will it take action against this discrimination to ensure that all Spanish citizens have the same level of access to healthcare irrespective of whether they use their right to free movement within the EU?

Question for written answer P-001087/14
to the Commission
Juan Fernando López Aguilar (S&D)
(4 February 2014)

Subject: Loss of the right to Spanish healthcare assistance following periods spent abroad lasting over 90 days

Through Law 22/2013 of 23 December 2013, the Spanish Government has reformed its legislation on the right to healthcare assistance, amending the criteria for maintaining this assistance in the event of the recipients leaving Spain. Specifically, it introduces a new condition vis-à-vis the concept of residence whereby the right to assistance will be revoked following periods spent abroad lasting over 90 days over the course of a calendar year. Beyond this period, Spanish social security will no longer cover healthcare dispensed in the territory of the other EU Member State.

We view this new regulation as an attack on the free movement of workers and persons within the EU, and an extremely serious threat given that those who are going to suffer most are young Spanish people who have left the country to look for work in other Member States.

This Spanish legislation is a clear contravention of the concept of habitual residence established in Article 11 of Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems, which states that residence may be defined by other criteria, which are listed in said Article, and never on the basis of a fixed period of days. Commissioner Borg reiterated this in his reply to Parliamentary Question E-012596/2013: 'a person may […] be temporarily absent for a period exceeding 90 days and still maintain his/her habitual residence […] this depends on an overall assessment of the person's situation, taking into account various factors which determine his/her real centre of interest'. That same directive cites a ruling from established CJEU case-law (inter alia CJEU Case C-76/76), and it is vital that this is maintained, because if the Spanish legislation is passed, all EU citizens whose right to healthcare assistance hinges on the criterion of residence could lose that right if the Spanish legislation were reproduced in other Member States.

Therefore, and because we believe that the Spanish Government has violated Community law and the principle of free movement, and that this Spanish legislation must be revoked, we would like to ask the following:

Is the Commission going to start infringement proceedings against the Spanish Government pursuant to Article 258 TFEU on account of the final provision 4.7 of Law 22/2013, which clashes with the regulations on the coordination of social security systems and with CJEU case-law?

Joint answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

According to the article 35 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, 'Everyone has the right of access to preventive healthcare and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices'. Member States have the obligation to ensure that the implementation of the EC law at national level is in compliance with the EU Charter.

EC law provides for the coordination and not the harmonisation of social security systems, meaning that Member States remain free to determine the details of their social security system, including which benefits shall be provided, the conditions of eligibility, how these benefits are calculated and how contributions should be paid. EC law establishes common rules and principles which must be observed by national authorities when applying national law.

According to Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 a person insured in one Member State is entitled to medical care which becomes necessary during a stay in another State. The European Health Insurance Card certifies this entitlement.

Inactive persons are subject to the legislation of the Member State of residence, which refers to the habitual centre of interests of a person. To decide where a person is 'habitually resident', the competent institution needs to carry out an overall assessment. As presented in the Commission's answer to Written Question E-012596-13 ([1]), a person may be temporarily absent for a period exceeding 90 days and still maintain the habitual residence in that State.

As regards the implication of the new Spanish legislation on the application of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004, the Commission will contact the Spanish authorities in order to obtain all available information on the matter described.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-012596&language=EN

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000146/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Reducción del número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o marginación social

La Taula del Tercer Sector está formada por 32 federaciones y organizaciones diferentes que agrupan cerca de 4 000 entidades sociales no lucrativas que actúan en el ámbito de los derechos sociales y la atención a las personas: asociaciones, fundaciones, cooperativas de iniciativa social y empresas de inserción. El pasado mes de noviembre se celebró en Barcelona el IV Congreso del Tercer Sector Social ([1]), que agrupa a entidades que trabajan al servicio de las personas más vulnerables en Cataluña. En su «manifesto» ([2]), estas entidades reclamaban el derecho a recibir el 0,7 % de la declaración de la renta para entidades sociales que un 60 % de los contribuyentes catalanes aportan libremente, para que se destinen principalmente a entidades sociales catalanas y sean gestionadas y distribuidas por la Generalitat de Cataluña, tal y como dictaminan varias sentencias de tribunales españoles.

El pasado 30 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión Europea publicó unas recomendaciones anuales adaptadas a cada Estado miembro para salir de la crisis económica ([3]). La Comisión subrayó que es urgente aprobar y aplicar con eficacia las reformas pendientes siguiendo un cronograma, de modo que pudieran empezar a producir los efectos positivos previstos en el país. Una de las recomendaciones que hace la Comisión al Estado español es «poner en marcha las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o marginación social reforzando las políticas activas dirigidas al mercado de trabajo, con el fin de aumentar la empleabilidad de las personas con menos posibilidades, y mejorar el objetivo, la adecuación, la eficiencia y la eficacia de las medidas de apoyo, incluidos servicios de ayuda de calidad a las familias».

¿Cree la Comisión que el hecho de que el Gobierno español no destine a entidades catalanas el 0,7 % de la declaración de la renta para entidades sociales que un 60 % de los contribuyentes catalanes aporta libremente, va contra las recomendaciones de la Comisión?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(26 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión es consciente de las consecuencias sociales de la crisis económica y de los retos que plantea la desigualdad para la política económica. El Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento de 2014 recomienda saneamientos presupuestarios diferenciados y propicios al crecimiento que tengan en cuenta el efecto de la política fiscal en el crecimiento, la eficiencia del sector público y la equidad social. También aboga por una protección social que funcione mejor y por estrategias activas de inclusión que abarquen unas ayudas a los ingresos adecuadas y eficaces.

En lo que respecta al programa de reforma de España, el Consejo, a propuesta de la Comisión, recomendó aumentar la rentabilidad del sector de la asistencia sanitaria, manteniendo, al mismo tiempo, su acceso para los grupos vulnerables, y adoptar y aplicar las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social, reforzando las políticas activas del mercado laboral a fin de mejorar la empleabilidad de las personas más alejadas de dicho mercado y mejorando la focalización y aumentando la eficiencia y la efectividad de las medidas de apoyo, particularmente mediante unos servicios de apoyo a la familia de calidad.

La evaluación de la Comisión de los avances realizados por España en relación con las recomendaciones por países de 2013 se efectuará en el marco del Semestre Europeo de 2014. No obstante, esta evaluación no podrá ser tan detallada como para valorar el efecto de cada medida, incluida la que menciona Su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.congrestercersector.cat/
([2]) http://www.congrestercersector.cat/sites/congrestercersector.cat/files/manifest_final_del_iv_congres_del_tercer_sector_social_0.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000146/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social marginalisation

La Taula del Tercer Sector is composed of 32 different federations and organisations that group together around 4,000 not-for-profit social institutions that work in the field of social rights and provide support to people, such as associations, foundations, social initiative cooperatives and integration enterprises. Last November, the IV Congreso del Tercer Sector Social ([1]) was held in Barcelona, bringing together organisations that work to support the most vulnerable people in Catalonia. In their 'manifesto' ([2]), these organisations called for the right to receive 0.7% of income tax for social institutions to which 60% of taxpayers in Catalonia voluntarily contribute, so that this can be set aside principally for Catalan social institutions, to be managed and distributed by the Autonomous Government of Catalonia, as per the various rulings handed down by the Spanish courts.

On 30 May 2013, the European Commission published its annual recommendations adapted for each Member State to help it emerge from the economic crisis ([3]). The Commission pointed out the urgent need to approve and apply the pending reforms effectively in a scheduled manner, so that they can begin to produce the positive effects anticipated in the country. One of the recommendations made by the Commission to Spain is to 'implement the necessary measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social marginalisation by reinforcing the active policies directed towards the labour market, with a view to increasing the employability of people with fewer opportunities and to increase the scope, suitability, efficiency and effectiveness of the support measures, including quality services to support families'.

Does the Commission believe that the fact that the Spanish Government has not allocated the 0.7% of income tax for social institutions to which 60% of taxpayers in Catalonia voluntarily contribute contravenes the Commission's recommendations?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the effect of the social consequence of the economic crisis and of the challenges posed by the inequality for economic policy. The Annual Growth Survey for 2014 recommends differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidations that take into account the effect of fiscal policy on growth, public sector efficiency and social equity. It advocates better performing social protection and active inclusion strategies encompassing efficient and adequate income support.

Concerning Spain's reform agenda, the Council, upon proposal of the Commission, recommended to increase the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector, while maintaining accessibility for vulnerable groups and adopt and implement the necessary measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion by reinforcing active labour market policies to improve employability of people further away from the labour market and by improving the targeting and increasing efficiency and effectiveness of support measures including quality family support services.

The Commission's assessment of progress made by Spain with respect to the 2013 country-specific recommendations will take place in the context of the 2014 European semester. However, the Commission's assessment will not be able to go into such a detail to assess the impacts of each single individual measure, such as the one mentioned by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.congrestercersector.cat/
([2]) http://www.congrestercersector.cat/sites/congrestercersector.cat/files/manifest_final_del_iv_congres_del_tercer_sector_social_0.pdf
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000147/14
an die Kommission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Verteuerung der Abwasserkosten durch EU-Umweltauflagen/EU-Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (2000/60/EG)

In der deutschen Presse (u.a. FAZ und BILD-Zeitung) wurden Ende 2013 Berichte veröffentlicht, worin Verbände wie der VKU und der BDEW angaben, EU-Auflagen würden in Zukunft eine erhebliche Verteuerung der Abwasserkosten zur Folge haben. Unter anderem wurde der Hauptgeschäftsführer des VKU mit dem Hinweis zitiert, dass sich Behandlungs- und Entsorgungskosten von Abwasser aufgrund „schärfere[r] Umweltauflagen der EU, Verabredungen aus dem Koalitionsvertrag von Union und SPD und nicht zuletzt [der] anstehende[n] Ökostromförderung" „erheblich erhöhen" würden. Der Verband würde intern, so hieß es, mit einer Verteuerung um 25 % rechnen. Der BDEW, so wurde berichtet, rechne sogar mit zusätzlichen Kosten bis zu 80 %.

Kann die Kommission in diesem Zusammenhang folgende Fragen beantworten:

Sind die angegebenen Zahlen nach Auffassung der Kommission in sich schlüssig?

Wie bewertet die Kommission die Aussagen?

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(27. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission ist sich über bestimmte Berichte in der deutschen Presse im Klaren, nicht jedoch der von den deutschen Wasserverbänden durchgeführten Analysen. Sie kann sich folglich zur Plausibilität der prognostizierten Kosten nicht äußern.

Wie aus dem 2012 vorgelegten Blueprint für den Schutz der europäischen Wasserressourcen ([1]) hervorgeht, hat die Kommission nicht die Absicht, die Umweltvorschriften der EU im Abwasserbereich in absehbarer Zukunft zu überarbeiten: Sie wird sich vielmehr auf die Durchführung bestehender Vorschriften (wie die Wasserrahmenrichtlinie ([2]) und die Richtlinie über die Behandlung von kommunalem Abwasser ([3])) konzentrieren. Eine Verteuerung der Abwasserkosten dürfte dies nicht zur Folge haben.

([1]) Mitteilung der Kommission an das Europäische Parlament, den Rat, den Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und den Ausschuss der Regionen: Ein Blueprint für den Schutz der europäischen Wasserressourcen (KOM(2012)0673 endg.)
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0673:FIN:DE:PDF

([2]) Richtlinie 2000/60/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. Oktober 2000 zur Schaffung eines Ordnungsrahmens für Maßnahmen der Gemeinschaft im Bereich der Wasserpolitik, ABl. L 327 vom 22.12.2000.

([3]) Richtlinie 91/271/EWG des Rates vom 21. Mai 1991 über die Behandlung von kommunalem Abwasser, ABl. L 135 vom 30.5.1991.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000147/14
to the Commission
Karl-Heinz Florenz (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Increase in waste water costs as a result of EU environmental regulations/EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

At the end of 2013, the German press (including the FAZ and BILD newspapers) published reports in which associations such as the VKU and the BDEW indicated that EU regulations would lead to a considerable increase in waste water costs in the future. Amongst other things, the chief executive of the VKU was quoted as saying that the costs of treating and disposing of waste water would 'increase considerably' as a result of 'more stringent EU environmental regulations, arrangements resulting from the Union/SPD coalition agreement and not least the upcoming green energy promotion'. The view within the association was that an increase of 25% could be expected. It was reported that the BDEW was even expecting additional costs of up to 80%.

In this context, can the Commission answer the following questions:

In the Commission's opinion, are the indicated figures plausible?

How does the Commission assess the statements?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of some reports by the German press but has not seen the underlying analysis undertaken by the German water associations and can therefore not comment on the plausibility of their forecast figures.

As laid down in the Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources ([1]) presented in 2012, the Commission does not plan to revise the EU environmental regulation in the field of waste water in the foreseeable future and intends to concentrate on the implementation of the existing legislation (Water Framework Directive ([2]) and Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive ([3])). This should not cause an increase in waste water treatment costs.

([1]) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources (COM/2012/0673 final) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0673:FIN:EN:PDF

([2]) Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy OJ L 327, 22.12.2000.

([3]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment. OJ L 135, 30.5.1991.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000148/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Skandale um Dioxin in Geflügel/Eiern aufgrund Recycel/Riskcycle-Problem

Als langlebige organische Schadstoffe werden Dioxine in der Umwelt bei niedrigen Temperaturen kaum abgebaut. Über die Nahrungskette reichern sie sich in lebenden Organismen an. Der Mensch nimmt sie vor allem über tierische Nahrungsmittel (Fisch, Fleisch, Eier, Milchprodukte) auf.

Die Risiken von (Alt-)Chemikalien und Additiven (Zusatzstoffen) in Produkten im Rahmen globaler Recycling-Ströme sind enorm. Selbst ein Land wie Deutschland mit strenger Gesetzgebung und ausgefeilter Abfallwirtschaft kann die problematischen Chemikalien wie etwa Dioxine/PCB in Stoffströmen auch nach 30 Jahren nicht angemessen handhaben.

Wie bewertet die Kommission die Erkenntnisse, dass die Ursachen der in den letzten Jahren beobachteten Skandale um mit Dioxinen/PCB verseuchte Geflügel/Eier auf das Recycel/Riskcycle-Problem zurück zu führen sind?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(27. Februar 2014)

Der Kommission sind die in den letzten Jahren in Geflügel sowie in Eiern aus Freilandhaltung und biologisch erzeugten Eiern festgestellten zu hohen Belastungen bekannt. In mehreren Fällen konnte die Kontamination von Geflügel und Eiern darauf zurückgeführt werden, dass das Geflügel Zugang zu recycelten Produkten hatte, die Dioxine und PCB enthielten.

Daher wird in der Empfehlung 2013/711/EU der Kommission vom 3. Dezember 2013 zur Reduzierung des Anteils von Dioxinen, Furanen und PCB in Futtermitteln und Lebensmitteln ([1]) den Mitgliedstaaten empfohlen, Eier aus Freilandhaltung und biologisch erzeugte Eier speziell auf Dioxine, dioxinähnliche PCB und nichtdioxinähnliche PCB zu überwachen.

Außerdem ist vorgesehen, dass vor allem, wenn bei Eiern aus Freilandhaltung und biologisch erzeugten Eiern Gehalte über dem Auslösewert festgestellt werden, Untersuchungen zur Ermittlung der Kontaminationsquelle durchgeführt und Maßnahmen zur Beschränkung oder Beseitigung der Kontaminationsquelle getroffen werden müssen.

Die Kommission plant, regelmäßige Sitzungen mit allen zuständigen Behörden der Mitgliedstaaten zu organisieren, damit die Ergebnisse hinsichtlich Dioxinen und PCB (u. a. in Eiern) ausgetauscht werden, ebenso die Ergebnisse von Untersuchungen zur Kontaminationsquelle und der wirksamen Maßnahmen zu deren Beschränkung oder Beseitigung.

Wir gehen davon aus, dass wir auf diese Weise die zuständigen Behörden und die Geflügelhalter in die Lage versetzen können, Präventionsmaßnahmen zu treffen, um zu vermeiden, dass Geflügel Zugang zu recycelten Produkten hat, die Dioxine und PCB enthalten.

([1]) ABl. L 323 vom 4.12.2013, S. 37.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000148/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Scandals regarding dioxin in poultry/eggs due to recycling (risk cycle) problem

As long-lasting harmful organic substances, dioxins scarcely undergo any degradation in the environment at low temperatures. They accumulate in living organisms through the food chain. Humans mainly absorb them through food of animal origin (fish, meat, eggs, dairy products).

The risks of (used) chemicals and additives appearing in products within the scope of global recycling flows are enormous. Even a country such as Germany with strict legislation and sophisticated waste management systems is unable to adequately deal with problematic chemicals such as dioxins/PCBs in material flows, even after 30 years.

How does the Commission assess the findings that the causes of the scandals which have been witnessed in recent years regarding poultry/eggs contaminated with dioxins/PCBs are to be attributed to the recycling (risk cycle) problem?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the findings of non-compliance in recent years in poultry and free range and organic eggs. In several cases the contamination of poultry and eggs could be traced back to the access of the poultry to recycled products containing dioxins and PCBs.

It is therefore that Commission Recommendation 2013/711/EU of 3 December 2013 on the reduction of the presence of dioxins, furans and PCBs in feed and food ([1]) recommends to Member States to monitor specifically the presence of dioxins, dioxin-like PCBs and non-dioxin-like PCBs in free range and organic eggs.

Furthermore it is provided that in particular in case of findings of levels above the action level in the case of free-range eggs and organic eggs, investigations to identify the source of contamination have to be performed and measures to be taken to reduce or to eliminate the source of contamination.

The Commission has the intention to organise regularly a meeting with all competent authorities of the Member States to exchange findings as regards the presence of dioxins and PCBs in, *inter alia*, eggs. Also the outcome of the investigations as regards the source of contamination and the effective measures taken to reduce or to eliminate the source of contamination.

It is expected that with this approach, we are enabling the competent authorities and the holders of poultry to take preventive measures to avoid that poultry have access to recycled products containing dioxins and PCBs.

([1]) OJ L 323, 4.12.2013, p.37.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000149/14
an die Kommission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Nur 1 % der EU-Forschungsmittel werden der Erforschung möglicher Risiken gewidmet

1. Kann die Kommission bestätigen, dass — laut dem Bericht der Europäischen Umweltagentur von 2013 „Späte Lehren aus frühen Warnungen: Wissenschaft, Vorsorge, Innovation“ — die Beträge, die die EU aus den Mitteln für Biotechnologie, Nanotechnologie und Informationstechnologien in die Forschung für Umwelt, Gesundheit und Sicherheit investiert, lediglich 1 % des Gesamtbetrags ausmachen, der zur Förderung dieser Technologien aufgebracht wird?

2. Wie will die Kommission ihre Bemühungen intensivieren, damit mehr wissenschaftliche Informationen im Bereich Risikobekämpfung produziert und mehr notwendige Kampagnen zur Information der Öffentlichkeit organisiert werden?

Antwort von Frau Geoghegan-Quinn im Namen der Kommission
(4. März 2014)

1. Forschung zu Umwelt-, Gesundheits- und Sicherheitsfragen (EHS) sowie zu einem wirksamen Risikomanagement ist meist integraler Bestandteil von Vorhaben im Bereich der Produktentwicklung, weshalb die Höhe der Finanzierung nicht genau beziffert werden kann. Daneben wird die sicherheitsbezogene Forschung in dem sich schnell entwickelnden Bereich der Nanotechnologien, in bestimmten Bereichen der Biotechnologie und in der Informations- und Kommunikationstechnik (IKT) gefördert. Im Zuge des 7. Forschungsrahmenprogramms (RP7) wurden 48 EHS-Forschungsprojekte in der Nanotechnik mit 177 Mio. EUR unterstützt. Dies entspricht 5 % des Budgets für das Programm NMP ([1]) ([2]) und 10 % des Bereichs Nanotechnologien. Im Rahmen des Programms „Wissensbasierte Bio-Ökonomie“ (KBBE) ([3]) des 7. Rahmenprogramms erhielten 10 Projekte, die die Risikobewertung oder Sicherheitsaspekte gentechnisch veränderter Organismen (GVO) betrafen und auch für Regulierungsfragen relevant waren, einen EU-Beitrag von insgesamt rund 31 Mio. EUR. In Bezug auf IKT hat die Kommission fünf Vorhaben, in denen die Exposition durch elektromagnetische Felder (EMF) und deren mögliche gesundheitliche Auswirkungen behandelt wurden, mit einem Gesamtbeitrag von 23 Mio. EUR gefördert.

2. Kommunikation und Wissensverbreitung sind integraler Bestandteil von Forschungsprojekten und werden bei der Bewertung der Vorschläge berücksichtigt. Neben der projektspezifischen Verbreitung sind dabei das EU-Nanosafety-Cluster ([4]), das jährliche Kompendium der RP-Vorhaben und die Forschungsagenda zur Sicherheit der Nanotechnologien 2015-2025 hervorzuheben. Für die biologische Sicherheit relevante Projekte werden in zwei Veröffentlichungen ([5]) beschrieben, die häufig in wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten zitiert werden. Informationen zu den Risiken elektromagnetischer Felder wurden z. B. über das Internationale EMF-Projekt unter der Leitung der WHO ([6]) verbreitet. Veröffentlichungen im Rahmen des Programms Horizont 2020 müssen frei zugänglich sein ([7]). In Bezug auf den freien Zugang zu Forschungsdaten, die aus Projekten in ausgewählten Bereichen des Programms Horizont 2020 hervorgehen, wird derzeit ein Pilotprojekt entwickelt.

([1]) Nanowissenschaften, Nanotechnologien, Werkstoffe und neue Produktionstechnologien.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/nanotechnology_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/home_en.html
([4]) http://www.nanosafetycluster.eu
([5]) Herausgegeben in den Jahren 2001 und 2010.
([6]) http://www.who.int/peh-emf/project/en/index.html
([7]) Sie müssen kostenlos online eingesehen und heruntergeladen werden können.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000149/14
to the Commission
Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Just 1% of EU research budget allocated to research into potential hazards

1. Could the Commission confirm that, according to the European Environment Agency's2013 report entitled 'Late Lessons from Early Warnings: Science, Precaution, Innovation', the level of EU environmental, health and safety (EHS) research funding allocated to biotechnologies, nanotechnologies and information communications technologies amounts to just about 1% of that which goes into promoting these technologies?

2. What steps is the Commission taking to increase efforts to produce scientific information for the purposes of risk management and the necessary public outreach activities?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

1. Environmental, health and safety (EHS) related research and effective risk management are typically covered as an integral part of product development oriented projects, implying that the level of funding cannot precisely be quantified. Further safety specific research funding is allocated to the fast evolving nanotechnologies field as well as towards specific issues in the biotechnologies and ICT domains. FP7 spending towards nano-EHS research accounted for EUR 177 million in 48 projects corresponding to 5% of the budget of the NMP ([1]) ([2]) programme and 10% of the nanotechnology part of NMP. Within the FP7 Knowledge-Based Bio-Economy (KBBE) ([3]) programme, 10 projects with an overall EU contribution of around EUR 31 million covered GMO risk assessment or safety with a clear impact on regulatory aspects. In relation to ICT, the Commission has funded five projects with a total contribution of EUR 23 million on exposure to and the potential health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs).

2. Communication and outreach is an integral part of research projects and is included in the criteria for proposal evaluation. Beyond project specific dissemination, the EU Nanosafety Cluster ([4]), the annual compendium of FP projects and the nano-safety research agenda 2015-2025 can be highlighted. Bio-safety relevant projects have been summarised in two publications ([5]) which are frequently cited in scientific publications. Information on EMF risks has been disseminated e.g. via the International EMF Project managed by WHO ([6]). Publications resulting from Horizon 2020 are required to be 'open access' ([7]). A pilot is being developed on open access to research data generated by projects in selected areas of Horizon 2020.

([1]) Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials & New Production Technologies.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/cooperation/nanotechnology_en.html
([3]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/kbbe/home_en.html
([4]) http://www.nanosafetycluster.eu
([5]) released in 2001 and 2010.
([6]) http://www.who.int/peh-emf/project/en/index.html
([7]) free to read and download online.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000150/14
alla Commissione
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(9 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Salvaguardia delle esportazioni dei derivati di pomodoro

Per richiesta dell'azienda di trasformazione del pomodoro SPC Ardmona Operations Limited, il governo australiano ha avviato un'indagine per l'applicazione di misure di salvaguardia nei confronti dei pomodori conservati importati dall'Italia. Il primo rapporto di tale indagine non ha rilevato alcun pregiudizio a danno dell'industria australiana con conseguente mancanza di prove per imporre misure di salvaguardia provvisorie. Nel luglio 2013, sempre a seguito delle richieste dell'azienda sopra citata, il governo ha avviato un'indagine anti-dumping sui pomodori trasformati importati dall'Italia. L'indagine si è articolata in tre fasi: una prima fase di ricezione delle risposte richieste in un questionario sottoposto dalla Commissione anti-dumping; una seconda fase di campionamento delle aziende esportatrici limitate ai 7 principali esportatori che hanno ricevuto le visite ispettive tra il 21 e il 25 ottobre 2013 e una terza fase ancora in corso).

A partire dal 1° novembre, il governo australiano ha deciso di imporre un maggior dazio (tra il 6.5 % e il 9.11 %) quale misura provvisoria sui derivati del pomodoro (pelati interi e non interi) provenienti dall'Italia. Di pari passo, sono stati recentemente resi noti gli esiti delle visite ispettive di tre aziende che hanno rilevato un margine di dumping inferiore rispetto a quello applicato con le misure provvisorie. Con un valore superiore ai 50 milioni di dollari US, le esportazioni italiane di pomodori conservati rappresentano il 90 % delle importazioni australiane di pomodori. L'Italia è inoltre l'unico produttore mondiale di pomodori pelati interi trasformati da pomodoro lungo e gli elevati livelli qualitativi di tale prodotto sono stati negli anni uno straordinario volano di crescita della domanda australiana. Di conseguenza, i dazi applicati dal 1° novembre rischiano concretamente di avere un impatto negativo sul consumo del prodotto italiano dal momento che si rifletteranno sui costi di produzione.

Può la Commissione far sapere:

se è a conoscenza della problematica sopra esposta e quali iniziative urgenti intende intraprendere al fine di ripristinare le regole commerciali necessarie a tutelare le aziende esportatrici di pomodori trasformati e a non compromettere il consumo di tali prodotti consolidatosi negli anni sul mercato australiano?

Risposta di Karel De Gucht a nome della Commissione
(3 marzo 2014)

Il 21 giugno e il 9 luglio 2013 le autorità australiane hanno avviato rispettivamente un'indagine di salvaguardia sulle importazioni di derivati di pomodoro da tutti i paesi d'origine nonché un'indagine anti-dumping sulle importazioni dei derivati di pomodoro originari dell'Italia.

La Commissione è pienamente a conoscenza di entrambe le indagini e, dal loro avvio, segue la questione e interviene ove necessario.

Per quanto concerne l'indagine di salvaguardia, la Commissione, gli Stati membri e le associazioni industriali sono intervenute congiuntamente a diversi livelli. Queste azioni sono state in effetti efficaci poiché, nel dicembre 2013, il governo australiano ha deciso che le misure di salvaguardia non erano giustificate.

La Commissione è stata anche estremamente attiva per quanto concerne l'indagine anti-dumping, ha presentato diverse interpellazioni scritte alla commissione australiana anti-dumping (ADC) ed ha sostenuto le imprese italiane nell'arco di tale processo. Tuttavia, il 1° novembre 2013, l'ADC ha deciso di imporre misure provvisorie (margini di dumping dallo 0 % al 9,11 %).

L'indagine si trova attualmente nella sua fase finale. Il 4 febbraio 2014 l'ADC ha raccomandato l'imposizione di misure definitive che comportano un dazio generale inferiore per gli esportatori che cooperano (dall'8,6 % nella fase provvisoria al 5 %), nessun dazio per due dei principali esportatori (44 % delle esportazioni italiane in Australia) e un dazio del 26,3 % per tutti gli esportatori che non hanno cooperato.

La Commissione sta esaminando attualmente le ultime risultanze pubblicate dall'ADC e presenterà fra breve i suoi commenti alle autorità australiane esprimendo la propria opposizione alla misura. L'ADC formulerà una raccomandazione finale sulle misure definitive entro il 21 marzo 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000150/14
to the Commission
Paolo De Castro (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Safeguarding exports of tomato derivatives

Following a request made by the tomato-processing company SPC Ardmona Operations Limited, the Australian Government launched an investigation into whether protective measures could be applied against canned tomatoes imported from Italy. The first report produced from this investigation did not reveal that Australian industry had suffered any material damage, which meant that there were no grounds to impose interim protective measures. In July 2013, again at the request of the above-cited company, the Government launched an anti-dumping investigation into processed tomatoes imported from Italy. The investigation has been carried out in three phases: a first phase in which the answers given in a questionnaire issued by the Anti-Dumping Commission were collated; a second phase in which exporting companies were individually appraised (which was limited to the seven chief exporters, who each received a visit from inspectors between 21 and 25 October 2013); and a third phase that is still in progress.

The Australian Government subsequently resolved, as an interim measure from 1 November 2013 onwards, to impose higher duties (ranging from 6.5% to 9.11%) on tomato derivatives (peeled tomatoes, both whole and chopped) imported from Italy. In the meantime, it has recently been observed that the results of the inspections conducted at three companies revealed a dumping margin lower than the threshold specified in the interim measures. Canned tomatoes imported from Italy are worth in excess of 50 million US dollars, and account for 90% of all tomatoes imported into Australia. Moreover, Italy is the world's sole producer of peeled whole tomatoes processed from San Marzano tomatoes (with their distinctive long shape), and the sheer quality of these products has seen their demand in Australia skyrocket in recent years. Consequently, there is a very real risk that the duties applied from 1 November onwards will see consumption levels of this Italian product fall, since these duties will be reflected in the production costs.

Is the Commission aware of this issue, and what urgent measures does it intend to take to re-establish the commercial regulations necessary for protecting companies that export processed tomatoes and for ensuring that the consumption levels of these products, which have been steady in Australia for many years, do not fall?

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

In 21 June and 9 July 2013, the Australian authorities initiated respectively a safeguard investigation on imports of processed tomato products from all countries of origin and an anti-dumping investigation on imports of processed tomato products from Italy.

The Commission is well aware of both investigations and since initiation has been monitoring and intervening when necessary.

Regarding the safeguard investigation the Commission, Member States and the industry associations jointly intervened at different levels. These actions were indeed successful since in December 2013 the Australian government decided that safeguard measures were not warranted.

The Commission has as well been very active as regards the anti-dumping investigation by making different written submissions to the Australian Anti-dumping Commission (ADC) and by supporting Italian companies along the process. Yet, on 1 November 2013 the ADC decided to impose provisional measures (dumping margins from 0% to 9.11%).

The investigation is currently on its final phase. On 4 February 2014, the ADC recommended the imposition of definitive measures meaning a lower general duty to cooperating exporters (from 8.6% at provisional stage to 5%), no duty to two of the main exporters (44% of Italian exports to Australia) and 26.3% duty to all non-cooperative exporters.

The Commission is at present examining the latest findings released by the ADC and will soon submit comments to the Australian authorities expressing its opposition to the measure. The ADC will make a final recommendation on definitive measures on or before 21 March 2014.

(Versão portuguesa)

Pergunta com pedido de resposta escrita E-000152/14
à Comissão
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) e Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(9 de janeiro de 2014)

Assunto: Efeitos da reclassificação das zonas estuarino-lagunares e litorais de produção de moluscos bivalves em Portugal

Uma decisão recente do Governo Português veio proceder à reclassificação das zonas estuarino-lagunares e litorais de produção de moluscos bivalves, desclassificando extensas zonas por todo o país, alterações que atingem com especial acuidade económica e social as comunidades da Ria Formosa no Algarve.

Esta desclassificação cria uma situação dramática para muitos milhares de viveiristas, aquicultores, mariscadores e pescadores da pesca com ganchorra que vivem da produção/captura de moluscos bivalves, que, de um dia para o outro, veem a sua atividade seriamente comprometida. Ao mesmo tempo, ela ameaça a continuidade de um setor de atividade de inegável valor económico e que assegura o sustento de largos milhares de famílias.

Alegadamente, esta desclassificação terá ocorrido na sequência da monitorização e controlo da qualidade microbiológica dos moluscos bivalves e em cumprimento de legislação da União Europeia. Mas os agentes económicos denunciam a exiguidade na recolha das amostras por razões de natureza financeira, que condicionam a atividade das equipas de recolha. O próprio governo reconhece que «a componente analítica é suportada por uma infraestrutura laboratorial dispendiosa e pessoal técnico especializado» e, por isso, se «tem procurado ajustar sempre o esforço de amostragem e analítico aos meios disponíveis».

Solicitamos à Comissão que nos informe sobre o seguinte:

1. Tem conhecimento desta reclassificação e das suas consequências?

2. Foi esta reclassificação determinada por legislação da UE? Em caso afirmativo, qual(ais) a(s) diretiva(s) e/ou o(s) regulamento(s) em causa?

3. Que critérios mínimos de monitorização e controlo da qualidade microbiológica dos moluscos bivalves estão estabelecidos? Foram esses critérios observados neste caso?

4. Que medidas de emergência poderão ser acionadas ao nível da UE para acorrer à situação dramática vivida por muitos milhares de viveiristas, aquicultores, mariscadores e pescadores da pesca com ganchorra que vivem da produção/captura de moluscos bivalves e que, de um dia para o outro, viram a sua atividade comprometida?

Resposta dada por Tonio Borg em nome da Comissão
(5 de março de 2014)

A Comissão está ciente da situação no setor dos moluscos bivalves vivos em Portugal.

Os resultados de uma auditoria realizada em Portugal, em setembro de 2013, pelo serviço de auditoria da Direção-Geral da Saúde e dos Consumidores da Comissão, a DG SANCO, (SAV — Serviço Alimentar e Veterinário) indicaram que, tendo em conta as falhas graves do sistema português de controlos oficiais, não existem garantias adequadas de que os moluscos bivalves vivos colocados no mercado cumpram as normas sanitárias da UE. Esses produtos representam um risco para a saúde pública em Portugal e nos outros Estados-Membros devido à sua possível contaminação por agentes patogénicos e/ou biotoxinas.

Entre as questões identificadas durante a auditoria, os peritos do SAV comunicaram, nomeadamente, que existem áreas de produção que foram classificadas com base num conjunto incompleto de resultados, com um número significativo de resultados que excedem os critérios pertinentes da UE. As zonas de produção nunca foram reclassificadas e a colheita não foi proibida quando a contaminação microbiológica excedeu os critérios pertinentes estabelecidos no Regulamento (CE) n.° 853/2004 ([1]) e no Regulamento (CE) n.° 854/2004 ([2]).

Por conseguinte, a decisão de alterar a classificação das zonas de produção foi tomada pelas autoridades portuguesas como parte de um conjunto de medidas destinadas a corrigir as deficiências graves assinaladas pela auditoria. A Comissão está a acompanhar a evolução da situação e a aplicação destas medidas em estreito contacto com as autoridades portuguesas.

([1]) JO L 139 de 30.4.2004, p. 55.
([2]) JO L 139 de 30.4.2004, p. 206.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000152/14
to the Commission
João Ferreira (GUE/NGL) and Inês Cristina Zuber (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Effects of the reclassification of estuary-lagoon and coastal areas used for bivalve mollusc production in Portugal

A recent decision by the Portuguese Government has led to the reclassification of estuary-lagoon and coastal areas used for bivalve mollusc production, with large areas around the country being declassified. These changes have had especially severe economic and social effects on the Ria Formosa communities in the Algarve.

Losing their classification has created a very difficult situation for many thousands of hatchery workers, fish farmers, shellfish gatherers and clam-dredge fishermen who make their living by producing or gathering bivalve molluscs and whose livelihood has suddenly been put in jeopardy. It also threatens the very continuity of an activity that is of undeniable economic value and supports many thousands of families.

These areas have allegedly been declassified as a result of monitoring and control of the microbiological quality of bivalve molluscs carried out to comply with European Union legislation. However, the people affected have complained that very few samples were taken due to financial reasons, which constrained the work of the sampling teams. The Government itself acknowledges the fact that 'the analytical component is underpinned by costly laboratory facilities and specialist technical staff' and therefore they 'have always tried to tailor the sampling and analytical effort to the funds available.'

1. Is the Commission aware of this reclassification and its consequences?

2. Was this reclassification required by EU legislation? If so, which are the directives and/or regulations concerned?

3. What minimum standards have been laid down for the monitoring and control of the microbiological quality of bivalve molluscs? Have these standards been met in this case?

4. What emergency measures can be set in motion at EU level to alleviate the difficulties faced by many thousands of hatchery workers, fish farmers, shellfish gatherers and clam-dredge fishermen who make their living by producing or gathering bivalve molluscs and whose livelihood has suddenly been put in jeopardy?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The Commission is aware of the situation in the sector of live bivalve molluscs in Portugal.

The findings of an audit conducted in Portugal in September 2013 by the Commission audit service of the Health and Consumers Directorate General, DG SANCO, (FVO — Food and Veterinary Office) indicated that in light of the serious failures of the Portuguese system of official controls there are no adequate assurances that bivalve molluscs placed on the market comply with EU health standards. Those products could pose a risk to public health in Portugal and in the other Member States due to their possible contamination with pathogens and/or biotoxins.

Amongst the issues identified during the audit, the FVO experts reported in particular that there are production areas which were classified on the basis of an incomplete set of results, with a significant number of results exceeding the EU relevant criteria. Production areas were never re-classified and harvesting was not banned when microbiological contamination exceeded the relevant criteria established in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 ([2]).

The decision to modify the classification of production areas was therefore taken by the Portuguese authorities as part of a number of measures aimed at addressing the serious shortcomings reported by the audit. The Commission is following the development of the situation and the implementation of these measures in close contact with the Portuguese authorities.

([1]) OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 55.
([2]) OJ L 139, 30.4.2004, p. 206.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000154/14
alla Commissione
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(9 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Finanziamento di opere progettate su incarichi legittimamente conferiti prima della legge 109/1994 «Legge quadro in materia di lavori pubblici»

Premesso che:

— In data 15 ottobre 2013 lo scrivente ha presentato un'interrogazione avente ad oggetto il Finanziamento di opere progettate su incarichi legittimamente conferiti prima della legge 109/1994 «Legge quadro in materia di lavori pubblici»;

— In data 3 dicembre 2013 la Commissione europea ha fornito la risposta numero P-011935/2013;

— Poiché la Commissione non ha chiarito in maniera esauriente il problema posto nel quesito, lo scrivente si ripropone muovendo dalla descrizione di una fattispecie che ricorre in un numero elevato di casi concreti.

Può la Commissione precisare se, avendo un comune della regione siciliana dello Stato italiano conferito, senza gara di evidenza pubblica, l'incarico per la progettazione di un'opera pubblica in un momento in cui ciò era possibile in base alle leggi vigenti nella predetta regione, in caso di richiesta di finanziamento dell'opera con fondi comunitari del predetto comune, il finanziamento possa comprendere le competenze tecniche dovute al progettista, che è stato incaricato senza gara di evidenza pubblica, ma nel rispetto delle leggi interne vigenti al momento del conferimento dell'incarico?

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

I finanziamenti UE possono essere concessi solo a progetti pienamente conformi alla normativa UE, compresa quella in materia di appalti pubblici ([1]).

Per stabilire se i contratti di servizio pubblico per la progettazione di lavori sono stati aggiudicati o meno in base alla normativa UE in materia di appalti pubblici all'epoca vigente, è necessario prendere in considerazione la data della decisione relativa all'aggiudicazione di detti contratti di servizio pubblico. Se le decisioni di cui sopra sono state adottate prima della fine del periodo di recepimento delle prime norme comunitarie che disciplinano l'aggiudicazione degli appalti pubblici di servizi ([2]), la questione dell'applicabilità della normativa UE non si pone. Se le decisioni sono state adottate dopo la fine del periodo di recepimento o se i contratti hanno subito sostanziali modifiche dopo detto periodo, occorre stabilire se le procedure di aggiudicazione utilizzate hanno rispettato le norme UE vigenti al momento dell'aggiudicazione stessa. Non è pertanto rilevante il fatto che norme regionali consentano procedure di aggiudicazione contrarie alle norme dell'UE.

In particolare, per valutare se le procedure di aggiudicazione diretta siano conformi alla normativa UE, occorre stabilire tra l'altro quali precisi servizi siano stati aggiudicati in quale momento, se i contratti coprono i servizi effettivamente prestati, se e quando essi sono stati sostanzialmente modificati, se i servizi rientrano nel campo d'applicazione delle direttive sugli appalti pubblici in termini di valore, quali norme della direttiva applicabile avrebbero dovuto essere applicate all'oggetto, e se possa essere applicabile una deroga all'applicazione della direttiva. Si dovrà inoltre valutare se la lunga durata dei contratti denoti l'intento di escludere il contratto dall'applicazione del diritto dell'UE nel corso del tempo. Le informazioni fornite dall'onorevole deputato non sono sufficienti affinché la Commissione possa effettuare una valutazione ([3]).

([1]) Come menzionato nella risposta P-11935/13.
([2]) Direttiva 92/50/CE.
([3]) Nei casi in cui i contratti siano stati già eseguiti, è competenza degli organismi nazionali di ricorso valutare le possibili violazioni del diritto nazionale con riferimento all'aggiudicazione e all'esecuzione di tali contratti.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000154/14
to the Commission
Giovanni La Via (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Funding for projects for which contracts were legitimately awarded prior to the entry into force of Italian Framework Law 109/1994 on public works

On 15 October 2013 I tabled a question concerning 'Funding for projects for which contracts were legitimately awarded prior to the entry into force of Italian Framework Law 109/1994 on public works'.

The Commission replied to that question (P-011935/2013) on 3 December 2013.

Given that the Commission failed to provide a complete answer, I shall, returning to the subject of the question, describe the particular situation applying in a great many specific cases.

Assuming that a Sicilian municipal council had awarded a public works contract without a public tendering procedure, at the time when it was still permitted to do so under the regional laws in force, if the council were to apply for EU funding to finance the works, could that funding be used for the specialist tasks to be performed by a contractor selected without a public tendering procedure, but also without any breach of the domestic laws in force when the contract was awarded?

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

EU funding can only be granted to projects fully complying with all applicable EC law including on public procurement (PP) ([1]).

To establish whether the public service contracts for the design of works were awarded or not according to EU PP law applicable at the time, it is necessary to take into account the date of the decision concerning the award of those specific public service contracts. If those decisions were taken before the end of the transposition period of the first Community rules on the award of public service contracts ([2]), there is no question of applicability of EC law. If the decisions were taken after the end of the transposition period or the ensuing contracts substantially modified after that, it is necessary to establish whether the awarding procedures used were complying with EU rules applicable at the time. In this respect it is not relevant whether regional rules allow awarding procedures contrary to those EU rules.

In particular, to assess the compliance with EC law of the direct awards, it should be established *inter alia* which precise services have been awarded at what time, whether the contracts cover the services actually performed, whether and when they have been substantially modified, whether the services fall within the scope of PP Directives in terms of value, which rules of the applicable Directive should have been applied to the subject matter, and if any exception to the application of the directive could apply. It will also have to be assessed whether the very long duration of the contracts demonstrates an intention to exclude the contract from the application of EC law over time. The information provided by the Honourable Member is not sufficient for the Commission to provide such an assessment ([3]).

([1]) As mentioned in the previous reply to P-11935/13.
([2]) Directive 92/50/EC,.
([3]) In those cases where the contracts have been already executed, it is with the competence of the national review bodies to assess possible violations of national law with reference to the award and execution of those contracts.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000157/14
a la Comisión
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Incremento de la desigualdad desde el inicio de la crisis

Según los datos más recientes publicados en Eurostat, los niveles de desigualdad en los Estados miembros de la Unión Europea se han disparado hasta niveles previamente desconocidos desde el inicio de la crisis económica. Los datos señalan un fracaso mayoritario de las estrategias de la mayoría de los Estados miembros para mantener unos niveles aceptables de desigualdad a través de políticas económicas progresivas.

Los datos arrojados sobre la situación de la desigualdad en España son alarmantes, puesto que entre 2007 y 2012, el país ha registrado un incremento de la desigualdad de renta entre el 20 % más rico de la población y el 20 % más pobre de 1,2, llegando el 20 % más rico a ganar 7,2 veces más lo que gana el 20 % más pobre. Estos datos anuncian cómo la crisis ha incrementado la brecha social antes de que España hubiese recibido el rescate de su sector bancario.

A todas luces, el rescate al sector bancario de España ha producido una serie de políticas económicas que han desencadenado aún más un incremento sin precedentes de la desigualdad. Millones de euros del erario público han sido destinados a sanear las cuentas de las instituciones financieras mientras que se han cancelado servicios públicos fundamentales. Los salarios de los directivos españoles no dejan de crecer, en un 3,2 % en 2012, mientras los directivos del sector bancario son los segundos mejor pagados de toda la Unión tan solo por detrás de Chipre, según datos de la propia Autoridad Bancaria Europea. A raíz de la evidencia del incremento de la desigualdad en buena parte de los Estados miembros de la UE:

¿Está la Comisión al corriente del importante incremento de la desigualdad registrado en numerosos países de la Unión Europea?

¿Está la Comisión planteando la lucha contra la desigualdad como un objetivo dentro de su política económica? ¿Cuáles son las medidas específicas que la Comisión recoge en sus recomendaciones a los Estados miembros para la lucha contra el incremento de la desigualdad en España y en el resto de Estados donde se ha incrementado?

¿Considera que los diferentes rescates financieros incrementarán la desigualdad en los Estados miembros sujetos a un Memorando de Entendimiento?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión es consciente de los efectos de las consecuencias sociales de la crisis económica y de los retos que plantea la política económica. El Estudio Prospectivo Anual de 2014 recomienda saneamientos presupuestarios diferenciados y propicios al crecimiento que tengan en cuenta el efecto de la política fiscal en el crecimiento, la eficacia del sector público y la equidad social. También aboga por una protección social que funcione mejor y por estrategias activas de inclusión que abarquen ayudas a los ingresos adecuadas y eficaces. Los distintos paquetes de ayuda financiera se han pensado para proporcionar liquidez en un entorno de gran incertidumbre, restablecer la solvencia fiscal y estimular el crecimiento económico a medio plazo. Velar por que el sector bancario facilite financiación a las actividades productivas es una de las prioridades del Estudio Prospectivo Anual sobre el Crecimiento de 2014.

En lo que respecta al programa de reforma de España, el Consejo, a propuesta de la Comisión, recomendó aumentar la rentabilidad del sector de la asistencia sanitaria, manteniendo, al mismo tiempo, su acceso para los grupos vulnerables, y adoptar y aplicar las medidas necesarias para reducir el número de personas en riesgo de pobreza o exclusión social reforzando las políticas activas del mercado laboral a fin de mejorar la empleabilidad de las personas más alejadas de dicho mercado, centrando mejor medidas de apoyo como los servicios de apoyo a la familia de calidad, por ejemplo, y mejorando la eficacia y la efectividad de tales medidas de apoyo.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000157/14
to the Commission
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Increase in inequality since the start of the financial crisis

According to the latest data published by Eurostat, inequality in Member States of the European Union has shot up to unprecedented levels since the beginning of the economic crisis. The data indicate major strategic failings by the majority of the Member States in maintaining inequality levels below an acceptable level through progressive economic policy.

The statistics produced on inequality in Spain are alarming, given that between 2007 and 2012, the country recorded increased levels of inequality in terms of income between the 20% richest and 20% poorest of the population, meaning that the 20% richest earn 7.2 times more than the 20% poorest. These statistics are a sign of how the crisis has widened the social gap prior to Spain receiving the rescue package for its banking sector.

Clearly, the rescue package for the Spanish banking sector has produced a series of economic policies that have triggered an even greater unprecedented rise in inequality. Millions of euros of public funds have been withdrawn from essential public services and allocated to restructuring the bank accounts of financial institutions instead. Executive salaries in Spain continue to rise, by 3.2% in 2012, while executives in the banking sector are the second-best paid in the whole of EU, behind only Cyprus, according to data from our very own European Banking Authority. As a result of the evidence of the considerable increase in inequality within EU Member States:

Is the Commission aware of the significant growth of inequality recorded in many EU countries?

Does the Commission plan to combat inequality as an objective within its economic policy? What specific measures is the Commission including in its recommendations to the Member States to combat the rise in inequality in Spain and in other States that have experienced a similar situation?

Does the Commission believe that the various financial rescue packages will lead to an increase in inequality in the Member States that are subject to a memorandum of understanding?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(11 February 2014)

The Commission is aware of the effect of the social consequence of the economic crisis and of the challenges posed for economic policy. The Annual Growth Survey for 2014 recommends differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidations that take into account the effect of fiscal policy on growth, public sector efficiency and social equity. It advocates better performing social protection and active inclusion strategies encompassing efficient and adequate income support. The various financial support packages have been devised to provide liquidity in high uncertain environment, re-establish fiscal solvency and foster economic growth in the medium term. Making sure that the banking sector provides finance to productive activities is one of the priorities of the Annual Growth survey for 2014.

Concerning reform agenda of Spain , the Council, upon proposal of the Commission, recommended to increase the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare sector, while maintaining accessibility for vulnerable groups and adopt and implement the necessary measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion by reinforcing active labour market policies to improve employability of people further away from the labour market and by improving the targeting and increasing efficiency and effectiveness of support measures including quality family support services.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000158/14
alla Commissione
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(9 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Recepimento del regolamento (UE) n. 258/2012

Il 14 marzo 2012 è stato pubblicato nella Gazzetta ufficiale il regolamento (UE) n. 258/2012, che attua l'articolo 10 del protocollo delle Nazioni Unite sulle armi da fuoco e dispone autorizzazioni di esportazione e misure di importazione e transito per le armi da fuoco, loro parti e componenti e munizioni, successivamente pubblicato.

La finalità del regolamento è di stabilire un sistema unificato per il commercio di armi da fuoco, armonizzando e semplificando le procedure a vantaggio delle imprese europee specializzate nel settore, combattendo il traffico illecito di armi da fuoco per uso civile, favorendo una maggiore cooperazione con i paesi terzi, il raggiungimento di elevati standard di sicurezza, un contrasto efficiente al traffico di armi e un'accresciuta tracciabilità delle armi.

In Italia il settore della produzione di armi può contare su un fatturato di oltre 250 milioni (sui quasi 700 europei), con più di 100 imprese e 3000 addetti, produzione che è destinata per il 90 per cento all'esportazione.

In Italia l'attuazione del regolamento ha provocato una moltiplicazione degli oneri burocratici, per cui l'istruttoria aziendale è passata da 16 a 86 pagine, mentre in altri Stati membri pare si sia avuta al contrario un'attuazione lassista delle nuove normative, tale da comportare uno squilibrio di tempi e di costi nell'assolvimento delle disposizioni del regolamento.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. intende verificare il corretto recepimento da parte dell'Italia?

2. Quali azioni intende intraprendere per verificare il grado e le modalità di recepimento del regolamento nei diversi paesi, in modo da evitare che un recepimento difforme possa provocare indebiti vantaggi competitivi per le imprese di alcuni Stati membri?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(19 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione ha recentemente istituito il gruppo di coordinamento di esperti delle autorità nazionali competenti, responsabile dell'attuazione del regolamento (UE) n. 258/2012 ([1]), come previsto al relativo articolo 20.

Il gruppo di coordinamento si riunirà periodicamente (primo incontro 11 febbraio 2014), ed esaminerà tutte le questioni riguardanti l'applicazione del regolamento.

La Commissione sta monitorando da vicino l'attuazione del regolamento, soprattutto per ridurre il rischio di discrepanze fra Stati membri, che potrebbero pregiudicare la libera circolazione delle merci e la concorrenza fra produttori.

([1]) Regolamento (UE) n. 258/2012 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 14 marzo 2012, che attua l'articolo 10 del protocollo delle Nazioni Unite contro la fabbricazione e il traffico illeciti di armi da fuoco, loro parti e componenti e munizioni, addizionale alla convenzione delle Nazioni Unite contro la criminalità transnazionale organizzata (protocollo delle Nazioni Unite sulle armi da fuoco), e dispone autorizzazioni all'esportazione, misure di importazione e transito per le armi da fuoco, loro parti e componenti e munizioni, GU L 94 del 30.3.2012, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000158/14
to the Commission
Carlo Fidanza (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Transposition of Regulation (EU) No 258/2012

Regulation (EU) No 258/2012 implementing Article 10 of the UN Firearms Protocol and establishing export authorisation, and import and transit measures for firearms, their parts and components and ammunition was published in the Official Journal in March 2012.

The purpose of the regulation is to create a uniform system for trade in firearms, harmonising and simplifying the relevant procedures for the benefit of European companies specialising in this sector, combating illegal trafficking of firearms for civil use and promoting greater cooperation with third countries, high safety standards, effective action against firearms trafficking and better traceability of firearms.

In Italy, the arms manufacturing sector boasts a turnover of more than 250 million (out of a total turnover of almost 700 million in Europe), with more than 100 companies and 3 000 employees; 90% of the firearms manufactured are earmarked for export.

In Italy, the implementation of the regulation has led to an increase in red tape, with the volume of paperwork generated in connection with the necessary controls more than quadrupling, while in other Member States it would seem that there has been a lax approach to implementing the new rules. This has resulted in an imbalance between the Member States in terms of the time and costs involved in complying with the regulation's requirements.

1. Does the Commission intend to check that Italy has transposed the regulation correctly?

2. What action does it intend to take to check how, and how fully, the regulation has been transposed in the various countries, so as to avoid a situation where transposition differences give companies in some Member States an unfair competitive advantage?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The Commission has recently set up the Coordination Group of Experts of competent national authorities responsible for the implementation of Regulation 258/2012 ([1]), as provided for in its Article 20.

This group will meet on regular basis (with its first meeting on 11 February 2014) and will examine any questions concerning the application of the regulation.

The Commission is closely monitoring the implementation of the regulation, notably in order to reduce the risk of discrepancies among Member States which could jeopardise the free circulation of goods and the competition among producers.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 258/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 implementing Article 10 of the United Nations' Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UN Firearms Protocol), and establishing export authorisation, and import and transit measures for firearms, their parts and components and ammunition; OJ L 94, 30.3.2012, p. 1-15.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000159/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Αξίωση της τρόικα για μειώσεις εργοδοτικών εισφορών

Σύμφωνα με πληροφορίες, ένα από τα βασικά σημεία τριβών μεταξύ της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και της τρόικα, αναφορικά με τις διαπραγματεύσεις για την αξιολόγηση του ελληνικού προγράμματος, είναι η αξίωση από την πλευρά των δανειστών για μείωση κατά περίπου 4% των εργοδοτικών εισφορών προς τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία. Η αξίωση αυτή θα επιφέρει «μαύρη τρύπα» στα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία, καθώς επίσης και στον προϋπολογισμό του 2014, που υπολογίζεται από 800 εκατ. έως και 1 δις ευρώ.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Αποτελεί όντως αξίωση της τρόικα η μείωση των εργοδοτικών εισφορών προς τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία από το 2014; Υπάρχει ομοφωνία όσον αφορά αυτή την αξίωση στο εσωτερικό της τρόικα;

2. Αποτελεί το παραπάνω μέτρο υποχρέωση της Ελλάδας με βάση το Μνημόνιο ή πρόκειται για νέο μέτρο που προτείνει η τρόικα;

3. Τι προτείνει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στην ελληνική κυβέρνηση για την κάλυψη του χρηματοοικονομικού κενού που θα δημιουργούσε μια μείωση των εργοδοτικών εισφορών προς τα ασφαλιστικά ταμεία; Υπάρχουν σκέψεις για μειώσεις συντάξεων;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Στο πλαίσιο του δεύτερου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής για την Ελλάδα, το μνημόνιο συμφωνίας προβλέπει μακρόχρονη δέσμευση για μείωση των συντελεστών των εισφορών κοινωνικής ασφάλισης κατά 3,9 εκατοστιαίες μονάδες έως την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2016. Η μεταρρύθμιση αποτελεί επείγουσα ανάγκη για τη μείωση του μη μισθολογικού κόστους της εργασίας και την προώθηση της δημιουργίας θέσεων απασχόλησης. Η εφαρμογή της μεταρρύθμισης συζητείται στο πλαίσιο της τρέχουσας επανεξέτασης. Η εφαρμογή του μέτρου θα πρέπει να είναι ισορροπημένη και ουδέτερη ως προς τα έσοδα.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000159/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Troika demand for reductions in employers' contributions

Reportedly, one of the main points of friction between the Greek Government and the Troika in the negotiations to evaluate the Greek programme is the demand by lenders to reduce employers' contributions to pension funds by about 4%. This demand will create a 'black hole' in pension funds, as well as in the budget for 2014, calculated at between EUR 800 million and EUR 1 billion.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Is the Troika really calling for a reduction in employers' contributions to pension funds from 2014? Is there a consensus within the Troika about this demand?

2. Is the above measure an obligation for Greece on the basis of the Memorandum or is it a new measure proposed by the Troika?

3. What measures is it proposing to the Greek Government to cover the financial shortfall which would result from a reduction in employers' contributions to pension funds? Is any consideration being given to reducing pensions?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

In the context of the second economic adjustment programme for Greece, the memorandum of understanding contains a long-standing commitment to reduce social security contribution rates by 3.9 percentage points by 1 January 2016. The reform is urgently needed to reduce non-wage labour costs and to foster employment creation, . Its implementation is being discussed in the context of the on-going review. The measure should be carried out in a balanced and revenue-neutral manner.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris P-000160/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Stadiul redactării programelor naționale pentru dezvoltare rurală

În contextul intrării în vigoare a Politicii Agricole Comune pentru perioada 2014-2020, Comisia este rugată să precizeze:

1. Ce state membre au trimis până în prezent spre aprobare proiectele noilor programe naționale pentru dezvoltare rurală?

2. Care este termenul limită pentru intrarea în vigoare a acestor programe?

Răspuns dat de dl Cioloș în numele Comisiei
(31 ianuarie 2014)

Comisia este implicată activ în consultări și dialoguri intense cu statele membre pe marginea proiectelor de program neoficiale, efectuând schimburi de opinii și căutând răspunsuri adecvate pentru programele pentru dezvoltare rurală care urmează să fie puse în aplicare în perioada 2014-2020. Cu toate acestea, până în prezent, niciun stat membru nu a transmis în mod oficial programul național pentru dezvoltare rurală.

Procesul de aprobare se va desfășura în conformitate cu dispozițiile prevăzute la articolul 29 din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1303/2013 [RPC] ([1]), care prevede că „Comisia aprobă fiecare program în termen de șase luni de la transmiterea acestuia de către statul membru în cauză, cu condiția ca orice observații formulate de Comisie să fi fost luate în considerare în mod corespunzător, dar nu înainte de 1 ianuarie 2014 sau de adoptarea de către Comisie a unei decizii de aprobare a acordului de parteneriat”.

De asemenea, un program poate fi aprobat numai după adoptarea actelor delegate și a actelor de punere în aplicare a Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1305/2013 [FEADR] ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0320:0469:RO:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0487:0548:RO:PDF

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000160/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Stage reached in the drafting of national rural development programmes

In view of the entry into force of the common agricultural policy for 2014-2020, can the Commission indicate:

1. Which Member States have to date submitted new national rural development projects for approval?

2. What is the deadline for entry into force thereof?

Answer given by Mr Cioloş on behalf of the Commission
(31 January 2014)

The Commission is actively involved in intense consultation and dialogue based on informal drafts with Member States, exchanging views and searching adequate responses in the Rural Development Programmes that will be implemented in the period 2014-2020. Nonetheless, there has been no official submission of Rural Development Programme so far by any Member State.

The process of approval will follow the provisions under Art. 29 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 [CPR] ([1]), which states that 'the Commission shall approve each programme no later than six months following its submission by the Member State concerned, provided that any observations made by the Commission have been adequately taken into account, but not before 1 January 2014 or before adoption by the Commission of a decision approving the Partnership Agreement'.

Furthermore, approval of a programme may only occur after the adoption of Delegated and Implementing Acts of Regulation (EU) 1305/2013 [EAFRD] ([2]).

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0320:0469:EN:PDF
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0487:0548:EN:PDF

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-000162/14
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Umsetzung von Straßenmaut-Regelungen und der Grundsatz der Nicht-Diskriminierung

In ihrer Antwort an die schriftliche Anfrage P-011520/2013 hat die Kommission betont, dass bei der Einführung eines Straßenmautsystems für Kraftfahrzeuge in einem Mitgliedstaat „Diskriminierung aufgrund der Staatsangehörigkeit verboten ist".

1. Darf ein Mitgliedstaat ein System einführen, bei dem die Einführung von Vignetten (mit gestaffelten Preisen) mit einer Reduzierung der Kraftfahrzeugsteuer einhergeht, um dadurch einen Anstieg der tatsächlichen Höhe der Abgaben zu verhindern, die Fahrer von in dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat angemeldeten Kraftfahrzeugen zu zahlen haben. Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

2. Welche Arten von unterschiedlichen Regelungen für Mautvignetten sind auf der Grundlage von Umwelt- oder anderen Kriterien gemäß EU-Rechtsvorschriften zulässig? Ist es rechtmäßig, eine Unterscheidung zwischen Kraftfahrzeugen mit Dieselmotoren und Benzinmotoren ungeachtet ihrer jeweiligen CO_2-Emissionen einzuführen? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

3. Wenn Unterscheidungen bei der Maut für Kraftfahrzeuge nicht nur auf der Grundlage der Nutzungsdauer, sondern auch auf der Grundlage von ökologischen und anderen Kriterien eingeführt werden, ist es zulässig, dass diese Unterscheidungen nur für in dem betreffenden Mitgliedstaat angemeldete Kraftfahrzeuge gelten? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

4. Was muss ein Mitgliedstaat tun, wenn eine derartige Unterscheidung eingeführt wird, um sicherzustellen, dass der Grundsatz der Nicht-Diskriminierung in der Praxis eingehalten wird und dass die Fahrer von in anderen Mitgliedstaaten angemeldeten Kraftfahrzeugen von dieser Unterscheidung profitieren können?

5. Angenommen, ein Mitgliedstaat führt Mautvignetten zum Preis von 10 EUR für eine Woche, 30 EUR für einen Monat und 100 EUR für ein Jahr ein, dürfen Mitgliedstaaten dann den jeweils für eine Mautvignette ausgegebenen Betrag (10, 30 bzw. 100 EUR) von der Kraftfahrzeugsteuer oder einer anderen Steuer abziehen, die von einem Steuerzahler dieses Mitgliedstaats erhoben wird? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

6. Angenommen, ein Mitgliedstaat führt Mautvignetten zum Preis von 100 EUR für ein Jahr und 60 EUR für Kraftfahrzeuge mit sehr geringen Treibhausgasemissionen ein, dürfen Mitgliedstaaten dann den jeweils für eine Mautvignette ausgegebenen Betrag (60 bzw. 100 EUR) von der Kraftfahrzeugsteuer oder einer anderen Steuer abziehen, die von einem Steuerzahler dieses Mitgliedstaats erhoben wird? Wenn ja, warum? Wenn nicht, warum nicht?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(12. Februar 2014)

Wie sie bereits in ihrer Antwort auf die schriftliche Anfrage des Herrn Abgeordneten P-011520/2013 angegeben hat, liegen der Kommission bislang noch keine detaillierten Informationen über die mögliche Einführung einer Vignette für Privatfahrzeuge auf dem deutschen Straßennetz vor.

Die Kommission kann daher gegenwärtig nur auf die allgemeinen Grundsätze des AEUV in Bezug auf die Nichtdiskriminierung von Straßennutzern verweisen, die auch in ihrer Mitteilung über die Erhebung nationaler Straßenbenutzungsgebühren auf leichte Privatfahrzeuge behandelt wurden (KOM(2012)199 endg.).

Für die Beurteilung konkreter Fälle benötigt die Kommission zudem einen vollständigen Überblick über die Merkmale und den Aufbau des Vignetten-Systems in der betroffenen Rechtsordnung. Auf hypothetische Fragen (Fragen 3, 4, 5 und 6) kann die Kommission daher nicht eingehen.

Hinsichtlich der ersten Frage hat die Kommission bereits früher mitgeteilt, dass es den Mitgliedstaaten freisteht, auf Privatfahrzeuge erhobene Kraftfahrzeugsteuern zu erhöhen oder zu senken oder Straßennutzungsgebühren einzuführen. Dabei müssen sie jedoch sicherstellen, dass die Grundsätze des AEUV, insbesondere das Verbot der Diskriminierung aufgrund der Staatsangehörigkeit, eingehalten werden.

In Bezug auf die zweite Frage zur Möglichkeit einer Differenzierung der Gebühren für Privatfahrzeuge teilt die Kommission mit, dass es keine entsprechenden Sekundärrechtsvorschriften gibt. Eine solche Differenzierung muss jedoch in jedem Fall den allgemeinen Nichtdiskriminierungsgrundsätzen des AEUV entsprechen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000162/14
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Implementation of road toll schemes and the principle of non-discrimination

In its answer to my Written Question P-011520/2013, the Commission underlined that 'discrimination on grounds of nationality is prohibited' when a road toll scheme for cars is introduced in a Member State. In light of the above, I would kindly ask the Commission to answer each of the following questions:

1. Can a Member State introduce a scheme that combines the introduction of road toll discs (with differentiated prices) with a reduction in road tax, so as to exclude any increase in the amount effectively paid by drivers of cars registered in that Member State? If so, why? If not, why not?

2. What types of road toll disc differentiation provisions are allowed on the basis of environmental or other criteria under European law? Is it legal to introduce a differentiation between diesel-- and gasoline-powered cars irrespective of actual CO_2 emissions? If yes, why? If no, why not?

3. If a differentiation is made in the road toll for cars on the basis of not only the duration of use but also environmental or other criteria, can this differentiation be granted only for cars registered in that specific Member State? If so, why? If not, why not?

4. If a differentiation of this kind is introduced, what does a Member State have to do to ensure that non-discrimination is guaranteed in practice and that drivers of vehicles registered in other Member States can effectively benefit from that differentiation?

5. Assuming that a Member State introduces road toll discs at the price of EUR 10 for one week of use, EUR 30 for one month of use and EUR 100 for one year of use, are Member States allowed to individually deduct the specific amount effectively spent on a disc (i.e. EUR 10, 30 or 100) from the road or any other tax levied on a given tax payer from that Member State? If so, why? If not, why not?

6. Assuming that a Member State introduces road toll discs at the price of EUR 100 for one year of use and EUR 60 for cars with very low GHG emissions, are Member States allowed to individually deduct the specific amount effectively spent on a disc (i.e. EUR 60 or 100) from the road or any other tax levied on a given tax payer from that Member State? If so, why? If not, why not?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(12 February 2014)

As the Honourable Member refers to Commission's previous answer to Honourable Member's Written Question P-011520/2013, the Commission restates that it has yet not received detailed information on a possible vignette for private vehicles on the German road network.

Therefore, the Commission is only able to refer to requirements stemming from general Treaty principles related to non-discrimination of road users, as also described in the communication from the Commission on the application of national road infrastructure charges levied on light private vehicles (COM(2012) 199 final).

Moreover, the Commission can assess any given case only when it has a complete overview of the specifics and set-up of a concrete vignette scheme in a specific legal order. Therefore the Commission abstains from answering hypothetical questions (questions 3, 4, 5 and 6).

As regards the first question, the Commission has previously stated that Member States may choose to increase or to lower vehicle taxes of private vehicles as well as to introduce road user charging schemes. When doing so Member States must ensure that Treaty principles are complied with, in particular the principle of non-discrimination on grounds of nationality.

In relation to the second question on the possibility of differentiating charges, there is no secondary legislation which applies to this matter for private vehicles. Such differentiation should in any case comply with the general Treaty principles of non-discrimination.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης P-000163/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ιδιωτικοποίηση ΕΥΑΘ με χρηματοδότηση από ευρωπαϊκά κονδύλια των έργων υποδομών της εταιρείας

Πρόσφατα δημοσιεύματα στον ελληνικό Τύπο αναφέρουν ότι η προς ιδιωτικοποίηση εταιρεία ύδρευσης της Θεσσαλονίκης (ΕΥΑΘ) υλοποιεί επενδύσεις σε έργα υποδομής ύψους άνω των 100 εκατ. ευρώ, τα οποία, είτε χρηματοδοτούνται από εθνικούς πόρους, είτε συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το Ταμείο Συνοχής της ΕΕ, για να τα εκμεταλλευθεί ο νέος ιδιώτης ιδιοκτήτης της προς πώληση επιχείρησης.

Η κατασκευή των έργων, που είναι προγραμματισμένα να παραδοθούν το 2016, θα συνεχιστεί με χρήματα από εθνικούς και ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους ακόμα και μετά την ιδιωτικοποίηση της ΕΥΑΘ, που δρομολογείται για τις αρχές του 2014, όταν δηλαδή, σύμφωνα με το μνημόνιο, η εταιρεία προβλέπεται να μην είναι πλέον δημόσια, αλλά ιδιωτική. Το ελληνικό Δημόσιο και η ΕΕ θα συνεχίσουν να χρηματοδοτούν την κατασκευή έργων άνω των 100 εκατ. ευρώ, τη λειτουργία των οποίων θα καρπωθεί ο ιδιώτης αγοραστής της ΕΥΑΘ. Το κόστος αυτών των έργων βρίσκεται πολύ κοντά στην τιμή που η κυβέρνηση και το ΤΑΙΠΕΔ πουλάνε την ΕΥΑΘ, δηλαδή τα 110 εκατ. ευρώ (ποσό στο οποίο αποτιμάται η τρέχουσα χρηματιστηριακή της αξία). Το 2012 η ΕΥΑΘ αποτυπώνει καθαρά κέρδη 18 εκατ. ευρώ ενώ εμφανίζει αποθεματικό το 2013, ύψους 50 εκατ. ευρώ. Μάλιστα με την πώλησή της δεν παραχωρείται μόνο η διαχείριση του νερού, αλλά και τα πάγια και οι υποδομές της, η αξία των οποίων ανέρχεται σε 100 εκατ. ευρώ. Συνεπώς ο αγοραστής της εκτιμάται ότι θα αποσβέσει την επένδυσή του στα επόμενα 3-4 χρόνια. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα ανωτέρω, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή, ως μέλος της τρόικας:

1. Δεν εναντιώνεται στους σκοπούς του προγράμματος σταθεροποίησης η πώληση μιας εταιρείας με δημόσιες επενδύσεις πάνω από 100 εκατ. ευρώ σε τιμή πώλησης, που αντιστοιχεί μόλις στο κόστος των επενδύσεων;

2. Δεν εναντιώνεται στο πρόγραμμα σταθεροποίησης η πώληση εταιρείας με κέρδη 18 εκατ. ευρώ και αποθεματικό 50 εκατ. ευρώ στην τιμή που αντιστοιχεί στο ύψος του αποθεματικού και των κερδών τριών χρόνων;

3. Έχει προβλεφθεί πώς θα αντικατασταθεί η συνεισφορά της κερδοφόρας ΕΥΑΘ στον προϋπολογισμό και το πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα;

4. Με δεδομένη τη χρηματοδότηση των έργων από το Ταμείο Συνοχής της ΕΕ, δεν θεωρεί η Επιτροπή ότι η προγραμματιζόμενη από την κυβέρνηση πώληση της ΕΥΑΘ μέσα στο 2014 παραβιάζει το άρθρο 57 παρ. 1 του Κανονισμού του Συμβουλίου (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006, παρέχοντας αδικαιολόγητο πλεονέκτημα σε ιδιωτική επιχείρηση;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(19 Φεβρουαρίου 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.

Όσον αφορά τις υποδομές που συγχρηματοδοτούνται από το ΕΤΠΑ ή το Ταμείο Συνοχής, κανένας κανονισμός δεν απαγορεύει την παροχή κοινοτικής χρηματοδότησης σε υποδομή υπό ιδιωτικοποίηση. Ωστόσο, οι εθνικές αρχές οφείλουν να διασφαλίσουν ότι συμμορφώνονται με τις απαιτήσεις του άρθρου 57 του κανονισμού (ΕΚ) αριθ. 1083/2006, ιδίως για να μην παρέχουν αδικαιολόγητο πλεονέκτημα στον πωλητή ή τον αγοραστή.

Η Επιτροπή αντιλαμβάνεται ότι η διαδικασία πώλησης δεν έχει ακόμη ολοκληρωθεί, και θα συνεχίσει να επαγρυπνεί για τη συμμόρφωση των ελληνικών αρχών προς τους κανόνες για τις κρατικές ενισχύσεις. Η τιμή πώλησης δεν έχει καθοριστεί ακόμη, αλλά θα διαμορφωθεί έπειτα από ανοιχτή και διαφανή διαδικασία υποβολής προσφορών.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000163/14
to the Commission
Kriton Arsenis (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Privatisation of Thessaloniki water company (EYATh) and EU funding for the company's infrastructure projects

It has recently been reported in the Greek press that Thessaloniki water company (EYATh) which has been earmarked for privatisation is making more than EUR 100 million worth of investments in infrastructure projects. These projects are either funded from national resources or co-funded by the EU Cohesion Fund and will benefit the company's new private ownership.

Construction work on these projects, which are scheduled for completion in 2016, will continue with funding from national and EU funds even after the privatisation of EYATh, which is scheduled for the beginning of 2014; this means that funding will continue during a period when, according to the Memorandum, the company will no longer be public, but private. The Greek Government and the EU will continue to fund the construction of projects to the tune of more than EUR 100 million, even though it is the private purchaser of EYATh who stands to benefit. The cost of these projects is very close to the price for which the government and the HRADF are selling EYATh, i.e. EUR 110 million (its estimated current market value). In 2012 EYATh posted net profits of EUR18 million while in 2013 it had reserves of EUR 50 million. The purchaser of this company is thus acquiring not only the management of water resources, but also its fixed assets and infrastructure, which are estimated to be worth EUR 100 million. As a result, the purchaser is expected to recoup his investment over the next 3-4 years. In view of the above, will the Commission state, in its capacity as part of the Troika:

1. Is it not contrary to the purposes of the stabilisation programme to sell a company which has been the recipient of public investments of over EUR 100 million at a price which corresponds only the cost of the investments?

2. Is it not contrary to the stabilisation programme to sell a company which is making profits of EUR 18 million and has reserves of EUR 50 million at a price corresponding to the amount of the reserves plus three years profits?

3. Has any thought been given as to how the contribution made by EYATh — which is a profitable enterprise — to the budget and the primary surplus can be replaced?

4. Given that these projects are being funded by the EU Cohesion Fund, does the Commission not consider that the government-planned sale of EYATh in 2014 is in breach of Article 57, paragraph 1, of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, since it gives an undue advantage to a private enterprise?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 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.

For infrastructure co-financed by the ERDF or the Cohesion Fund there is no rule prohibiting EU funding to an infrastructure under privatisation. However, the national authorities must ensure compliance with the requirements of Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 in order in particular to avoid giving an undue advantage to the seller or the buyer.

The Commission understands that the sale process has not yet been finalised and will remain vigilant as to compliance with state aid rules by the Greek authorities. The selling price has not yet been determined but will be the result of an open and transparent bidding process.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000164/14
a la Comisión (Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: VP/HR — Factoría textil incendiada por los trabajadores en Bangladés

El pasado 29 de noviembre, los trabajadores de una de las diez fábricas más grandes de todo el país provocaron un grave incendio que prácticamente destruyó unas instalaciones que producían ropa destinada a la venta por marcas occidentales entre las que se encontraba Zara, una de las marcas del grupo empresarial Inditex, de España.

En anteriores preguntas he expresado mi preocupación por la situación de los trabajadores textiles en Bangladés, así como por las prácticas esclavistas seguidas en muchos de los telares subcontratados por el grupo empresarial Inditex en todo el mundo. Esta fábrica daba empleo a alrededor de 18 000 trabajadores que producían todo tipo de ropa destinada a la venta en grandes cadenas occidentales de primer orden en el sector textil, entre las que se encuentra Zara. Desde el gravísimo incendio ocurrido en Daca el 25 de abril de 2013, las organizaciones de trabajadores vienen denunciando continuamente la falta de medidas de seguridad y participación de los sindicatos en el diseño de las mismas.

Bangladés continúa siendo el mayor productor mundial del sector textil y se elaboran allí todo tipo de prendas para las principales marcas comercializadas en todo el mundo. Este sector se ha visto afectado durante el año 2013 por una serie de trágicos accidentes e incendios, debidos a la falta de seguridad en estos centros de producción, que ha llevado a los trabajadores a luchar por su propia seguridad. Sin embargo, esto no ha afectado un ápice a compañías como Inditex, que no han dejado de ninguna manera de celebrar contratos con subcontratistas en dicho país, debido a los competitivos precios ofrecidos a costa de los derechos y la seguridad de los trabajadores. Este incendio es una mera muestra de la lucha de los trabajadores de Bangladés por el derecho a unas condiciones seguras en sus trabajos.

¿Está al corriente la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante de la quema de la citada factoría?

¿Exigirá la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante a Bangladés que garantice los derechos de los trabajadores y fomente la participación de los sindicatos en las decisiones relativas a la seguridad en las fábricas textiles?

¿Solicitará la Vicepresidenta/Alta Representante a las compañías textiles europeas que compran o subcontratan en Bangladés que suspendan sus importaciones a Europa mientras no se respeten los derechos de los trabajadores y mejoren las medidas de seguridad para evitar muertes en el trabajo en el sector textil?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(27 de febrero de 2014)

La Comisión está al corriente de los acontecimientos que menciona Su Señoría.

La Comisión comparte la inquietud del Parlamento Europeo en materia de derechos y condiciones laborales en Bangladés. Por ello, en 2013, la Comisión puso en marcha una iniciativa conjunta entre la Unión Europea, el Gobierno de Bangladés y la Organización Internacional del Trabajo: «Mantener el compromiso: pacto de sostenibilidad para la mejora constante de los derechos laborales y la seguridad en el sector de la confección en Bangladés» ([1]). A este respecto, la Comisión remite a su respuesta a la pregunta E-011906/13.

La Comisión considera que la cooperación y el compromiso con Bangladés constituyen el enfoque más adecuado y constructivo para mejorar las condiciones de trabajo en el sector de la confección de ese país.

Con este espíritu, la Comisión acoge con satisfacción el Acuerdo de Bangladés sobre la seguridad de los edificios y la seguridad en caso de incendio ([2]), suscrito por sindicatos internacionales y que cuenta hasta ahora con la adhesión de más de ciento veinte destacadas empresas internacionales (principalmente europeas), incluida la que menciona en la pregunta. El acuerdo ha establecido un programa quinquenal sobre la seguridad de los edificios y la seguridad en caso de incendio en Bangladés, que afecta a más de mil quinientos talleres de ese país.

([1]) Véase: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) Véase: http://www.bangladeshaccord.org/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000164/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Textile factory set alight by workers in Bangladesh

On 29 November last year, workers at one of the 10 largest factories in Bangladesh started a serious fire that practically destroyed some of the facilities used to produce clothes that are sold by Western brands, including Zara, a brand of the Spanish Inditex Group.

In previous questions, I have voiced my concern about the conditions of textile workers in Bangladesh, as well as the slave-labour practices used in many of the textile mills subcontracted by the Inditex Group across the world. This factory employed around 18,000 workers, who produced many different types of clothes intended for sale by large high-end clothing chains in the West, including Zara. Since the extremely serious fire that occurred in Dhaka on 25 April 2013, labour organisations have been continually speaking out against insufficient safety measures and the fact that the unions are not involved in drawing them up.

Bangladesh remains the world's largest textile producer, manufacturing all kinds of garments for the biggest global brands. Throughout 2013, the textile sector was plagued by a series of tragic accidents and fires stemming from insufficient safety measures in these production centres, which has led to workers fighting for the right to personal safety. However, companies like Inditex have still not taken the slightest notice and continue to subcontract in the country, because of the competitive prices on offer, at the expense of the rights and safety of workers. This arson attack is just one an example of the Bangladeshi workers' fight for the right to work in safe conditions.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the fire at this factory?

Will the Vice-President/High Representative demand that Bangladesh guarantee workers' rights and encourage the involvement of unions in decisions relating to safety in textile factories?

Will the Vice-President/High Representative ask European textile companies who buy from or subcontract to Bangladesh to suspend imports to Europe until workers' rights are respected and safety measures are improved to prevent the deaths of textile workers?

Answer given by Mr De Gucht on behalf of the Commission
(27 February 2014)

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

The Commission shares the European Parliament's concern on labour rights and labour conditions in Bangladesh. This is why, in 2013, the Commission launched a joint initiative by the European Union, Bangladesh's government and the International Labour Organisation 'Staying engaged: A Sustainability Compact for continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready-Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh' ([1]). In this respect, the Commission refers to its reply to Question E-011906/13.

The Commission believes that cooperation and engagement with Bangladesh is the most appropriate and constructive approach to improving working conditions in the country's Ready-Made Garment industry.

In this spirit, the Commission welcomes the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh ([2]) initiated by international trade unions and until now signed up by over 120 (mainly European) leading international companies, including the one referred to in the question. The Accord has established a fire and building safety programme in Bangladesh for a period of five years, which covers over 1500 factories in the country.

([1]) See: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2013/july/tradoc_151601.pdf
([2]) See: http://www.bangladeshaccord.org/

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000168/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ενδεχόμενο νέο Πρόγραμμα για την Ελλάδα

Σύμφωνα με δημοσιογραφικές πληροφορίες στον ελληνικό και διεθνή τύπο, η κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού του ελληνικού προγράμματος δημοσιονομικής προσαρμογής θα πραγματοποιηθεί, ως ένα βαθμό, με δανεισμό της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης από τις διεθνείς χρηματαγορές. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, γίνεται λόγος για έξοδο της Ελλάδας στις χρηματαγορές, μέσα στο 2014, και μάλιστα με ευρωπαϊκή εγγύηση από τον Ευρωπαϊκό Μηχανισμό Σταθερότητας (ESM).

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Υπάρχουν συζητήσεις μεταξύ της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης και της τρόικα για το τρόπο με τον οποίο, ενδεχομένως, θα καλυφθεί το χρηματοδοτικό κενό του ελληνικού προγράμματος; Έχει εκφραστεί, από κάποιο από τα συμβαλλόμενα μέρη, η πρόταση για έξοδο της Ελλάδας στις χρηματαγορές με εγγύηση του ESM;

2. Ποια είναι η θέση της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, όσον αφορά την κάλυψη του χρηματοδοτικού κενού του ελληνικού προγράμματος;

3. Σε περίπτωση που επικρατήσει η πρόταση για έξοδο της Ελλάδας στις χρηματαγορές με εγγύηση του ESM, είτε μέσω της Προληπτικής Πιστωτικής Γραμμής (article 14, ESM Precautionary Financial Assistance), είτε μέσω Χρηματοοικονομικής Στήριξης στην Πρωτογενή Αγορά (article 17, Primary Market Support Facility), ποιες θα είναι οι πολιτικές και οικονομικές δεσμεύσεις της Ελλάδας; Θα πρέπει να συνταχθεί συγκεκριμένο Μνημόνιο Κατανόησης (Memorandum of Understanding) μεταξύ της Ελλάδας, της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και του ESM;

Απάντηση του κ. Rehn εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(18 Φεβρουαρίου 2014)

Καταρτίζεται επικαιροποιημένη εκτίμηση των χρηματοδοτικών αναγκών της Ελλάδας στο πλαίσιο της εν εξελίξει 4ης αναθεώρησης δυνάμει του 2ου προγράμματος οικονομικής προσαρμογής, η οποία θα κοινοποιηθεί στα σχετικά έγγραφα του προγράμματος όταν ολοκληρωθεί η διαδικασία αναθεώρησης.

Στην παρούσα φάση, οι συζητήσεις όσον αφορά το μέγεθος του χρηματοδοτικού κενού και τους δυνατούς τρόπους κάλυψής του δεν είναι σκόπιμες.

Τον Νοέμβριο του 2012, η Ευρωομάδα ανέφερε ότι τα κράτη μέλη της ζώνης του ευρώ θα εξετάσουν την σκοπιμότητα περαιτέρω μέτρων και συνδρομής όταν η Ελλάδα επιτύχει ετήσιο πρωτογενές πλεόνασμα, υπό την προϋπόθεση της πλήρους εφαρμογής όλων των όρων που περιλαμβάνονται στο πρόγραμμα, ώστε να εξασφαλιστεί ότι η Ελλάδα θα είναι σε θέση να επιτύχει δείκτη χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ ίσο προς 124% του ΑΕΠ το 2020, και δείκτη χρέους προς το ΑΕΠ σημαντικά χαμηλότερο από 110% το 2022.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000168/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Possible new programme for Greece

According to the Greek and international press, the funding shortfall in the Greek fiscal adjustment programme will be offset in part by the Greek Government borrowing on the international money markets, to be commenced in 2014 with European backing in the form of Stability Mechanism (ESM) guarantees.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission say whether discussions are being held between the Greek Government and the Troika concerning possible ways of meeting the funding shortfall in the Greek programme? Have any of the parties submitted proposals regarding money market operations by Greece with ESM backing?

2. What is the Commission's position regarding measures to offset the funding shortfall in the Greek programme?

3. If the proposal regarding money market operations by Greece with ESM guarantees, backed by either the ESM Precautionary Financial Assistance (Article 14) or the Primary Market Policy Facility (Article 17), is adopted what political and financial commitments will be made by Greece? Should a specific Memorandum of Understanding be drawn up by Greece, the Commission and the ESM?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(18 February 2014)

An updated assessment of Greece's financing needs is being prepared in the context of the on-going 4th review under the 2nd economic adjustment programme and will be communicated in the related programme documents when the review is concluded.

Any discussions at this stage about the size of the financial gap and possible ways to cover it are not warranted.

In November 2012, the Eurogroup stated that euro area Member States will consider further measures and assistance, if necessary, when Greece reaches an annual primary surplus, conditional on full implementation of all conditions contained in the programme in order to ensure that Greece can reach a debt-to-GDP ratio of 124% of GDP in 2020, and a debt-to-GDP ratio substantially lower than 110% in 2022.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-000170/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 Ιανουαρίου 2014)

Θέμα: Δεσμεύσεις τραπεζικών λογαριασμών

Η ελληνική κυβέρνηση σκοπεύει να ενεργοποιήσει το Σύστημα Μητρώου Τήρησης Τραπεζικών Λογαριασμών, ώστε να επιτυγχάνεται ο πιο εύκολος έλεγχος εκ μέρους των φορολογικών αρχών, των τραπεζικών λογαριασμών των φορολογουμένων. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, με την παραπάνω ρύθμιση, οι φορολογικές αρχές θα μπορούν σε 24 ώρες να «ανοίξουν» όλους τους τραπεζικούς λογαριασμούς ενός φορολογούμενου, όπως κινήσεις δανείων, καταθετικών ή επενδυτικών λογαριασμών κ.α.

Με βάση τα παραπάνω και με την όποια επιφύλαξη μπορεί να έχει κανένας για την προστασία της ιδιωτικής ζωής των φορολογουμένων, πράγμα που συναρτάται και με τον τρόπο εφαρμογής ενός τέτοιου μέτρου, ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Με δεδομένο ότι οι ευρωπαίοι πολίτες της ΕΕ είναι απολύτως ελεύθεροι να διαθέτουν τραπεζικούς λογαριασμούς σε όλες τις χώρες της ΕΕ, είναι δυνατόν, σήμερα, οι ελληνικές φορολογικές αρχές να «ανοίγουν» τραπεζικούς λογαριασμούς Ελλήνων πολιτών σε τράπεζες κρατών μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης;

2. Έχουν την υποχρέωση τα κράτη μέλη της ΕΕ να παρέχουν σε φορολογικές αρχές άλλων χωρών της Ένωσης, πληροφορίες τραπεζικών λογαριασμών, φορολογουμένων αυτών;

Απάντηση του κ. Šemeta εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Μαρτίου 2014)

1. Η Επιτροπή σημειώνει τις προθέσεις της ελληνικής κυβέρνησης, όπως αναφέρονται στην ερώτηση. Σε επίπεδο ΕΕ, δεν υπάρχει πράξη που να απαιτεί από τα κράτη μέλη να παρέχουν στις φορολογικές αρχές άλλου κράτους μέλους άμεση πρόσβαση σε μητρώο τραπεζικών λογαριασμών.

2. Η οδηγία 2003/48/ΕΚ ([1]) του Συμβουλίου προβλέπει ετήσια αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών σχετικά με τις πληρωμές τόκων που πραγματοποιούνται από τους φορείς πληρωμών που είναι εγκατεστημένοι σε ένα κράτος μέλος σε φυσικά πρόσωπα έχοντα κατοικία σε άλλο κράτος μέλος. Το σύστημα αυτό εφαρμόζεται από όλα τα κράτη μέλη, εκτός από το Λουξεμβούργο και την Αυστρία, που εφαρμόζουν σήμερα ένα μεταβατικό καθεστώς και επιβάλλουν παρακράτηση φόρου στην πηγή ([2]).

Σύμφωνα με τις ισχύουσες διατάξεις της οδηγίας 2011/16/ΕΕ ([3]) του Συμβουλίου, κάθε κράτος μέλος μπορεί να ζητά πληροφορίες από άλλα κράτη μέλη, οι οποίες είναι σημαντικές για την επιβολή της φορολογικής νομοθεσίας, και το αιτούν κράτος μέλος δεν μπορεί να αρνηθεί την παροχή πληροφοριών αποκλειστικά και μόνον επειδή οι πληροφορίες αυτές βρίσκονται στην κατοχή τράπεζας ή άλλου χρηματοπιστωτικού ιδρύματος. Σύμφωνα με τις διεθνείς εξελίξεις, στις 12 Ιουνίου 2013, η Επιτροπή πρότεινε τροποποιήσεις της οδηγίας 2011/16/ΕΕ ([4]). Σύμφωνα με τις προτεινόμενες τροποποιήσεις, θα απαιτηθεί από τα κράτη μέλη, σε ετήσια βάση, αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών για χρηματοοικονομικές συναλλαγές, συμπεριλαμβανομένων των υπολοίπων των λογαριασμών.

Τα στοιχεία για την επεξεργασία των τόκων και των λοιπών χρηματοοικονομικών συναλλαγών που αφορούν φυσικά πρόσωπα πρέπει να υπάγονται στις διατάξεις της οδηγίας 95/46/ΕΚ ([5]) περί προστασίας των δεδομένων, μεταξύ άλλων, όσον αφορά τους νόμιμους λόγους για την επεξεργασία δεδομένων, τον περιορισμό του σκοπού, την ποιότητα των δεδομένων, καθώς και τον σεβασμό των διαφόρων δικαιωμάτων του προσώπου στο οποίο αναφέρονται τα δεδομένα.

([1]) ΕΕ L 157 της 26.6.2003, σ. 38.
([2]) Το Λουξεμβούργο εξήγγειλε πρόσφατα την πρόθεσή του να εγκαταλείψει το μεταβατικό καθεστώς παρακράτησης φόρου στην πηγή και να αρχίσει την αυτόματη ανταλλαγή πληροφοριών που αφορούν τις πληρωμές τόκων από την 1 Ιανουαρίου 2015.
([3]) ΕΕ L 64 της 11.3.2011, σ. 1.
([4]) COM(2013)348 τελικό της 12ης Ιουνίου 2013.
([5]) ΕΕ L 281 της 23.11.1995, σ. 31.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000170/14
to the Commission
Nikolaos Chountis (GUE/NGL)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Inspection of taxpayers' bank accounts

The Greek Government intends to introduce the central register of bank accounts system in order to make it easier for the tax authorities to inspect taxpayers' bank accounts. More specifically, the above arrangement will enable the tax authorities to view all the bank accounts held by a taxpayer, such as loans and deposit and investment accounts, within twenty-four hours.

In view of the above, and whatever reservations one may have on the basis of protecting taxpayers' privacy which will be affected by the implementation of such a measure, will the Commission say:

1. Given that EU citizens are absolutely free to hold bank accounts in any EU country, is it possible today for the Greek tax authorities to view bank accounts held by Greek citizens in banks in Member States of the European Union?

2. Are EU Member States obliged to provide the tax authorities of other EU countries with information about bank accounts held by these taxpayers?

Answer given by Mr Šemeta on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

1. The Commission takes note of the intentions of the Greek Government, as mentioned in the question. At EU level there is no instrument requiring Member States to provide the tax authorities of another Member State with direct access to a register of bank accounts.

2. Council Directive 2003/48/EC ([1]) provides for annual automatic exchange of information on interest payments made by paying agents established in a Member State to individuals resident in another Member State. This system is applied by all Member States except Luxembourg and Austria, which currently operate a transitional regime and levy a withholding tax ([2]).

Under the currently applicable provisions of Council Directive 2011/16/EU ([3]), each Member State can request information from other Member States that is foreseeably relevant to the administration and enforcement of its tax law, and the requested Member State cannot decline to supply information solely because this information is held by a bank or other financial institution. In line with international developments, on 12 June 2013, the Commission proposed amendments to Directive 2011/16/EU ([4]). The proposed amendments would require Member States to automatically exchange, on an annual basis, financial account information, including account balances.

The processing of interest payments and other financial account information concerning natural persons has to comply with the provisions of Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC ([5]), including as regards the legitimate grounds for processing of data, purpose limitation, data quality, and the respect of the various rights of the data subject.

([1]) OJ L 157, 26.6.2003, p. 38.
([2]) Luxembourg has recently announced its intention to give up the transitional withholding tax regime and start the automatic exchange of information concerning interest payments as from 1 January 2015.
([3]) OJ L 64, 11.3.2011, p. 1.
([4]) COM(2013) 348 final of 12 June 2013.
([5]) OJ L 281, 23.11.1995, p. 31.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000171/14
to the Commission
Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Commitments to improve access to water and sanitation in 2014

The next Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) high-level meeting will take place in Washington DC on 11 April 2014. Commissioner Piebalgs represented the EU at last year's meeting and made a number of commitments on the concrete steps the EU would take to remove barriers impeding broader access to sanitation and water ([1]).

Will Commissioner Piebalgs represent the EU at this year's high-level meeting? Will the Commission announce any new commitments to improve access to water and sanitation, and, if so, can it outline what these commitments will be?

Answer given by Mr Piebalgs on behalf of the Commission
(25 February 2014)

The Commissioner for Development has participated with great interest at the first Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) High Level Meeting in April 2012 and will do his upmost to be able to attend this year high-level meeting.

The Commission has announced that, between 2014-2020, funds of EUR 3.5 billion will be committed to improve nutrition in developing countries; out of them EUR 400 million will be spent on boosting nutrition through specific nutrition programmes in the health sector, whereas the other EUR 3.1 billion will be invested in making sure programmes in other areas such as agriculture, education, WASH and social protection. The Commission is aware that WASH plays a fundamental role in improving nutritional outcomes.

The EU will continue its commitment to water initiatives in those countries that identify water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as a focal sector when jointly elaborating their National Indicative Programmes (NIPs). As of February 2014, 16 countries have pre-selected WASH as a focal sector.

Furthermore, pursuing to the new water-energy-food security nexus approach, WASH may be covered through its inter-linkages with other sectors, such as food security, agriculture and energy.

The Commissioner for Development also participated at the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which suggested some illustrative goals, including a specific one to achieve universal access to Water and Sanitation.

([1]) http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/report_card/european-union

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000173/14
à la Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(9 janvier 2014)

Objet: Rémunération des agents contractuels de la Commission au Luxembourg

Les chiffres qui sont à ma disposition démontrent que les institutions européennes pratiquent une politique de dumping salarial en matière de rémunération à Luxembourg.

À titre d'exemple, le salaire mensuel pour 40 heures de travail hebdomadaire d'un agent contractuel des grades initiaux GF1 (1847,76 euros) et GF2 (1919,18 euros) est inférieur au salaire social minimum luxembourgeois pour salariés non qualifiés qui s'élève à 1921,03 euros et, de loin, inférieur au salaire minimum pour personnes qualifiées qui s'élève à 2305,23 euros. Ces dispositions concernent un nombre important de personnes.

1. Dans ce contexte, j'aimerais savoir comment la Commission peut justifier le fait que bon nombre de ses contractuels touchent une rémunération inférieure au salaire social minimum luxembourgeois? Quelle est la légalité d'une telle situation?

2. N'est-il pas condamnable moralement et juridiquement que la Commission ne respecte pas les prescriptions de la directive 96/71/CE sur les droits et conditions de travail des travailleurs détachés, qui ont pour règle de base que les normes de l'État d'accueil doivent être d'application?

Réponse donnée par M. Šefčovič au nom de la Commission
(10 mars 2014)

La rémunération des agents contractuels est exclusivement déterminée par les règles fixées par le statut des fonctionnaires et le régime applicable aux autres agents, qui ont été adoptées par la voie d'un règlement. En vertu de l'article 288, paragraphe 2, du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne, ce règlement a une portée générale, est obligatoire dans tous ses éléments et est directement applicable dans tout État membre. Selon la jurisprudence de la Cour de justice, le principe général de la primauté du droit communautaire s'applique également.

En ce qui concerne les chiffres mentionnés dans votre question, il convient de garder à l'esprit qu'ils ne prennent pas en compte les effets de l'impôt et des cotisations au titre de la sécurité sociale déduits dans le cadre des deux régimes. En termes nets, le salaire mensuel pour 40 heures de travail hebdomadaire d'un agent contractuel sera de 1 616,60 euros au grade initial GF1 et de 1 678,79 euros au grade initial GF2, comparé à un salaire net d'environ 1 563,45 euros pour un travailleur non qualifié et d'environ 1 823,94 euros pour un travailleur qualifié à Luxembourg.

En outre, et dans une situation «analogue» à celle d'un travailleur détaché, le personnel de l'UE bénéficiera d'une indemnité de dépaysement, ce qui augmente le salaire net pour les grades GF1 et GF2, le faisant passer à 2 121,99 euros et 2 184,18 euros respectivement.

L'Honorable Parlementaire est également prié de se rappeler que les propositions de la Commission concernant les adaptations annuelles des rémunérations du personnel de l'UE pour l'année 2011 et l'année 2012 sont en attente au Parlement européen et au Conseil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000173/14
to the Commission
Astrid Lulling (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Remuneration of Commission contract staff in Luxembourg

I have received information which shows that the European institutions are practising wage dumping in Luxembourg.

By way of an example, the monthly salary for a contract staff member working 40 hours per week at the starting grades of GF1 (EUR 1 847.76) and GF2 (EUR 1 919.18) is less than the Luxembourg minimum wage for unskilled workers, which is EUR 1 921.03, and significantly less than the minimum wage for skilled workers, which is EUR 2 305.23. These provisions affect a significant number of people.

1. How does the Commission justify the fact that a large number of its contract staff members are receiving salaries lower than the Luxembourg minimum wage? Are these arrangements lawful?

2. Is it not morally and legally indefensible that the Commission should be flouting the rules laid down in Directive 96/71/EC on working conditions for posted workers, which states that the rules to be applied are those of the host country?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(10 March 2014)

The remuneration of contract staff is exclusively determined by the rules laid down in the Staff Regulation of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servant, which were adopted by means of a regulation. By virtue of Article 288(2) of the TFEU that regulation shall have general application, shall be binding in its entirety and shall be directly applicable in all Member States. Under the case law of the Court of Justice the general principle of superiority of Community law also applies.

As regards the figures referred to in your question, one should bear in mind that they do not take into account the effects of the taxation and social security payments deducted under both regimes. In net terms, the monthly salary for a contract staff member working 40 hours per week at the starting grades GF1 will be EUR 1 616,60 and for GF2 — EUR 1 678.79, have to be compared with a net salary around EUR 1 563.45 for a Luxembourg unskilled worker and around EUR 1 823,94 for a skilled worker.

In addition, and in a 'corresponding' situation to a posted worker, an EU staff member will be entitled to expatriation allowance which increases the net salary for GF1 and GF2 to EUR 2 121.99 and EUR 2 184.18, respectively.

The honourable Member is also kindly reminded that the Commission proposals regarding the 2011 and 2012 annual adjustment of salaries for EU staff are pending before the Parliament and the Council.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-000175/14
à la Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(9 janvier 2014)

Objet: Réactivation d'armes à feu

La Commission pourrait-elle indiquer le nombre de réactivations d'armes à feu dans un État membre, lesquelles avaient été désactivées dans un État membre?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Malmström au nom de la Commission
(17 février 2014)

La Commission ne dispose pas de chiffres comparables concernant les armes à feu qui ont été réactivées dans un État membre et qui avaient précédemment été désactivées dans un autre État membre.

Selon l'évaluation de la menace que représente la grande criminalité organisée dans l'Union européenne (SOCTA UE), effectuée par Europol ([1]), la réactivation des armes neutralisées ainsi que le vol et la conversion de gaz constituent les principales sources d'armes illégales faisant l'objet d'un trafic par les groupes criminels organisés.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000175/14
to the Commission
Véronique Mathieu Houillon (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Reactivation of firearms

Can the Commission say how many firearms which had previously been deactivated in one Member State have been reactivated in another Member State?

Answer given by Ms Malmström on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

The Commission does not have comparable figures on firearms which have been reactivated in another Member State and which were previously deactivated in another Member State.

According to the Europol Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment 2013 ([1]), the reactivation of neutralised weapons, theft and conversion of gas are the main sources of illegal weapons trafficked by organised crime groups.

([1]) https://www.europol.europa.eu/content/eu-serious-and-organised-crime-threat-assessment-socta

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-000178/14
alla Commissione
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(9 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Caccia al tordo bottaccio (Turdus philomelos) in Francia durante il periodo di migrazione prenuziale in violazione della direttiva uccelli 2009/147/CE

La direttiva 2009/147/CE prevede che la caccia agli uccelli migratori termini prima dell'inizio della migrazione prenuziale. Le date di chiusura sono state definite per ciascuna specie e per ciascuno Stato membro e sono riportate nel documento «Key Concepts».

Nel caso del tordo bottaccio (Turdus philomelos) la data indicata per l'Italia è anticipata di quaranta giorni rispetto a quella definita per la Francia mediterranea, malgrado la contiguità territoriale.

Dal momento che l'inizio della migrazione in Italia è stato definito sulla base di movimenti verso nord che si registrano tra la Sardegna e la Liguria e che inevitabilmente interessano la Corsica, può la Commissione far sapere come intende garantire una corretta applicazione della direttiva in Francia, sia per fornire un adeguato livello di tutela degli uccelli migratori, sia per assicurare una condizione di parità tra i cittadini residenti nei diversi Stati membri?

Risposta di Janez Potočnik a nome della Commissione
(26 febbraio 2014)

La Commissione ha pubblicato un documento di orientamento sulla caccia ai sensi della direttiva Uccelli (2009/147/CE ([1])). Tale documento è stato a sua volta integrato da un testo che precisa e fornisce un'interpretazione dei concetti chiave dell'articolo 7, paragrafo 4, della direttiva, sul periodo di riproduzione e di migrazione prenuziale per le specie di uccelli che possono essere cacciate e che figurano nell'allegato II della direttiva.

Ai fini dell'elaborazione di tale documento, gli Stati membri erano stati invitati a trasmettere i migliori dati scientifici disponibili in relazione all'inizio e alla fine dei periodi di migrazione prenuziale di tutti gli uccelli che possono essere oggetto di attività venatoria nell'UE. Nei dati comunicati per la prima versione del documento erano state riscontrate delle incongruenze e, sebbene la maggior parte di esse siano state risolte grazie a un successivo aggiornamento, sono tutt'ora presenti alcune differenze fra Stati membri limitrofi.

La Commissione continuerà a migliorare il documento sulla base di nuovi dati affidabili al fine di garantire che la direttiva sia applicata in modo coerente in tutti gli Stati membri.

([1]) Direttiva Uccelli, GU L 20 del 26.1.2010.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000178/14
to the Commission
Andrea Zanoni (ALDE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Hunting of song thrushes (Turdus philomelos) in France during their prenuptial migration period, in breach of the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC)

Directive 2009/147/EC stipulates that any hunting of migratory birds should stop before their prenuptial migration begins. The closing dates have been specified for each species and for each Member State and are listed in the Key Concepts document.

In the case of the song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), the date given for Italy is 40 days earlier than that specified for Mediterranean France, even though the two areas are contiguous.

Since the official start of the migration in Italy has been set on the basis of northward movements recorded between Sardinia and Liguria, which inevitably involve birds flying over Corsica, can the Commission explain how it intends to ensure that the directive is correctly implemented in France, both to provide migratory birds with an appropriate level of protection and to create a level playing field for people in different Member States?

Answer given by Mr Potočnik on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The Commission has published a Guidance Document on Hunting under the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC ([1])), supplemented by a document providing clarification and interpretation of key Concepts of Article 7(4) of the directive, which deals with the period of reproduction and of pre-nuptial migration for huntable bird species listed on Annex II of the directive.

In preparing this document, Member States were asked to provide the best available scientific data as regards the beginning and end of the reproduction and pre-nuptial migration periods of all huntable birds in the EU. Certain discrepancies were found in the data reported for the first version of the document and, while most of them were addressed through a subsequent update, some differences between neighbouring Member States remain.

The Commission will continue to improve the document on the basis of new authoritative evidence to ensure the directive is applied coherently across Member States.

([1]) Birds Directive, OJ L 020, 26.1.2010.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000181/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Ineficiența suplimentelor alimentare

Trei studii recente, realizate în Statele Unite ale Americii, arată că o mare parte din suplimentele alimentare sunt ineficiente în lupta împotriva afecțiunilor cronice. Unele dintre acestea ar putea fi chiar dăunătoare organismului, susțin autorii unui articol publicat în cel mai recent număr al revistei Annals of Internal Medicine.

„*Considerăm că acest caz este închis — adăugarea de suplimente minerale și vitamine în dietele adulților care se hrănesc atent nu aduce niciun beneficiu clar și ar putea fi chiar dăunătoare*”, scriu autorii.

Cel mai relevant studiu la care fac referire experții este o meta-analiză a peste 20 de studii și experimente la care au participat mai mult de 400 000 de voluntari. În urma evaluării cercetărilor, care au analizat efectul suplimentelor alimentare asupra prevenirii bolilor cronice, nu au fost găsite dovezi solide care să arate că vitaminele pot diminua riscul dezvoltării cancerului sau a bolilor cardiovasculare. Pe de altă parte, însă, suplimentele de vitamina E și betacaroten au condus la creșterea riscului de dezvoltare a cancerului la plămâni, în cazul pacienților predispuși acestui risc.

În acest context:

1. Are Comisia în vedere realizarea unor studii similare și în statele Uniunii Europene?

2. Ce măsuri intenționează Comisia să ia pentru a asigura o informare mai clară a consumatorilor în legătură cu aceste produse?

Răspuns dat de dna Geoghegan-Quinn în numele Comisiei
(19 februarie 2014)

1. În prezent, Comisia nu intenționează să efectueze o meta-analiză similară. Totuși, în cadrul PC6 și PC7 ([1]), Comisia a finanțat mai multe proiecte de cercetare în domeniul vitaminelor și/sau mineralelor (cum ar fi EURRECA ([2]), ODIN ([3]), DO-HEALTH ([4])). Orizont 2020 va oferi noi oportunități de abordare a acestui subiect prin intermediul provocărilor societale „Sănătate, schimbări demografice și bunăstare” și „Securitate alimentară, agricultură și silvicultură durabile, cercetare marină, maritimă și fluvială și bioeconomie”. Informații cu privire la oportunitățile de finanțare existente pot fi obținute pe site-ul portalului pentru participanții la programe de cercetare și inovare ([5]).

2. În conformitate cu legislația europeană, suplimentele alimentare sunt clasificate ca produse alimentare și sunt reglementate de Directiva 2002/46/CE ([6]), care stabilește dispoziții generale referitoare la aceste produse, cum ar fi etichetarea adecvată și corespunzătoare. Pentru a garanta claritatea informațiilor furnizate consumatorilor pe produs, articolul 6 alineatul (3) din directiva menționată prevede că eticheta conține următoarele indicații specifice: rația de produs recomandată pentru consumul zilnic; un avertisment împotriva depășirii dozei zilnice recomandate; un avertisment privind evitarea utilizării suplimentelor alimentare ca înlocuitor pentru un regim alimentar variat.

În plus, articolul 7 alineatul (3) din Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1169/2011 ([7]) privind informarea consumatorilor cu privire la produsele alimentare interzice atribuirea sau evocarea în legătură cu un produs alimentar a unor proprietăți de prevenire, de tratament sau de vindecare a unei boli umane. Produsele cu astfel de proprietăți s-ar încadra în definiția medicamentelor și, prin urmare, ar trebui să fie clasificate ca atare de către statele membre.

([1]) Al șaselea și al șaptelea program-cadru pentru cercetare, dezvoltare tehnologică și activități demonstrative (PC6, 2002-2006 — PC7, 2007-2013).
([2]) http://www.eurreca.org/everyone
([3]) http://www.odin-vitd.eu
([4]) http://do-health.eu/wordpress
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([6]) JO L 183, 12.7.2002.
([7]) JO L 304, 22.11.2011.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000181/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Ineffectiveness of food supplements

Three recent studies conducted in the United States show that a significant portion of food supplements are ineffective in the fight against chronic diseases. Some of them may even be harmful, claim the authors of an article published in the latest issue of Annals of Internal Medicine.

'We believe that the case is closed — supplementing the diet of well-nourished adults with (most) mineral or vitamin supplements has no clear benefit and might even be harmful,' the authors write.

The main study referred to by the experts is a meta-analysis of over 20 studies and experiments involving over 400 000 volunteers. An assessment of the research into the effect of food supplements on the prevention of chronic diseases found no solid evidence to show that vitamins may decrease the risk of developing cancer or cardiovascular diseases. However, vitamin E and beta-carotene supplements led to an increased risk of developing lung cancer in patients predisposed to this risk.

In this context:

1. Is the Commission planning to conduct similar studies in the European Union Member States?

2. What measures does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure that consumers have clearer information regarding these products?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

1. The Commission is not planning to conduct a similar meta-analysis for the time being. However, under FP6 and FP7, ([1]) the Commission has funded several research projects in the area of vitamins and/or minerals (e.g. EURRECA, ([2]) ODIN, ([3]) DO-HEALTH ([4])). Horizon 2020 will offer further opportunities to address this subject through the societal challenges 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' and 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the Bioeconomy'. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the EC Research and Innovation Participant Portal. ([5])

2. Food supplements are classified as food under European legislation and regulated by Directive 2002/46/EC, ([6]) which lays down general provisions relating to these products such as adequate and appropriate labelling. In order to ensure that consumers have clear information on the product, its Article 6(3) lays down the following specific labelling requirements: the portion of the product recommended for daily consumption; a warning not to exceed the stated recommended daily dose; a statement to the effect that food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied diet.

Furthermore, Article 7(3) of Regulation (EU) 1169/2011 ([7]) on the provision of food information to consumers prohibits the attribution or reference to any food with the property of preventing, treating or curing a human disease. Products with such properties would fulfil the definition of medicinal products and shall therefore be classified as such by the Member States.

([1]) Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP6, 2002-2006 — FP7, 2007-2013).
([2]) http://www.eurreca.org/everyone
([3]) http://www.odin-vitd.eu
([4]) http://do-health.eu/wordpress
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html
([6]) OJ L 183, 12.7.2002.
([7]) OJ L 304, 22.11.2011.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000184/14
adresată Comisiei
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Utilizarea fondurilor europene în România

Guvernul României a aprobat recent un proiect de hotărâre de guvern care prevede că Ministerul Fondurilor Europene se va muta într-o clădire de birouri privată, urmând să achite o chirie lunară de 19,8 euro pe metru pătrat plus TVA.

Suprafaţa închiriată este de 3 853 mp, în condiţiile în care numărul maxim de posturi pentru Ministerul Fondurilor Europene este de 304 angajaţi, inclusiv demnitarii şi posturile aferente cabinetului ministrului. Ministerul Fondurilor Europene a precizat că banii de chirie vor fi achitaţi din fondurile alocate Programului Operaţional pentru Asistenţă Tehnică, prin Fondul european de dezvoltare regională.

În contextul dat:

1. Consideră Comisia că utilizarea a peste două milioane de euro pe an (1 830 000 euro plus TVA) pentru un sediu de lux este o destinaţie potrivită pentru cheltuirea fondurilor europene?

2. Este legală utilizarea banilor publici europeni în acest scop?

3. Ce soluţii are Comisia în vedere pentru a evita repetarea unor astfel de situaţii pe viitor?

Răspuns dat de dl Hahn în numele Comisiei
(4 martie 2014)

Fondurile structurale şi de investiţii europene sunt gestionate prin intermediul unui sistem de gestiune partajată cu statele membre; prin urmare, gestionarea programului este responsabilitatea autorităţii de management a programului, care în acest caz este Ministerul român al Fondurilor Europene.

Fondurile pot finanţa următoarele activităţi desfăşurate în cadrul programelor: lucrările pregătitoare, gestionarea, monitorizarea, evaluarea, informarea şi comunicarea, colaborarea în reţea, soluţionarea reclamaţiilor, controlul şi auditul. Prin urmare, este posibil să se utilizeze sprijinul din Fondul european de dezvoltare regională alocat programului de asistenţă tehnică pentru plăţile aferente închirierii sediilor organismelor eligibile, cu condiţia ca clădirile existente ale administraţiei publice să nu fie suficiente pentru acoperirea nevoilor. Costurile de închiriere trebuie să aibă la bază preţurile pieţei şi să demonstreze în mod clar respectarea principiului rentabilităţii.

Autoritatea de audit şi Comisia evaluează periodic conformitatea şi adecvarea proiectelor cofinanţate.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000184/14
to the Commission
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (PPE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: The use of EU funds in Romania

The Romanian Government has recently approved a draft Government Decision stipulating that the Ministry of European Funds is to be moved to a private office building, where it will pay a monthly rent of EUR 19.8 per square metre, plus VAT.

The leased area is 3 853 square metres, while a maximum of 304 staff members are employed by the Ministry of European Funds, including senior officials and ministerial office staff. The Ministry of European Funds has indicated that the rent will be paid from funds allocated to the Operational Programme for Technical Assistance through the European Regional Development Fund.

In view of this:

1. Does the Commission consider that spending over two million euros annually (EUR 1 830 000 plus VAT) from EU funds for luxury offices is appropriate?

2. Is it legal to use European public money for this purpose?

3. What measures are being envisaged by the Commission to avoid any recurrence of such a situation?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

The European Structural and Investment Funds are managed through a shared management system with the Member States; therefore programme management is the responsibility of the programme managing authority, in this case the Romanian Ministry of European Funds.

The Funds may finance the preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and communication, networking, complaint resolution and control and audit activities of programmes; it is therefore possible to use European Regional Development Fund support within the technical assistance programme to pay for the renting of premises for the eligible bodies, provided existing buildings of the public administration do not cover the needs. Rental costs should be based on market prices and demonstrate a clear commitment to the principle of value for money.

The audit authority and the Commission periodically assess the compliance and appropriateness of co-funded projects.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000186/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Respectarea liberei circulații a lucrătorilor români și bulgari

Conform Tratatului privind Uniunea Europeană (TUE) și Tratatului privind funcționarea Uniunii Europene (TFUE), Uniunea oferă cetățenilor săi un spațiu de libertate, securitate și justiție, fără frontiere interne, în interiorul căruia este asigurată libera circulație a persoanelor. Uniunea combate excluziunea socială și discriminările și promovează justiția și protecția socială, egalitatea între femei și bărbați, solidaritatea între generații și protecția drepturilor copilului. De asemenea, libera circulație a lucrătorilor este garantată în cadrul Uniunii. Libera circulație implică eliminarea oricărei discriminări pe motiv de cetățenie între lucrătorii statelor membre, în ceea ce privește încadrarea în muncă, remunerarea și celelalte condiții de muncă.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care sunt măsurile concrete pe care le are în vedere pentru asigurarea liberei circulații a forței de muncă în cadrul UE și, în special, a eliminării oricărei discriminări pe motiv de cetățenie între lucrătorii statelor membre.

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(24 februarie 2014)

Libera circulație a lucrătorilor este benefică pentru economia UE, iar Comisia intenționează să ia în continuare măsuri, în cursul anului 2014, pentru promovarea mobilității forței de muncă pe teritoriul UE prin adoptarea unui pachet privind mobilitatea forței de muncă, inclusiv inițiativele legate de normele de coordonare a securității sociale. Ea a prezentat o propunere ([1]) de nou regulament în vederea îmbunătățirii funcționării rețelei de servicii europene pentru ocuparea forței de muncă (EURES). Obiectivele Fondului social european pentru perioada de programare 2014-20 au fost, de asemenea, consolidate, astfel încât acesta poate finanța mobilitatea forței de muncă între statele membre. În plus, în cursul anului 2014, propunerea de directivă a Comisiei ([2]) în vederea facilitării exercitării de către lucrători a dreptului lor la liberă circulație, în temeiul articolul 45 din TFUE și a Regulamentului (UE) nr. 492/2011, ar trebui să fie adoptată de colegislatori. Propunerea respectivă, pe care statele membre ar trebui să o transpună în termen de doi ani de la publicarea ei în Jurnalul Oficial, va permite existența unor măsuri mai bune de punere în aplicare la nivel național, pentru a proteja lucrătorii împotriva discriminării pe motive de naționalitate și împotriva măsurilor naționale care restricționează în mod ilegal exercitarea dreptului lor la liberă circulație.

Comisia rămâne atentă la schimbările din legislația națională care afectează drepturile lucrătorilor mobili și va acționa pentru a se asigura că asemenea modificări sunt conforme cu *acquis*-ul comunitar.

([1]) COM(2014) 6 final din 17 ianuarie 2014.
([2]) COM(2013) 236 final din 26 aprilie 2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000186/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Respecting the free movement of Romanian and Bulgarian workers

According to the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Union offers its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal borders, where the free movement of persons is ensured. The EU combats social exclusion and discrimination, and promotes social justice and protection, gender equality, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of children. The free movement of workers is also ensured inside the EU. Free movement entails the elimination of all types of discrimination based on nationality between the workers of the Member States, as regards employment, remuneration and other conditions of work.

In view of this, what specific measures does the Commission intend to take in order to ensure the free movement of the workforce in the EU and, in particular, the elimination of all types of discrimination based on nationality between the workers of the Member States?

Answer given by Mr Andor on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

Free movement of workers is beneficial to the EU economy and the Commission intends to take further steps in the course of 2014 to promote labour mobility across the EU with the adoption of a labour mobility package, including initiatives relating to the social security coordination rules. It has presented a proposal ([1]) for a new regulation to improve the operation of the European network of Employment Services (EURES). The objectives of the European Social Fund for the 2014-20 programming period have also been strengthened so it can fund labour mobility between Member States. In addition, in the course of 2014 the Commission proposal ([2]) for a directive to facilitate the exercise by workers of their right of free movement under Article 45 TFEU and Regulation (EU) No 492/2011 should be adopted by the co-legislators. That proposal, which Member States should transpose within two years from its publication on the Official Journal, will allow for better enforcement measures at national level to protect EU workers from discrimination on grounds of nationality and from national measures that unlawfully restrict the exercise of their right of free movement.

The Commission remains attentive to changes in national legislation that affect the rights of mobile workers and will act to ensure that such changes comply with the EU *acquis*.

([1]) COM(2014) 6 final of 17 January 2014.
([2]) COM(2013) 236 final of 26 April 2013.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000187/14
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Kontakte der Kommission zum deutschen Bundeskanzleramt bei der Eisenbahnpolitik

Der Verkehrsträger Eisenbahn stand, nicht nur wegen der Arbeiten am 4. Eisenbahnpaket, in den letzten Jahren in besonderem Maße im Fokus der europäischen Verkehrspolitik. Selbstverständlich steht die Kommission dabei in einem engen Austausch auch mit den Regierungen der Mitgliedstaaten. Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen (einzeln) beantworten:

1. Bei wie vielen Kontakten (persönlichen Treffen, Telefonaten, Post- oder Emailverkehr), die unter anderem die Eisenbahnpolitik zum Gegenstand hatten, war in den Jahren 2012 und 2013 das deutsche Bundeskanzleramt beteiligt?

2. Bei wie vielen dieser Kontakte war Ronald Pofalla als Chef des deutschen Bundeskanzleramts beteiligt?

3. Welchen Anlass hatten diese Kontakte?

4. Wie viele Male, wann und zu welchem Anlass hat das für Verkehr zuständige Mitglied der Kommission beziehungsweise der Generaldirektor der Generaldirektion Mobilität und Verkehr das deutsche Bundeskanzleramt in Berlin getroffen?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(5. März 2014)

Im Zeitraum 2012-2013 hat der für Verkehr zuständige Kommissar das deutsche Bundeskanzleramt im Januar 2013 in Begleitung des Generaldirektors der GD Mobilität und Verkehr besucht, um mit Herrn Pofalla über verschiedene Bereiche der europäischen Verkehrspolitik zu sprechen, darunter auch die Eisenbahnpolitik. Zudem hat der Generaldirektor der GD Mobilität und Verkehr dem deutschen Bundeskanzleramt im gleichen Zeitraum fünf Besuche abgestattet, um mit den zuständigen Ansprechpartnern verschiedene Themen der europäischen Verkehrs- und Infrastrukturpolitik zu erörtern. An keinem dieser Gespräche war Herr Pofalla beteiligt.

Die Kommission führt nicht über alle Sitzungen, Telefonate, Briefwechsel oder E-Mails Aufzeichnungen, in denen mit nationalen Behörden wie dem deutschen Bundeskanzleramt möglicherweise über Themen wie die Eisenbahnpolitik gesprochen wurde.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000187/14
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: The Commission's contacts with the German Federal Chancellery in connection with railway policy

In recent years, and not just because of the work on the Fourth Railway Package, there has been a special European transport policy focus on the railways. It goes without saying that the Commission is in close contact with Member State governments in this connection.

1. How often in 2012 and 2013 was the German Federal Chancellery in contact with the Commission (in face-to-face meetings, by telephone, by postal correspondence or by e-mail) in connection with, *inter alia*, railway policy?

2. How often did those contacts involve Ronald Pofalla, Head the German Federal Chancellery at the time?

3. Why did the contacts take place?

4. How often, when and why has the Commissioner for Transport and/or the Director-General of Mobility and Transport visited the German Federal Chancellery in Berlin?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

In the time period 2012-2013, the Commissioner for Transport accompanied by the Director-General for mobility and transport visited the German Federal Chancellery in January 2013 to discuss with Mr Pofalla various subjects of European transport policy, including railway policy. During the same period, the Director-General for mobility and transport visited the German Federal Chancellery at 5 other occasions to discuss various subjects of European transport and infrastructure policy with his counterparts. None of these involved Mr Pofalla.

The Commission does not keep records of all meetings, telephone calls, postal correspondence or e-mail exchange with national administrations such as the German Federal Chancellery, in which *inter alia* the railway policy could have been raised.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000188/14
an die Kommission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: EU-Mittel für Tierschutz in Rumänien

Kann die Kommission — unter Berücksichtigung der bereits an sie gerichteten Anfragen zur Situation der Hunde und insbesondere der Straßenhunde in Rumänien — folgende zusätzliche Fragen (jeweils einzeln) beantworten:

1. In welcher Höhe hat der Mitgliedstaat Rumänien — unter Berücksichtigung aller Haushaltslinien der EU — insgesamt EU-Mittel in den Jahren 2012 und 2013 erhalten?

2. In welchem Umfang und unter welchem Haushaltstitel hat Rumänien EU-Mittel im Zusammenhang mit dem Tierschutz erhalten? (Bitte jeweils Programm und Höhe der Mittel nennen.)

3. In welchem Umfang sind die unter der zweiten Frage genannten Mittel für das Management der Population von Hunden oder Straßenhunden in Rumänien vorgesehen bzw. eingesetzt worden? (Bitte jeweils Programm und Höhe der Mittel nennen.)

4. Kann die Kommission zusichern, dass von Rumänien keinerlei EU-Mittel für die Tötung von Hunden eingesetzt wurden? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

5. Sind der Kommission nach wie vor keine Fälle der Zweckentfremdung oder der illegalen Verwendung von EU-Geldern in Bezug auf Straßenhunde in Rumänien bekannt? Wenn doch, welche Fälle sind bekannt?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(26. Februar 2014)

Der Herr Abgeordnete wird auf die Antworten auf die schriftlichen Anfragen E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 und E-005276/2013 ([1]) verwiesen, in denen es um streunende Hunde und deren Behandlung geht.

Wie viele EU-Mittel Rumänien insgesamt unter Berücksichtigung aller EU-Haushaltslinien in den Jahren 2012 und 2013 erhalten hat, ist im Internet ([2]) nachzulesen.

Dort wird unter „*Pré-allocation par Etat Membre pour certains soutiens 2007-2013 de l'UE*“ im Einzelnen aufgeschlüsselt, welche Mittel jeder Mitgliedstaat für Kohäsion, für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums und für den Europäischen Fischereifonds erhält.

Die Kommission kann keine Programme zur Eindämmung streunender Hunde finanzieren, da die EU nicht über die entsprechenden Kompetenzen verfügt.

Bezüglich einer EU-Unterstützung im Bereich Tierschutz besteht im Rahmen des ELER (Europäischer Landwirtschaftsfonds für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums) die Möglichkeit, dass die Mitgliedstaaten Zahlungen an Landwirte leisten, die sich freiwillig zur Verbesserung des Tierwohls in ihren Betrieben verpflichten, d. h. zu Tierschutzmaßnahmen, die über das auf EU oder nationaler Ebene vorgeschriebene Maß hinausgehen. Das rumänische Programm zur Entwicklung des ländlichen Raums (*Rural Development Programme* — RDP) 2007-2013 enthält eine solche Förderregelung für die Verbesserung des Tierschutzes zugunsten von Schweinen und Geflügel in landwirtschaftlichen Betrieben. Rund 320 Mio. EUR aus ELER-Mitteln haben die rumänischen Behörden ([3]) für diese Maßnahme, die im Jahr 2012 im Rahmen des rumänischen RDP angelaufen ist, bereitgestellt. Diese Zahlungen werden jedoch im Rahmen der gemeinsamen Agrarpolitik (GAP) geleistet; Empfänger sind somit (nur) Landwirte, die die finanzielle Förderung (nur) zur Verbesserung der Haltungsbedingungen landwirtschaftlicher Nutztiere erhalten. Maßnahmen für streunende Hunde sind nicht förderfähig.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/de/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/fin_fwk0713/fin_fwk0713_de.cfm#alloc
([3]) 2007RO06RPO001 im Rahmen der Maßnahme 215 „Tierschutz“.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000188/14
to the Commission
Michael Cramer (Verts/ALE)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: EU funding for animal welfare in Romania

Further to the previous questions put to the Commission on the situation of dogs, and stray dogs in particular, in Romania:

1. How much EU funding did Romania receive in total, taking all EU budget headings into account, in 2012 and 2013?

2. How much EU funding, and from which budget heading(s), did Romania receive in connection with animal welfare? (Please state the programme and amount in each case.)

3. How much of the funding referred to in question 2 was earmarked and/or used for managing the dog or stray dog population in Romania? (Please state the programme and amount in each case.)

4. Can the Commission provide assurances that Romania has not used any EU funding in order to kill dogs? If not, why not?

5. Is it still the case that the Commission is not aware of any instances of misuse or illegal use of EU monies in connection with stray dogs in Romania? If that is not the case, what instances is it aware of?

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

The Honourable Member is invited to refer to the answers to written questions E-006543/2011, E-007161/2011, E-002062/2012 and E-005276/2013 ([1]) which address the issues of stray dogs and of dog population management.

The EU funding received by Romania in total, taking all EU budget headings into account, in 2012 and 2013 can be found on this page ([2]).

Here it is possible to find the detailed breakdown of how much was offered per Member State under 'Pre-allocation by Member State for certain EU-support 2007-2013, for Cohesion, Rural Development and European Fisheries Fund'.

EU competences do not allow the Commission to fund stray dogs control programs.

As regards EU support for animal welfare, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) does include the possibility for Member States to make payments to farmers who undertake voluntary commitments to improve animal welfare on farm, going beyond relevant mandatory standards established by EU or national provisions. The Romanian Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 includes such a support scheme to improve the welfare of pigs and poultry kept on farm. Some EUR 320 million of EAFRD funds have been allocated by the Romanian authorities ([3]) to this measure which was launched in 2012 under the Romanian RDP. However, these payments are made in the context of the common agricultural policy (CAP) and so the beneficiaries of support are farmers (only) and the aids are therefore payable to improve husbandry standards for farm animals only. Stray dogs would not be eligible.

([1]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/budget/biblio/documents/fin_fwk0713/fin_fwk0713_en.cfm#alloc
([3]) 2007RO06RPO001 under measure 215 'Animal welfare payments'.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-000190/14
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(9 stycznia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Projekt ustawy regulującej zasady realizacji w Polsce programów operacyjnych polityki spójności finansowanych w perspektywie budżetowej 2014-2020

23 grudnia 2013 r. polskie Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju przedstawiło projekt ustawy o zasadach realizacji programów operacyjnych polityki spójności finansowanych w perspektywie budżetowej 2014-2020.

Ustawa określa system relacji pomiędzy podmiotami uczestniczącymi w rozdziale środków unijnych oraz nadzór nad ich wydatkowaniem. Podczas konsultacji projektu Centralne Biuro Antykorupcyjne zwracało uwagę, że „poważne wątpliwości budzi powierzenie wielu ról ministrowi ds. rozwoju regionalnego". Problem wynika m.in. z tego, że Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju jednocześnie będzie koordynować wdrażanie programów operacyjnych, jak i będzie instytucją nimi zarządzającą (problem desygnacji). Proponowane w ustawie rozwiązania tworzą również sytuację, w której Minister Infrastruktury i Rozwoju będzie kontrolować sam siebie, co prowadzi do konfliktu interesów.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

Czy Komisja analizowała projekt ustawy przedstawiony przez Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju regulującej zasady wydatkowania funduszy europejskich?

Czy proponowane przez ministerstwo rozwiązanie Komisja uznaje za wystarczające z punktu widzenia przejrzystości rozdziału środków europejskich w Polsce w latach 2014-2020?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(4 marca 2014 r.)

1. Komisja nie otrzymała jeszcze projektu ustawy, do której odnosi się Szanowny Pan Poseł. Nie istnieje też obowiązek przedkładania takich dokumentów przez państwa członkowskie.

2. Kwestie poruszone przez Szanownego Pana Posła są regulowane przez art. 123 rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1303/2013 ([1]). Zgodnie z tym artykułem do takich programów państwo członkowskie wyznacza instytucję zarządzającą, certyfikującą i audytową, a także może, z własnej inicjatywy, wyznaczyć podmiot koordynujący. Zgodnie z art. 123 ust. 5 wspomnianego rozporządzenia, pod warunkiem przestrzegania zasady rozdzielania funkcji, instytucja zarządzająca, certyfikująca i audytowa mogą stanowić część tego samego organu lub podmiotu publicznego. Niezależność funkcjonalna jest wyraźnie wymagana tylko od instytucji audytowej. Dlatego też rozwiązanie wybrane przez Polskę wydaje się być zgodne z powyższymi przepisami, ale w systemach zarządzania i kontroli należy wdrożyć odpowiednie procedury mające na celu rozdzielenie funkcji zgodnie z art. 72 tego samego rozporządzenia. Komisja sprawdzi to przy zatwierdzaniu programów i może zażądać sprawozdania i opinii niezależnego organu, zgodnie z art. 124 ust. 3 tego samego rozporządzenia.

([1]) Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady (UE) nr 1303/2013 z dnia 17 grudnia 2013 r. ustanawiające wspólne przepisy dotyczące EFRR, EFS, EFRROW i EFMR oraz ustanawiające przepisy ogólne dotyczące EFRR, EFS, Funduszu Spójności i EFMR oraz uchylające rozporządzenie Rady (WE) nr 1083/2006; Dz.U. L 347 z 20.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000190/14
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Draft law on the rules for implementing cohesion policy operational programmes financed under the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework in Poland.

On 23 December 2013, the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure and Development presented a draft law on the rules for implementing cohesion policy operational programmes financed under the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework in Poland.

That law lays down the system of relations between entities participating in the distribution of EU funds and rules governing the supervision of their expenditure. During consultations on the draft, the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau noted: 'the fact that multiple roles have been assigned to the Minister for Regional Development raises serious concerns'. The problem arises partly from the fact that the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development will be coordinating the implementation of the operational programmes whilst simultaneously managing them (a problem with the designation of roles). The solutions proposed in the draft law also create a situation in which the Minister for Infrastructure and Development will be supervising him or herself, which will result in a conflict of interests.

Has the Commission examined the draft law presented by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development on the rules for the disbursement of EU funds?

Does the Commission consider the solution presented by the Ministry to be adequate from the point of view of transparency with respect to the distribution of EU funds in Poland in the 2014-2020 period?

Answer given by Mr Hahn on behalf of the Commission
(4 March 2014)

1. The Commission has not received the law to which the Honourable Member refers, nor is there an obligation on Member States to submit such laws.

2. The issues raised by the Honourable Member are regulated by Article 123 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 ([1]). In line with this article, the Member State designates a managing authority, certifying authority and audit authority for programmes and may, at its own initiative, designate a coordination body. According to Article 123(5) of the same regulation, provided that the principle of separation of functions is respected, the managing authority, certifying authority and the audit authority may be part of the same public authority or body. Functional independence is explicitly required only for the audit authority. Therefore, the solution selected by Poland appears to be compliant with the above provisions, but appropriate procedures for ensuring separation of functions should be put in place in management and control systems in line with Article 72 of the same regulation. The Commission will check this set up during the approval of the programmes and may request the report and opinion of the independent body, according to Article 124(3) of the same regulation.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the EAFRD and the EMFF and laying down general provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund and the EMFF and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006; JO L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000191/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Concurența pe piețele energiei electrice din Uniune și situația siguranței alimentării cu energie electrică în Uniune

Directiva 2009/72/CE privind normele comune pentru piața internă a energiei electrice și de abrogare a Directivei 2003/54/CE stabilește norme comune pentru producerea, transportul, distribuția și furnizarea energiei electrice, precum și dispoziții privind protecția consumatorilor, în vederea îmbunătățirii și integrării piețelor de energie competitive, conectate printr-o rețea comună, în Uniune.

Conform articolului 47 din aceasta directivă, Comisia monitorizează și examinează punerea în aplicare a directivei și prezintă anual Parlamentului European și Consiliului un raport general privind progresele înregistrate. De asemenea, Comisia a prezentat, ca parte din reexaminarea generală, până la 3 martie 2013, Parlamentului European și Consiliului, un raport specific detaliat care să evidențieze măsura în care cerințele privind separarea prevăzute în capitolul V au înregistrat succese cu privire la asigurarea unei independențe depline și efective a operatorilor de transport și de sistem, utilizând separarea efectivă și eficientă drept criteriu de referință. După caz, și în special în eventualitatea în care raportul detaliat specificat mai sus a determinat că, în practică, nu au fost garantate următoarele condiții: acces la rețea echitabil și nediscriminatoriu; reglementare eficientă; dezvoltarea rețelei pentru a răspunde necesităților pieței; stimulente nedenaturate pentru investiții; dezvoltarea infrastructurii de interconectare; concurența efectivă pe piețele energiei electrice din Uniune și situația siguranței alimentării cu energie electrică în Uniune, Comisia înaintează propuneri Parlamentului European și Consiliului, în vederea asigurării independenței depline și efective a operatorilor de transport și de sistem, până la 3 martie 2014.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă are în vedere să transmită propuneri în vederea garantării condițiilor de mai sus și care ar fi măsurile pe care intenționează Comisia să le includă în aceste propuneri.

Răspuns dat de dl Oettinger în numele Comisiei
(14 februarie 2014)

Comisia confirmă că are în pregătire o evaluare a eficienței funcționării cerințelor de separare prevăzute la capitolul IV și la capitolul V din directivele privind energia electrică și gazele. Evaluarea menționată va fi publicată ca parte din revizuirea generală a funcționării pieței interne a energiei, planificată pentru mijlocul anului 2014. În această etapă, nu este prevăzută o propunere legislativă.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000191/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Competition on the EU electrical energy markets and security of the electricity supply situation in the EU

Directive 2009/72/EC concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and repealing Directive 2003/54/EC establishes common rules for the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity, together with consumer protection provisions, with a view to improving and integrating the competitive energy markets, connected via a common network, in the Union.

In accordance with Article 47 of this directive, the Commission is to monitor and review the application of the directive and submit to the European Parliament and the Council an overall progress report, on an annual basis. As part of the general review, the Commission was also to present to the European Parliament and to the Council, by 3 March 2013, a detailed specific report outlining the extent to which the unbundling requirements in Chapter V have been successful in ensuring the fully effective independence of transmission system operators, using effective and efficient unbundling as a benchmark. Where appropriate, and especially in the event that the detailed report referred to above establishes that the following conditions were not guaranteed in practice: fair and non-discriminatory network access; effective regulation; the development of the network to meet market needs, undistorted incentives to invest; the development of interconnection infrastructure, effective competition in the energy markets of the EU and the security of the supply situation in the EU, the Commission is to submit proposals to the European Parliament and the Council in order to ensure the fully effective independence of transmission system operators by 3 March 2014.

I would like to ask the Commission whether it intends to submit proposals with a view to guaranteeing those conditions exist, and what measures it intends to include in those proposals.

Answer given by Mr Oettinger on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

The Commission confirms that it is preparing an assessment on the effective functioning of the unbundling requirements in Chapter IV and Chapter V of the Gas and Electricity Directives respectively. It will be published as part of a general review of the functioning of the internal energy market, planned for mid-2014. At this stage, no legislative proposal is foreseen.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-000192/14
adresată Comisiei
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(9 ianuarie 2014)

Subiect: Revizuirea Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei

La data de 1 iunie 2013, a intrat în vigoare Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1129/2011 al Comisiei care cuprinde anexa II la Regulamentul (CE) nr. 1333/2008 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului care definește aditivii alimentari permiși la nivel european pentru preparatele din carne.

Printre aditivii care nu au mai fost autorizați se regăsesc și anumiți aditivi care, conform industriei procesatoare de carne din România, se folosesc în mod tradițional la prepararea pastei de mici.

În acest context, România a făcut demersurile necesare pe lângă Comisia Europeană pentru a solicita includerea în lista aditivilor autorizați a aditivilor necesari la prepararea pastei de mici.

Ca urmare a demersurilor României și ale altor state membre interesate, Comisia a fost de acord cu o revizuire a regulamentului, anunțând disponibilitatea de a finaliza procesul până la sfârșitul anului 2013.

Comisia a pregătit o propunere de regulament care modifică anexa II în ceea ce privește categoriile de carne și utilizarea anumitor aditivi în preparatele din carne, dar pasul procedural următor (adoptarea formală a propunerii de regulament în reuniunea Comitetului permanent pentru lanțul alimentar și sănătatea animalelor), prevăzut pentru 21 octombrie 2013, a fost amânat.

Dată fiind importanța continuării procedurii de revizuire a Regulamentului (UE) nr. 1129/2011 pentru România și alte state membre, poate Comisia să precizeze când intenționează să procedeze la adoptarea și prezentarea formală a formei revizuite a acestui Regulament?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(12 februarie 2014)

Comisia invită distinsul membru să consulte răspunsul oferit de Comisie la întrebarea scrisă E-013828/2013 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000192/14
to the Commission
Minodora Cliveti (S&D)
(9 January 2014)

Subject: Revision of Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011

Commission Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011, including Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council defining the food additives permitted at European level for meat products, entered into force on 1 June 2013.

The additives that are no longer approved also include certain additives that, according to the meat processing industry in Romania, are traditionally used for the preparation of minced meat roll paste.

Romania contacted the European Commission in order to request the inclusion of the additives required for the preparation of minced meat roll paste on the list of authorised additives.

Following the requests by Romania and other affected Member States, the Commission agreed to revise the regulation and said that it was prepared to complete the revision process by the end of 2013.

The Commission drew up a proposal for a regulation amending Annex II regarding the categories of meat and the use of certain additives in meat products, but the next procedural step (the formal adoption of the proposal for a regulation in the meeting of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health), scheduled for 21 October 2013, was postponed.

Given the importance of continuing the process for the revision of Regulation (EU) No 1129/2011 for Romania and other Member States, can the Commission indicate when it intends to adopt and formally present the revised regulation?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-013828/2013 ([1]).

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

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-000193/14
a la Comisión
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(10 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Tax lease holandés — Estado de la investigación

En relación con el régimen de *tax lease* holandés, en diciembre de 2012 se denunció ante la Comisión Europea la amortización anticipada y acelerada disponible para los ejercicios 2009, 2010 y 2011, por su carácter selectivo al excluir de su ámbito de aplicación determinados bienes. Asimismo, fue denunciada la combinación de esta medida con otros incentivos fiscales —en el marco de las estructuras de arrendamiento financiero para la adquisición de buques— que permiten evitar la reversión de la amortización y la tributación de la plusvalía puesta de manifiesto con la venta del buque, obteniendo un ahorro fiscal definitivo.

En relación con la investigación de estos hechos, la Comisión Europea manifestó, el 7 de octubre de 2013, que las medidas objeto de la denuncia estaban siendo evaluadas, y que, si completada la información existiesen serias dudas, incoaría el procedimiento de investigación formal. Apuntó también que la duración de la investigación dependerá de la complejidad de las medidas a examinar.

Dado que han pasado más de tres meses desde que la Comisión se pronunció por última vez sobre este asunto y que nos consta que dispone de nueva información, ¿qué grado de complejidad considera la Comisión que reviste la investigación? ¿En qué punto se encuentra esta?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(3 de febrero de 2014)

Después de responder a la pregunta P-9832/13 sobre el mismo tema, la Comisión recibió a mediados de noviembre la contestación de las autoridades neerlandesas a sus preguntas. Además, la Comisión recibió a principios de enero nuevos datos de la parte denunciante. Por motivos relacionados con la protección de su derecho de defensa, la Comisión recabará el parecer de las autoridades de los Países Bajos sobre el contenido del documento. La Comisión analizará las medidas teniendo en cuenta la respuesta de las autoridades neerlandesas a sus preguntas, su reacción ante el nuevo documento y cualquier otra información que pueda ser útil solicitar sobre esa base.

Como se indica en la respuesta a la pregunta P-9832/13, las medidas fiscales y las operaciones de arrendamiento fiscal pueden mostrar un nivel de complejidad que justifique objetivamente una investigación más larga. Sin perjuicio de la posición que adopte al término de su examen preliminar, la Comisión no va a tratar este asunto de manera distinta a cualquier otro relacionado con la fiscalidad analizado en el pasado.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000193/14
to the Commission
Salvador Garriga Polledo (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Dutch tax lease system — current state of the investigation

In December 2012 a complaint was submitted to the Commission in respect of the Dutch tax lease system, and in particular the accelerated depreciation provisions for the financial years 2009, 2010 and 2011. According to the complaint, the provisions were selective because they excluded certain goods. The complaint also criticised the fact that these provisions were combined with other tax incentives concerning financial leasing arrangements for the acquisition of vessels. These made it possible for investors to avoid paying back tax saved under the depreciation arrangements and to avoid the capital gains tax due on the sale of a vessel, equating to a permanent tax saving.

On 7 October 2013 the Commission said that the measures targeted by the complaint were being assessed and that if there were serious doubts once all the information was available, it would open the formal investigation procedure. It also pointed out that the length of the investigation would depend on the complexity of the measures under scrutiny.

Three months have now passed since the Commission last commented on this matter and we do know that it has new information. How complex does the Commission consider the investigation to be now, therefore? What point has its investigation reached?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2014)

Since the reply to Question P-9832/13 on the same subject, the Commission received in mid-November the replies of the Dutch authorities to its questions. In addition, the Commission received, at the beginning of January, a new piece of information submitted by the complaining party. For reasons linked to the protection of their right of defence, the Commission will seek the reaction of the Dutch authorities on the content of that document. The Commission will analyse the measures in light of the replies given by the Dutch authorities to its questions, their reaction to the new document, and any further information that would be useful to request on that basis.

As indicated in the reply given to Question P-9832/13, tax measures and tax lease operations may be complex enough objectively to justify a lengthier investigation. Without prejudice to the position that the Commission will adopt at the end of its preliminary investigation, the Commission is not treating this case differently than any other tax case analysed in the past.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-000195/14
à la Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 janvier 2014)

Objet: Turquie — atteintes à l'état de droit

Les scandales politico-financiers qui agitent depuis novembre la Turquie donnent lieu, de la part du gouvernement, à des purges sans précédent au sein de la police turque et au sein de la magistrature du pays, accusées de ne pas avoir informé le pouvoir politique des enquêtes en cours.

Ce climat d'intimidations et de sanctions est attentatoire à l'état de droit et à la séparation des pouvoirs, valeurs consubstantielles de la construction européenne.

Il est remarquable, dans ces conditions, d'observer le silence total sur ce sujet du Conseil européen, du Conseil et de sa haute représentante ainsi que du commissaire européen chargé de l'élargissement, alors que les premières pressions exercées sur l'appareil de police et sur la magistrature datent du mois de novembre 2013. La seule réaction enregistrée à ce jour est venue, le 8 janvier 2014, d'un… porte-parole de la Commission.

Cet embarras s'explique par le fait que les institutions européennes viennent de décider, le 22 octobre dernier, contre tout bon sens, de relancer les négociations d'adhésion de la Turquie à l'Union, en ouvrant un nouveau chapitre de négociations avec ce gouvernement.

À la lumière des décisions prises par ce dernier, décisions attentatoires à l'indépendance de la justice et à l'impartialité des enquêtes de police, la Commission européenne a-t-elle l'intention de condamner les pressions qui ont été exercées? A-t-elle l'intention de tirer constat du fait que ce pays s'éloigne de plus en plus des standards habituels de l'État de droit, en suspendant les négociations d'adhésion en cours avec la Turquie, conformément à ce que souhaitent des millions de ressortissants européens des différents États membres?

Réponse donnée par M. Füle au nom de la Commission
(26 février 2014)

La Commission n'a eu de cesse de souligner la nécessité de garantir l'indépendance de la justice et l'impartialité des enquêtes des autorités policières et judiciaires sur toute allégation de violation, y compris de corruption. Elle s'est également déclarée très préoccupée par le nombre d'agents de police et de procureurs démis de leurs fonctions en raison de leur possible influence sur l'indépendance, l'impartialité et le bon déroulement des enquêtes en cours.

Il a été fait état de ces préoccupations lors de réunions avec les pouvoirs publics ainsi que dans une correspondance suivie. Lors de sa rencontre avec le Premier ministre Erdogan, le président Barroso en personne a fait part de l'inquiétude de la Commission au sujet de l'ingérence dans l'indépendance de la justice. À ce jour, quatre lettres définissant la position de la Commission ont été envoyées aux autorités turques au sujet des modifications envisagées qu'il est prévu d'apporter aux différents éléments de la loi relative au système judiciaire. Le commissaire européen chargé de l'élargissement a publié une déclaration le 17 février dernier indiquant les raisons de l'inquiétude de la Commission au sujet de la loi adoptée, son importance pour l'État de droit en Turquie et la volonté de la Commission de continuer à suivre l'évolution de la situation dans ce pays.

La Commission a également pris acte des assurances données par le gouvernement turc qui a affirmé qu'il continuerait à dialoguer et à maintenir des contacts étroits sur ces questions d'importance cruciale pour la Turquie et l'UE. La situation actuelle montre une fois de plus que l'Union doit plus que jamais poursuivre le dialogue engagé avec la Turquie, y compris dans le cadre du chapitre 23 «Pouvoir judiciaire et droits fondamentaux», étant donné qu'il s'agit de la façon la plus efficace de répondre à ces problèmes.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000195/14
to the Commission
Christine De Veyrac (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Turkey — violations of the rule of law

The political and financial scandals which have been causing so much controversy in Turkey since November 2013 have led to unprecedented purges by the government of the Turkish police and judiciary, leading members of which have been accused of not informing the political authorities about ongoing investigations.

This atmosphere of intimidation and victimisation is undermining rule of law and the separation of powers, values which are fundamental to European integration.

Under the circumstances, it is astonishing that the European Council, the Council, the High Representative and the European Commissioner for Enlargement should have made no comment on this matter, even though the police and judiciary first came under fire in November 2013. The only response so far has come from a humble Commission spokesperson, on 8 January 2014.

This embarrassing state of affairs can be explained by the EU's nonsensical decision of 22 October 2013 to open a new negotiation chapter with the Turkish Government, thus relaunching the accession negotiations.

In the light of the decisions taken by the Turkish Government, which threaten the independence of the judiciary and the impartiality of police investigations, does the Commission intend to condemn what is happening in Turkey? Given that the country is clearly increasingly prepared to disregard principles fundamental to the rule of law, does the Commission intend to respond by suspending the current accession negotiations with Turkey, in accordance with the wishes of millions of EU citizens?

Answer given by Mr Füle on behalf of the Commission
(26 February 2014)

The Commission has repeatedly highlighted the need to guarantee the independence of the judiciary, and the impartiality of investigations by the police and judiciary into any allegation of wrongdoing, including corruption. The Commission has also expressed serious concern about the removal of a large number of police officers and prosecutors from their duties due to its possible impact on the independence, impartiality and efficiency of current investigations

These concerns have been communicated in meetings with the government and through continued correspondence. President Barroso raised the Commission's concerns regarding interference into independence of the judiciary in person during his meeting with Prime Minister Erdogan. To date, four letters setting out the Commission's position have been sent to Turkish authorities with regard to the foreseen amendments to different elements of legislation concerning the judicial system. The Commissioner for Enlargement issued a statement on 17 February further setting out the Commission's concerns regarding the adopted law, its importance for the rule of law in Turkey and the Commission's commitment to continue to monitor developments in Turkey.

The Commission also took note of the assurances provided by the Turkish government that it will continue the dialogue and maintain its close contact on these issues of primary importance to both Turkey and the EU. The current situation demonstrates once more that the EU needs to be engaged more rather than less with Turkey, including in the framework of Chapter 23 — Judiciary and fundamental rights, as this is the most effective way of tackling these issues.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-000196/14
alla Commissione
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 gennaio 2014)

Oggetto: Obbligo di risarcimento in forma specifica e profili di incompatibilità con la libera circolazione dei servizi

Il governo italiano si appresta a varare un decreto legge che renderebbe obbligatoria la «forma specifica» nel risarcimento dei danni dei veicoli incidentati, vale a dire far riparare il veicolo incidentato esclusivamente dalle officine di carrozzeria convenzionate con le assicurazioni e pagate direttamente da queste ultime. Tali disposizioni appaiono del tutto incoerenti con i principi ispiratori di un sistema europeo di liberalizzazione del mercato interno, che per converso dovrebbe mirare alla tutela del cittadino sia in termini di possibilità di scelta sia in termini di abbattimento dei costi dei servizi. Di fatto, l'approvazione di una simile normativa indirizzerebbe in Italia tutto il mercato della riparazione verso le carrozzerie convenzionate, alle quali già le compagnie assicurative impongono condizioni contrattuali vessatorie, costringendole a lavorare sotto costo e mettendo a rischio anche la qualità della riparazione. Inoltre, s'impedirebbe ai cittadini di esercitare la libera scelta di essere risarciti in denaro e di farsi riparare l'auto dall'officina di fiducia.

Il provvedimento in esame ha un duplice devastante impatto in quanto:

— presenta aspetti d'illegittimità sotto il profilo concorrenziale, soprattutto nei rapporti con le imprese di riparazione: proposte di convenzioni, irragionevolmente selettive, eliminerebbero infatti dal mercato quelle imprese di autoriparazione escluse dalle convenzioni;

— mentre nei confronti dei consumatori il pregiudizio si sostanzia nella perdita di possibilità di scelta dell'autoriparatore di fiducia.

La norma proposta rappresenta, di fatto, un grave e palese conflitto d'interesse in cui ricadono le compagnie assicurative che, per legge, sono obbligate a risarcire il danno e non a occuparsi direttamente della riparazione.

Stante che:

— l'Antitrust in Italia ha più volte ricevuto segnalazioni in merito sia da parte delle associazioni nazionali di categoria delle imprese di autoriparazione sia da parte delle associazioni dei consumatori;

— in Italia esistono circa 17.000 imprese di carrozzeria e solo meno di un terzo ha rapporti di convenzione con le compagni assicurative, scegliendo di operare in indipendenza e in un mercato in aperta e leale concorrenza;

— in Francia ad esempio la nuova proposta di legge sui consumatori stabilisce il diritto di scelta da parte del danneggiato del riparatore a cui rivolgersi;

— le condizioni di accesso ai servizi assicurativi imposte dalla normativa italiana potrebbero integrare la violazione dell'art. 56 del TFUE in materia di libera circolazione dei servizi oltre che le disposizioni sulla concorrenza;

— il mercato assicurativo italiano è di fatto un oligopolio in cui tre gruppi principali si dividono quasi il 70 % del mercato della responsabilità civile auto;

può la Commissione valutare la compatibilità della suddetta normativa con il diritto dell'UE?

Risposta di Michel Barnier a nome della Commissione
(17 febbraio 2014)

In base alle informazioni a disposizione della Commissione, la misura in questione, che riguarda l'uso di una «forma specifica» per il risarcimento dei danni, è un regime facoltativo che ha come fine la prevenzione delle frodi. Il ricorso a tale misura è a discrezione del cliente; nel caso in cui scelga di farlo, il cliente può beneficiare di una riduzione sul premio dell'assicurazione coinvolta.

La Commissione esaminerà ulteriormente la questione. In ogni caso, occorre sottolineare che in base alla giurisprudenza della Corte di giustizia europea la prevenzione delle frodi è un settore che può essere considerato un motivo imperativo di interesse generale, tale da giustificare una restrizione alla libera circolazione dei servizi e alla libertà di stabilimento, a condizione che la misura in questione abbia carattere non discriminatorio e sia necessaria e proporzionata.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-000196/14
to the Commission
Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Compulsory 'specific form' damage compensation and possible incompatibility with the free movement of services

The Italian Government is about to pass a law that would make 'specific form' compensation for damages mandatory for vehicles which have been in an accident. This means that any vehicle involved in an accident would have to be repaired exclusively by the vehicle body repair shops that are affiliated with insurance companies and paid directly by them. These provisions appear to be entirely inconsistent with the guiding principles of the EU system to liberalise the internal market, the aim of which, conversely, is supposed to be to protect citizens in terms of both free choice and a reduced cost of services. In actual fact, if such legislation were to be adopted in Italy, the entire vehicle repair market would centre on these specially approved vehicle body shops, upon which the insurance companies already impose unfair contractual terms, forcing them to work below cost and even jeopardising the quality of the repairs. In addition, citizens would be prevented from exercising their freedom of choice to be compensated in cash and to get their cars repaired by their own favourite body repair shop.

The measure in question will have a doubly devastating impact because:

— it is illegitimate from a competition point of view, especially in terms of relations with vehicle repair companies, since any potential agreements — which might be unreasonably selective — would eliminate from the market all auto repair companies that were excluded from such agreements;

— as far as consumers are concerned, the damage would consist of the impossibility of being able to choose one's own trusted vehicle repair shop.

Indeed, the proposed law is a serious and obvious conflict of interest for insurance companies which, by law, are required to make good any damage and not to deal directly with repairs.

Given that:

— the Italian Antitrust Authority has repeatedly received complaints about this, from both the national vehicle repair trade associations and consumer associations;

— in Italy, there are some 17 000 vehicle body repair companies; only less than a third of these have agreements with insurance companies, as most of them choose to operate independently, in a market with open and fair competition;

— in France, for example, a new consumer bill provides for the right of consumers to choose their vehicle body repair shops;

— the conditions of access to insurance services laid down by Italian law could be in breach of Article 56 TFEU regarding the free movement of services, as well as of the competition rules;

— the Italian insurance market is, in fact, an oligopoly in which three main groups share almost 70% of the motor vehicle liability insurance market;

can the Commission say whether the abovementioned legislation is compatible with EC law?

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

According to the information available to the Commission, the measure in question concerning the use of a 'specific form' in order to receive compensation for damage is a facultative scheme with the purpose of preventing fraud. It appears that it remains the free choice of the client whether to join such a scheme or not. In case the client joins such a scheme, s/he can benefit from a reduction on the price of the insurance concerned.

The Commission will examine this matter further. In any event, it is recalled that, according to the case law of the European Court of Justice, the prevention of fraud is one area which may be considered an overriding reason relating to the public interest, which may justify a restriction to the free movement of services and freedom of establishment, provided that the measure in question is non-discriminatory, necessary and proportionate.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000197/14
a la Comisión
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Programa MEDIA y financiación de la Muestra de Cine Europeo Ciudad de Segovia (MUCES)

El programa MEDIA es el programa comunitario de apoyo a la industria europea audiovisual que durante más de veinte años ha contribuido a financiar proyectos e iniciativas impulsados por entidades públicas y privadas europeas. La última edición de este programa ha estado vigente durante el período 2007-2013 y a partir de enero de este año pasará a formar parte del programa Europa Creativa.

El Ayuntamiento de Segovia (España) organiza desde hace ocho años la Muestra de Cine Europeo Ciudad de Segovia, conocida como MUCES. Esta Muestra se ha beneficiado durante los últimos años de fondos europeos concedidos en el marco del programa MEDIA dependiente de la Dirección General de Educación y Cultura.

Diversos medios se han hecho eco de las críticas suscitadas en torno a la organización de MUCES y es escasa la información en lo relativo a cuestiones económicas. Se ha aludido de manera concreta a la falta de coincidencia entre los datos económicos proporcionados por el Ayuntamiento de Segovia al solicitar financiación a la Comisión Europea con cargo al programa MEDIA y los ofrecidos a los medios de comunicación como coste total de organización de esta Muestra.

Por todo lo expuesto y a fin de clarificar el asunto, ¿podría indicar la Comisión en qué años y cuantía se ha beneficiado el Ayuntamiento de Segovia de fondos europeos destinados a la organización de la Muestra de Cine Europeo Ciudad de Segovia (MUCES) en el marco del programa MEDIA? En las ocasiones en que el Ayuntamiento recibió la financiación solicitada ¿cuál fue el coste total de organización presupuestado por el Ayuntamiento para la organización de la Muestra?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de febrero de 2014)

Según los informes finales presentados por el Ayuntamiento de Segovia en relación con la Muestra de Cine Europeo Ciudad de Segovia (MUCES), los datos sobre los costes totales de la Muestra, el presupuesto detallado de gastos subvencionables y la contribución de la Unión son los siguientes:

Edición de 2008

Subvención de 35 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 329 384 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 182 731 EUR

Edición de 2009

Subvención de 30 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 329 697 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 153 297 EUR

Edición de 2010

Subvención de 35 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 339 541,27 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 130 902,55 EUR

Edición de 2011

Subvención de 35 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 335 539,97 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 166 698,90 EUR

Edición de 2012

Subvención de 30 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 302 096 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 159 249,99 EUR

Aún no se ha recibido el informe de 2013, pero a continuación figuran las cifras presupuestadas:

Edición de 2013

Subvención de 30 000 EUR

Presupuesto total: 300 000 EUR

Presupuesto de gastos subvencionables (dedicado a películas europeas, invitados europeos e impresión del catálogo y el programa oficiales de la Muestra): 165 000 EUR

La reducción de la subvención de 2012 se debió a la disminución del porcentaje de películas europeas en el programa de la Muestra. No se ha detectado ninguna irregularidad financiera ni organizativa en los informes finales.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000197/14
to the Commission
Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: The MEDIA programme and funding for the City of Segovia Festival of European Cinema (MUCES)

The MEDIA programme is the EU's support programme for the European audiovisual industry, which for over 20 years has contributed to funding projects and initiatives led by both public and private European entities. The last programme was held over the period 2007-2013 and as of January of this year it will now form part of the Creative Europe programme.

Segovia City Council (Spain) has organised the City of Segovia Festival of European Cinema — also known as MUCES — for the last eight years. Over the past few years, this Festival has received European funding from the MEDIA programme, which is overseen by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture.

Criticisms of the way in which MUCES is organised have been echoed on a number of platforms, and financial information has been hard to come by. Specifically, reference has been made to the inconsistencies between the financial data provided by Segovia City Council in its application to the European Commission for funding from the MEDIA programme and the figures representing the total cost of organising the Festival given to the media.

In light of the above and with a view to shedding some light on the matter, please could the Commission tell us in which years Segovia City Council received European funding for organising the City of Segovia Festival of European Cinema (MUCES) as part of the MEDIA programme and how much this funding amounted to? On the occasions that the City Council did receive the funding applied for, what was the total cost of organising the Festival budgeted for by the City Council?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(14 February 2014)

According to the final reports submitted by the Segovia City Council for the City of Segovia Festival of European Cinema (MUCES), the figures for the total costs of the festival, the detailed eligible budget, and the Union contribution were as follows:

2008 edition
Grant of EUR 35,000
Total budget: EUR 329,384
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 182,731

2009 edition
Grant of EUR 30,000
Total budget: EUR 329,697
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 153,297

2010 edition
Grant of EUR 35,000
Total budget: EUR 339,541.27
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 130,902.55

2011 edition
Grant of EUR 35,000
Total budget: EUR 335,539.97
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 166,698.90

2012 edition
Grant of EUR 30,000
Total budget: EUR 302,096
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 159,249.99

The report for 2013 has not yet been received, but here are the budgeted figures:

2013 edition
Grant of EUR 30,000
Total budget: EUR 300,000
Eligible budget (devoted to European films, European guests and official printed catalogue and festival programme): EUR 165,000

The reduction of the grant in 2012 was related to the reduction of the percentage of European films in the festival programme. No financial or organisational irregularities have been detected in the Final Reports.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000198/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Servicios de ayuda de calidad a las familias

La atención a la dependencia es una de las principales víctimas de los recortes anunciados en la presentación en el Congreso de los Presupuestos Generales del Estado español de 2014 ([1]). Para este año la partida sufre un recorte del 46,7 %, pasando de 2 205 a 1 176 millones de euros. Esta medida deja colgadas a muchas familias que tenían aceptada esta ayuda económica para cuidar mejor a sus seres queridos. El Gobierno catalán (obligado a pagar por ley el 50 % de la subvención a la dependencia) ya hace tiempo que también paga una parte de lo que corresponde al Estado español. Así, en 2013 el Gobierno catalán pagó el 80 %, y el Gobierno español, el 20 % restante ([2]). Esto supone un gran esfuerzo económico para la Generalitat de Cataluña.

El 30 de mayo de 2013 la Comisión Europea publicó unas recomendaciones anuales adaptadas a cada Estado miembro para salir de la crisis económica ([3]). La Comisión subrayó que era urgente aprobar y aplicar con eficacia las reformas pendientes siguiendo un cronograma, de modo que pudieran empezar a producir los efectos positivos previstos en el país.

Una de las recomendaciones que hizo la Comisión al Estado español fue que la relación coste-eficacia del sector sanitario debía ser mayor, reduciendo por ejemplo el gasto farmacéutico de los hospitales, potenciando la coordinación entre los distintos tipos de asistencia sanitaria y manteniendo, al mismo tiempo, la atención a los grupos vulnerables. Las personas dependientes son vulnerables ¿Cree la Comisión que el hecho de que el Gobierno español no cumpla la ley de dependencia va contra las recomendaciones de la Comisión?

Otra recomendación de la Comisión al Estado español fue la intensificación de la lucha contra la economía sumergida y el trabajo no declarado. ¿Cree la Comisión que el incumplimiento de la ley de dependencia por parte del Estado español dificulta el seguimiento de esta recomendación?

Respuesta del Sr. Rehn en nombre de la Comisión
(19 de febrero de 2014)

España está elaborando una normativa general para mejorar la eficacia y el control de los gastos sanitarios, en consonancia con las recomendaciones específicas por países y el Programa Nacional de Reformas de España. La revisión de las condiciones de acceso al cuidado de las personas dependientes es un elemento del conjunto de reformas.

Si bien las autoridades reducen los desembolsos presupuestarios relacionados con el cuidado de las personas dependientes, se contemplan algunas disposiciones para facilitar el acceso a los servicios de salud a los grupos más vulnerables de la sociedad, tal como se indica, por ejemplo, en el Plan Nacional de Acción para la Inclusión Social. Una evaluación completa del cumplimiento de las recomendaciones específicas por países de 2013 se efectuará con ocasión del Semestre Europeo de 2014.

En lo que respecta al trabajo no declarado, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta a la pregunta E-012411/2013.

([1]) http://www.infolibre.es/noticias/politica/2013/09/30/la_dependencia_pierde_mas_000_millones_2014_8186_1012.html
([2]) http://premsa.gencat.cat/pres_fsvp/AppJava/notapremsavw/detall.do?id=212091&idioma=0&departament=1&canal=2
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000198/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Quality family assistance services

Dependency care is one of the main victims of the cuts announced when Spain's national budget for 2014 ([1]) was presented to Congress. The care budget is suffering a 46.7% cut this year, from EUR 2 205 million to EUR 1 176 million. This measure has let down many families who were counting on this financial assistance in order to provide better care for their loved ones. The Catalan government (obliged by law to pay 50% of the dependency subsidy) has for some time now also been paying part of Spain's share. In 2013, the Catalan government paid 80% and the Spanish Government, the remaining 20% ([2]). This places a major economic strain on the Government of Catalonia.

On 30 May 2013, the European Commission published its annual recommendations, adapted for each Member State, on how to come out of the economic crisis ([3]). The Commission emphasised the urgent need for the pending reforms to be approved and effectively implemented in line with an agreed schedule, so that the projected benefits could start to be felt in the country.

One of the Commission's recommendations was that Spain should make the health sector more cost-effective , for example by reducing hospitals' expenditure on drugs and increasing coordination between different types of healthcare, while at the same time maintaining care for vulnerable groups. Dependents are vulnerable. Does the Commission consider that the Spanish Government's failure to comply with the dependency law runs counter to the Commission's recommendations?

The Commission also recommended that Spain should step up the fight against the underground economy and undeclared work. Does the Commission consider that Spain's failure to comply with the law on dependency is an obstacle to being able to follow this recommendation?

Answer given by Mr Rehn on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

A comprehensive regulatory framework is being developed in Spain to increase efficiency and control of healthcare expenditure, in line with the country specific recommendations and the Spanish National Reform Programme. Revising conditions of access to dependency care is an element of the reform package.

While he authorities reduce budgetary outlays on dependency care, some measures facilitating access to health services to the most vulnerable groups in society are foreseen, as for instance outlined in the Spanish National Action Plan of Social Inclusion. A full assessment of compliance with the 2013 country specific recommendations will be made in the context of the 2014 European Semester.

As far as the undeclared work is concerned, the Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to the reply to Question E-012411/2013.

([1]) http://www.infolibre.es/noticias/politica/2013/09/30/la_dependencia_pierde_mas_000_millones_2014_8186_1012.html
([2]) http://premsa.gencat.cat/pres_fsvp/AppJava/notapremsavw/detall.do?id=212091&idioma=0&departament=1&canal=2
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/spain/actualidad-y-prensa/noticias/economia-en-la-union-europea/recomendaciones-espanha_es.htm

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-000199/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de enero de 2014)

Asunto: Pregunta complementaria a la respuesta E-012416/2013

En relación con los créditos fiscales que ha recibido la banca española, la Comisión afirma en su respuesta E-012416/2013 que «existe ayuda estatal únicamente cuando una medida otorga, de hecho o de derecho, una ventaja selectiva a determinadas empresas o a la producción de ciertos bienes. Las medidas fiscales que se aplican legítimamente de forma generalizada no constituyen ayudas estatales. La Comisión no ha recibido ninguna notificación sobre la nueva normativa española».

¿No cree la Comisión que estos créditos fiscales representan una ayuda estatal que distorsiona el mercado único en relación con el resto de las entidades del sector bancario europeo?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(5 de marzo de 2014)

La Comisión Europea no está al corriente de datos que indiquen la existencia de ayudas estatales en la nueva legislación. No obstante, la Comisión analizará toda la información del mercado o de denunciantes que le permita mejorar su evaluación preliminar.

Además, los regímenes tributarios no han sido completamente armonizados en la Unión Europea. Persisten diferencias sustanciales entre los Estados miembros en materia de fiscalidad directa. Por ejemplo, algunos Estados miembros permiten la imputación de las pérdidas declaradas por las empresas a ejercicios fiscales anteriores, mientras que otros no la autorizan. En consecuencia, existe un alto número de impuestos pendientes de pago en los libros de las empresas (y no solo de las bancarias) que operan en esas jurisdicciones, impuestos que se han acumulado en los últimos años debido a la grave crisis económica y financiera.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000199/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Additional question in response to answer E-012416/2013

Regarding the deferred tax assets (DTAs) that the Spanish bank has received, in its answer E-012416/2013 the Commission states that 'there is state aid only where a measure grants, de jure or de facto, a selective advantage to certain undertakings or the production of certain goods. Taxation measures which genuinely apply across the board do not constitute state aid. The Commission has not received a notification on the new legislation in Spain'.

Does the Commission not believe that these DTAs constitute state aid which is distorting the single market in relation to the other institutions in the European banking sector?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

The European Commission is not aware of elements that indicate the existence of state aid in the new legislation. The Commission will however analyse any information from the market and/or complainants that could allow it to refine its preliminary assessment.

Furthermore, national tax systems have not been fully harmonised in the European Union. Material differences still exist among Member States in the field of direct taxation. For instance, some Member States do allow losses declared by companies to be utilised against taxes paid over the past fiscal years (carry-back). Other Member States, however, do not allow for such a possibility. As a result, there is a significant number of outstanding tax claims on the books of companies (not only banks) operating in those jurisdictions that have accumulated over recent years due to the severe financial and economic crisis.

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-000202/14
Komisi
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(10. ledna 2014)

Předmět: Zaručení ochrany duševního vlastnictví při registraci krmných aditiv

Společnosti produkující krmná aditiva pro použití v živočišné výrobě vyjadřují obavy ohledně ochrany svého duševního vlastnictví v souvislosti se schvalovacím procesem svých výrobků na evropské úrovni. Může Evropská komise garantovat, že ve veřejném vědeckém stanovisku agentury EFSA nebo v dokumentaci evropského povolovacího postupu nebudou zveřejněny informace o detailech složení výrobků, které by ohrozily ochranu duševního vlastnictví výrobců? (S ohledem na nařízení EP a Rady č.767/2009 týkající se duševního vlastnictví výrobců krmiv a nařízení EP a Rady č.1831/2003 týkající se premixů zchutňovadel.)

V případě, že Komise nemůže toto riziko vyloučit, hodlá Komise v blízké době přijmout taková opatření, která by umožnila bezpečný schvalovací proces a současně garanci ochrany duševního vlastnictví výrobců?

Odpověď komisaře Borga jménem Komise
(5. března 2014)

Bez ohledu na obecnou ochranu, kterou poskytuje platné právo duševního vlastnictví nebo příslušné právní předpisy týkající se nekalých obchodních praktik, zajišťuje zvláštní formu ochrany údajů, jež předkládají žadatelé, nařízení č. 1831/2003 ([1]).

Za účelem ochrany obchodních a průmyslových informací, včetně informací o výzkumu a vývoji, týkajících se společností, které procházejí schvalovacím procesem v souvislosti s povolením doplňkové látky, zachovává Komise důvěrnost údajů v souladu s článkem 18 nařízení (ES) č. 1831/2003. Příslušná společnost může Komisi požádat, aby zachovala důvěrnost informací obsažených v její vědecké dokumentaci, protože jejich zveřejnění by mohlo významně poškodit postavení společnosti vůči konkurentům.

Článek 20 uvedeného nařízení navíc stanoví, že na vědecké údaje v dokumentaci společnosti předložené za účelem povolení se po dobu deseti let vztahuje ustanovení o ochraně údajů.

A v neposlední řadě, pokud Komise, Evropský úřad pro bezpečnost potravin nebo členské státy obdrží žádost o přístup k dokumentu v jejich držení, který je vlastnictvím společnosti procházející schvalovacím procesem, musí být splněna ustanovení nařízení (ES) č. 1049/2001 ([2]). Orgány zejména odepřou přístup k dokumentu, pokud by jeho zpřístupnění vedlo k porušení ochrany obchodních zájmů fyzické nebo právnické osoby, včetně duševního vlastnictví.

([1]) Nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 1831/2003 ze dne 22. září 2003 o doplňkových látkách používaných ve výživě zvířat, Úř. věst. L 268, 18.10.2003, s. 29.

([2]) Nařízení Evropského parlamentu a Rady (ES) č. 1049/2001 ze dne 30. května 2001 o přístupu veřejnosti k dokumentům Evropského parlamentu, Rady a Komise, Úř. věst. L 145, 31.5.2001, s. 43.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000202/14
to the Commission
Zuzana Roithová (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Intellectual property rights guarantee during registration of feed additives

Companies producing feed additives for use in animal production are expressing concerns regarding the protection of their intellectual property rights during the procedure for approving their products at EU level.

Can the Commission guarantee that public scientific statements released by the EFSA and documents published as part of the European authorisation procedure will not include detailed information on the composition of such products, given that the publication of such information would jeopardise the protection of producers' intellectual property rights (with reference to Regulation No 767/2009 concerning the intellectual property of feed producers and Regulation No 1831/2003 concerning flavouring compounds)?

If the Commission is unable to rule out such a risk, would it be prepared to adopt measures in the near future to facilitate a safe authorisation procedure while at the same time guaranteeing that producers' intellectual property rights are protected?

Answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(5 March 2014)

Irrespective of the general protection granted by the applicable intellectual property rights or by the relevant laws on unfair commercial practices, Regulation No 1831/2003 ([1]) grants a special form of protection to the information submitted by the applicants.

To protect commercial and industrial information, including reasearch and development information of companies undergoing feed additive authorisation, the Commission adopts a confidentiality decision according to Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003. The company may ask the Commission to keep confidential information contained in the scientific file, based on a justification that the disclosure of the information might significantly harm its competitive position.

Furthermore, Article 20 of the abovementioned Regulation foresees that the scientific data contained in a company's authorisation file are granted a 10 year data protection.

Finally, if the Commission, the European Food Safety Authority or the Member States receive a request to access a document in their posession belonging to a company undergoing authorisation procedure, the provisions in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 ([2]) have to be complied with. In particular, the institutions shall refuse access to a document where disclosure would undermine the protection of commercial interests of a natural or legal person, including intellectual property.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition, OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, p. 29-43.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000203/14
an die Kommission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(10. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Straßenmaut

Nach welchen Kriterien und auf welcher rechtlichen Grundlage werden die Mautsysteme von der Kommission untersucht?

Antwort von Herrn Kallas im Namen der Kommission
(24. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission prüft Mautsysteme für Lkw auf der Grundlage der Richtlinie 1999/62/EG ([1]) in der jeweils geltenden Fassung. Die Kriterien betreffen im Wesentlichen die Einhaltung der zentralen Berechnungsgrundsätze, die in Artikel 7e erwähnt und in Anhang III der Richtlinie präzisiert werden. Weitere relevante Kriterien für die Prüfung sind in Kapitel III der Richtlinie festgelegt.

Pkw-Mautsysteme unterliegen dagegen nicht dem EU-Recht. Leitlinien dazu finden sich jedoch in der Mitteilung der Kommission über die Erhebung nationaler Straßenbenutzungsgebühren auf leichte Privatfahrzeuge ([2]).

([1]) Richtlinie 1999/62/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 17. Juni 1999 über die Erhebung von Gebühren für die Benutzung bestimmter Verkehrswege durch schwere Nutzfahrzeug (ABl. L 187 vom 20.7.1999, S. 42).
([2]) KOM(2012)199 endg.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000203/14
to the Commission
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Road tolls

On the basis of what criteria, and on what legal basis, does the Commission scrutinise road toll systems?

Answer given by Mr Kallas on behalf of the Commission
(24 February 2014)

The Commission assesses tolling schemes for trucks on the basis of Directive 1999/62/EC ([1]) as amended. The main criteria on which the assessment is carried out are related to the respect of the core calculation principles, mentioned in Art 7e and set out in Annex III of this directive. Other criteria of relevance for the assessment are laid down in Chapter III of this directive.

As far as the tolling schemes for passenger cars are concerned, these are not governed by any EU-legislation. However the communication from the Commission on the application of national road infrastructure charges levied on light private vehicles ([2]) provides further guidance.

([1]) Directive 1999/62/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 1999 on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, OJ L 187, 20.7.1999, p. 42-50.
([2]) COM(2012)0199 final.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-000204/14
an die Kommission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(10. Januar 2014)

Betrifft: Beihilferecht — Rundfunkgebühren

Die Kommission hat am 27.10.2009 eine revidierte Rundfunkmitteilung veröffentlicht (Mitteilung der Kommission über die Anwendung der Vorschriften über staatliche Beihilfen auf den öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunk, 2009/C-257/01). Diese ersetzt die Mitteilung aus dem Jahr 2001 und trägt den Entwicklungen auf den Märkten und in der Technologie Rechnung. Dabei wurden strengere Regeln zur Rundfunkfinanzierung beschlossen, insbesondere zur Bildung von Rücklagen (Ziffern 73-75 der Rundfunkmitteilung).

Die Kommission zur Ermittlung des Finanzbedarfs der Rundfunkanstalten (KEF) in Deutschland hat Mitte Dezember 2013 empfohlen, die Hälfte der erwarteten Mehreinnahmen von 1 145,9 Mio. EUR für eine Senkung des Rundfunkbeitrags um 73 Cent auf 17,25 EUR monatlich zu verwenden. Als Reaktion darauf forderte der Verwaltungsrat des hessischen Rundfunks, dass die Mehrerträge des neuen Rundfunkbeitrags auf einem Sperrkonto eingefroren werden.

1. Ist die Kommission über die beabsichtigte Sperrung von Rundfunkbeitrags-Mehreinnahmen auf einem separaten Sperrkonto in Deutschland informiert?

2. Ist eine derartige Sperrung von Rundfunkbeitrags-Mehreinnahmen beihilferechtlich durch die Bundesrepublik Deutschland bereits angemeldet und beihilferechtlich geprüft worden?

3. Hat die Kommission beihilferechtliche Bedenken gegen die Sperrung von Rundfunkbeitrags-Mehreinnahmen auf einem separaten Sperrkonto?

Antwort von Herrn Almunia im Namen der Kommission
(19. Februar 2014)

Die Kommission wurde nicht über eine eventuell beabsichtigte Sperrung von Rundfunkbeitrags-Mehreinnahmen auf einem separaten Sperrkonto informiert und hat keine Anmeldung eines solchen Vorhabens erhalten. Daher ist auch keine beihilferechtliche Prüfung einer derartigen Sperrung erfolgt.

Wenn Rundfunkbeitrags-Mehreinnahmen nicht an die öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten, sondern auf ein Sperrkonto gehen, auf das die Rundfunkanstalten keinen Zugriff haben und das nicht in ihren Büchern aufscheint, stellt dies nicht unbedingt einen Vorteil für die Anstalten dar. Ob sich daraus ein Vorteil ergibt, hängt davon ab, unter welchen Bedingungen und von wem das Konto freigegeben werden kann.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000204/14
to the Commission
Nadja Hirsch (ALDE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: State aid law — Radio and television licence fees

On 27 October 2009, the Commission published a revised communication on broadcasting (Communication from the Commission on the application of state aid rules to public service broadcasting, 2009/C 257/01). It replaced the 2001 communication and took market developments and technological developments into account. It also set out stricter broadcasting funding rules, in particular as regards accumulation of reserves (paragraphs 73-75 of the communication on public service broadcasting).

The commission which determines public broadcasters' funding requirements in Germany recommended in mid-December 2013 that half the expected additional revenue of EUR 1 145.9 million should be used to reduce the licence fee by 73 cents to EUR 17.25 per month. In response to that, the management board of Hessischer Rundfunk (the public broadcaster for the federal state of Hessen) called for the additional licence fee revenue to be frozen in a blocked account.

1. Has the Commission been informed about the call for additional licence fee revenue to be frozen in a blocked account in Germany?

2. Has the Federal Republic of Germany already given notification, under state aid rules, of action to freeze additional licence fee revenue, and has that action been scrutinised for compliance with state aid rules?

3. Does the Commission have reservations, in the light of state aid rules, as regards freezing additional licence fee revenue in a blocked account?

Answer given by Mr Almunia on behalf of the Commission
(19 February 2014)

The Commission has not been informed and has not received a notification regarding possible plans to freeze additional licence fee revenue in a blocked account. It has therefore not made an assessment of such a plan under the state aid rules of the Treaty.

License fee revenues which are not awarded to the public service broadcaster but are put in a blocked account that is not accessible to the public service broadcaster and does not appear in its accounts does not necessarily provide an advantage to the public service broadcaster. The presence of an advantage will depend on the conditions under which the account can be unblocked and by whom this may be done.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000206/14
to the Commission
Nicole Sinclaire (NI)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Citizen's initiative

Could the Commission advise me as to how many petitions have been successfully submitted to date under the European Citizens' Initiative?

Also, how many petitions have been submitted and rejected?

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the Commission
(17 February 2014)

By successful submission the Honourable Member can either refer to a) the successful registration of a proposed citizens' initiative by the Commission (cf. Article 4 of the Citizens' Initiative Regulation ([1])) or b) to the submission to the Commission of an initiative which has successfully collected at least one million statements of support and reached the required thresholds in at least seven Member States (cf. Article 9 of the abovementioned Regulation). For detailed explanations on these different procedural stages, please consult the Commission website dedicated to the citizens' initiative:
http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/how-it-works

In both cases, the requested information is published on the Commission's website.

(a) The total number of initiatives registered successfully to date is 21; the successfully registered initiatives can be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/welcome., where they are listed as open, closed, or obsolete initiatives, according to their current status. The total number of initiatives for which registration has been refused to date is 17; the list of refused requests for registration can be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/non-registered;

(b) To date one initiative, which has succeeded in collecting the required number of statements of support, has been submitted to the Commission. It can be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/citizens-initiative/public/initiatives/finalised/submitted

The Commission is currently examining this initiative in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 on the citizens' initiative.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000207/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(10 januari 2014)

Betreft: Uitstootrechten

Als landen moeite hebben om hun Kyotonormen te halen, essentieel om de EU 2020-normen te halen, kunnen ze via een (controversieel) achterpoortje schone lucht in het buitenland aankopen door investeringen te doen in groene projecten. Zo kunnen industrielanden die worstelen met de norm investeren in bijvoorbeeld ontwikkelingslanden die minder middelen hebben om te investeren in dure, innovatieve milieuvriendelijke technologie. België benadrukt dat die emissiehandel essentieel is om de Europese klimaatdoelstellingen, die onlangs nog verstrengd zijn voor 2030, te halen.

In België is het echter gebleken dat het systeem ontspoord is, en dat Vlaanderen bijvoorbeeld 52 % van zijn totale uitstoot verantwoordt via klimaathandel, en dus zelf (amper) klimaatinvesteringen doet.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Heeft de Commissie een overzicht in percentages of nominale bedragen van hoeveel schone lucht de verschillende lidstaten aankopen in het buitenland?

2. Zijn daarover cijfers beschikbaar voor België?

Antwoord van mevrouw Hedegaard namens de Commissie
(28 februari 2014)

Netto-overnames van Kyoto-eenheden door de Partijen bij het Kyotoprotocol worden openbaar gemaakt in tabellen in het zogenaamde standaard elektronisch formaat („Standard Electronic Format" of SEF) die elk jaar, samen met de broeikasgasinventarissen, door de Partijen worden gerapporteerd. De tabellen voor 2013, met inbegrip van die voor België, zijn gepubliceerd op de website van het UNFCCC:
http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/national_inventories_submissions/items/7383.php

Voor de gevraagde informatie doet tabel 2a het meest ter zake. Aankopen worden „toevoegingen" genoemd overeenkomstig het Kyotoprotocol. Deze tabel bevat ook een samenvatting van eenheden die een Partij heeft afgeboekt (d.w.z. gebruikt om aan de voorschriften te voldoen).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000207/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Emission permits

If countries have difficulty in complying with their Kyoto targets, which are essential in order to attain the EU 2020 targets, they can buy clean air abroad via an — albeit controversial — alternative compliance scheme, by investing in green projects. Industrialised countries which find compliance difficult can, for example, invest in developing countries which have less resources to invest in expensive, innovative, environmentally sound technology. Belgium stresses that such emissions trading is essential in order to attain Europe's climate targets, which were recently further stepped up for 2013.

However, in Belgium it has become apparent that the system has been derailed, and that Flanders for instance is accounting for 52% of its total emissions by means of emissions trading, which means that Flanders itself is hardly investing in measures to prevent global warming.

1. Does the Commission have an overview, in percentages or absolute terms, of the quantities of clean air that the various Member States are buying abroad?

2. Are such figures available for Belgium?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(28 February 2014)

Net acquisitions of Kyoto units by Parties to the Kyoto Protocol are made public in the so-called Standard Electronic Format (SEF) tables which are reported along with the greenhouse gas inventories by Parties every year. The 2013 tables published on the UNFCCC website, including the ones on Belgium, can be found at:
http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/national_inventories_submissions/items/7383.php

For the information requested, Table 2a is the most relevant. Purchases are called 'additions' in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol. This table also includes a summary of units that a Party has retired (i.e. used for compliance).

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-000209/14
aan de Commissie
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(10 januari 2014)

Betreft: Filmlabel „Kinderen niet toegelaten" nodig op Europees niveau

Wanneer een film gelanceerd wordt in de EU, wordt hij afzonderlijk gescreend door de lidstaten of die film geschikt is voor kinderen. De regels hiervoor worden echter bepaald per land. Zo bepaalt in België de keuringscommissie of een film al dan niet toegelaten is voor 16-jarigen op basis van een wet uit 1920, is dat in Nederland een bevoegdheid van de Kijkwijzer en bestaat er in Tsjechië bijvoorbeeld geen wetgeving over. Een harmonisering zou eventueel een oplossing kunnen zijn, zodat een film maar één keer gescreend hoeft te worden. Dit lijkt eenvoudiger voor de distributeurs, de filmindustrie en de lidstaten zelf.

Vandaar de volgende vragen:

1. Erkent de Commissie dit probleem?

2. Plant de Commissie enige harmonisering op Europees niveau zodat een film maar één keer gescreend hoeft te worden in plaats van 28 keer?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(3 maart 2014)

De bescherming van minderjarigen door middel van filmkeuring en leeftijdsgebonden beperkingen is in de eerste plaats een bevoegdheid van de lidstaten. Elk land beschikt over een filmclassificatiesysteem dat voldoet aan de eigen wetgeving. Leeftijdsclassificatie weerspiegelt verschillende culturele gevoeligheden en is daardoor moeilijk te harmoniseren. De lidstaten zijn het feitelijk niet eens over het nut en de haalbaarheid van mediaonafhankelijke en/of Europese classificatiesystemen voor inhoud ([1]).

De Commissie is zich bewust van de nieuwe uitdagingen ten aanzien van de bescherming van minderjarigen die voortvloeien uit ontwikkelingen op het gebied van audiovisuele en onlinediensten. In dat verband dient erop te worden gewezen dat de richtlijn audiovisuele mediadiensten ([2]) bepalingen inzake de bescherming van minderjarigen omvat, die van toepassing zijn op diensten op aanvraag.

In het kader van de CEO-coalitie ([3]) werken topbedrijven uit de technologie- en mediabranche aan oplossingen op vijf concrete gebieden, waaronder de uitbreiding van het gebruik van inhoudsbeoordelingssystemen en leeftijdsclassificatie.

([1]) Verslag van de Commissie over de toepassing van de aanbevelingen inzake de bescherming van minderjarigen: http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/minors/rec/ 2011_report/ index_en.htm

([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:NL:PDF

([3]) De in december 2011 opgerichte CEO-coalitie is een vrijwillig samenwerkingsverband dat erop gericht is internet veiliger voor kinderen te maken: https://ec.europa.eu/ digital-agenda/node/61973

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000209/14
to the Commission
Philippe De Backer (ALDE)
(10 January 2014)

Subject: Need for an 'unsuitable for children' film classification at European level

When a film is launched in the EU, it is screened separately by the Member States to ascertain whether it is suitable for children. However, the rules governing this are determined by each country separately. In Belgium, for example, the Film Classification Board decides whether or not a film is suitable for 16-year-olds on the basis of a law dating from 1920; its Dutch counterpart is the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of TV, Videos and Games, while in the Czech Republic for example there are no laws on the subject. Harmonisation might be one solution, so that a film would only have to be classified once. This would surely be simpler for distributors, the film industry and the Member States themselves.

1. Does the Commission acknowledge this problem?

2. Is the Commission planning any harmonisation at European level, so that films only have to be classified once rather than 28 times?

Answer given by Ms Kroes on behalf of the Commission
(3 March 2014)

Insofar as age ratings and film restrictions are concerned, the primary responsibility for protection of minors falls under the competence of the Member States. Each country has its own system of ratings in accordance with its own law. Age ratings reflect different cultural sensitivities and as such are difficult to harmonise. In fact, there is no consensus among Member States as to the helpfulness and feasibility of cross-media and/or pan-European classification systems for media content ([1]).

The Commission is conscious of the new challenges for the protection of minors that are linked to the developments taking place in the field of audiovisual and online services. It is worth mentioning that the AVMS Directive ([2]) includes provisions on protection of minors applicable to on-demand services.

Through the work of the CEO Coalition ([3]), top technology and media companies are currently engaged in working towards better solutions on 5 concrete areas, including wider use of content classification systems and age-rating.

([1]) Commission report on the application of the recommendations on the protection of Minors, http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/reg/minors/rec/2011_report/index_en.htm
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:095:0001:0024:EN:PDF
([3]) The CEO coalition, launched in December 2011, is a cooperative voluntary intervention designed to make the Internet a safer place for kids: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/61973