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 377/01)

Treść Strona

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004316/14
alla Commissione
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Limitazioni della capacità delle armi

Il governo italiano, con il decreto legislativo n. 121 del 29 settembre 2013 di recepimento della direttiva 2008/51/CE, ha recentemente stabilito ulteriori limitazioni al possesso, all'introduzione e alla commercializzazione legale di armi da fuoco comuni. In particolare, l'articolo 2, lettera a), comma I, sancisce ora il limite di capacità a 15 colpi per le armi corte, 5 colpi per quelle lunghe e 10 colpi per le repliche storiche; questi limiti si applicano anche alle armi in cui i colpi sono alloggiati in un serbatoio facente parte integrante dell'arma stessa, fatto questo che rende tali modifiche, che devono essere permanenti, particolarmente onerose e, in molti casi, tecnicamente impossibili.

I nuovi limiti stabiliti dal decreto legislativo n. 121/2013 comportano maggiori oneri per i fabbricanti, i quali, per continuare a operare nel mercato, dovranno attuare costosi adeguamenti per prevedere una linea di produzione esclusivamente indirizzata al mercato italiano, differente da quella per il resto dei mercati europei, implicando in alcuni casi la possibile uscita dal mercato di importanti operatori di settore non in grado o non intenzionati a sostenere tali costi per un mercato ridotto ad un solo paese.

Alla luce di quanto in precedenza esposto, può la Commissione far sapere se:

1. ritiene che tale limite imposto unilateralmente dall'Italia possa rappresentare un ostacolo al principio di libera circolazione delle merci?

2. ritiene che tale ulteriore classificazione vada contro il principio della creazione di standard comuni per la classificazione delle armi da fuoco?

3. può esso rappresentare una discriminazione nei confronti degli utilizzatori di armi in Italia rispetto agli altri Stati?

Risposta di Antonio Tajani a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

La direttiva 91/477/CEE relativa al controllo dell'acquisizione e della detenzione di armi, quale modificata dalla direttiva 2008/51/CE (la cosiddetta direttiva sulle armi da fuoco), stabilisce quali armi da fuoco possano essere immesse, acquistate e detenute legalmente nel mercato della UE. La direttiva armi da fuoco si limita tuttavia, riguardo all'immissione sul mercato, all'acquisto e alla detenzione di armi da fuoco nella UE, a fissare un minimo di regole e norme comuni. L'articolo 3 della direttiva stabilisce che gli Stati membri possono adottare nella loro legislazione nazionale norme più severe. Questa discrezionalità rispecchia il carattere della direttiva, che non cerca l'armonizzazione totale delle norme quanto la fissazione di un livello minimo di sicurezza per la circolazione all'interno dell'Unione delle armi da fuoco.

Spetta pertanto al governo italiano introdurre norme più severe sulla delimitazione delle varie categorie di armi da fuoco che possono essere commercializzate sul mercato italiano. Le misure nazioni di questo tipo devono tuttavia soddisfare le norme UE sulla libera circolazione delle merci, stabilite dagli articoli da 34 a 36 del TFUE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004316/14
to the Commission
Lara Comi (PPE)
(7 April 2014)

Subject: Limiting the capacity of firearms

Through Legislative Decree No 121 of 29 September 2013 transposing Directive 2008/51/EC, the Italian Government has recently introduced further restrictions on owning, bringing into the country and legally trading in ordinary firearms. In particular, Article 2(a)(I) now limits the capacity of short firearms to 15 shots, long firearms to five shots and historical replicas to 10 shots. These limits also apply to firearms in which the rounds are contained in a magazine that forms an integral part of the weapon itself, making the modifications, which must be permanent, particularly costly and in many cases technically impossible.

The new limits laid down by Legislative Decree No 121/2013 impose additional burdens on manufacturers. To continue to operate in the market, they will have to make expensive changes to create a separate production line just for the Italian market, as it differs from the other European markets. In some cases, major operators in the sector may decide to stop selling in Italy if they are unable or unwilling to bear those costs in order to remain in a market limited to a single country.

1. Does the Commission believe that the limits imposed unilaterally by Italy may run counter to the principle of the free movement of goods?

2. Does it believe that the abovementioned additional classification goes against the principle of creating common standards for the classification of firearms?

3. Might that constitute discrimination against firearms users in Italy compared with those in other Member States?

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

Directive 91/477/EEC on the control of the acquisition and possession of weapons as amended by Directive 2008/51/EC (the so-called Firearms Directive) defines which firearms can be legally put on the market, traded and owned in the EU. However, the Firearms Directive sets common minimum standards and rules regarding the placing on the market, acquisition and possession of weapons in the EU. The directive's Article 3 stipulates that Member States may adopt more stringent rules in their national legislation. This discretion reflects the character of the directive, which does not attempt full harmonisation of rules, but rather provides a minimum level of safety for the intra-EU movement of firearms.

Thus, it is at the discretion of the Italian authorities to introduce more stringent rules concerning the limits on or categories of firearms to be placed on the Italian market. However, such national measures must comply with the EU rules on the free movement of goods set by the articles 34-36 TFEU.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004317/14
à la Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(7 avril 2014)

Objet: Modèle social européen et réponse à la crise

Depuis le début de la crise financière en 2007, la priorité des États membres s'est focalisée sur le sauvetage des banques, la création de l'Union bancaire et la signature de plusieurs traités et accords indiquant les lignes politiques «austéritaires» qui ont des effets catastrophiques en matière de chômage (26 millions de personnes dans l'Union européenne), de pauvreté — dont une augmentation sans précédent de la pauvreté enfantine en Europe avec un enfant sur cinq qui vit en situation de pauvreté, d'exclusion et d'inégalités sociales en tous genres.

L'OIT a signalé que la mise en place d'un vrai modèle social européen serait la solution à la crise sévère que subissent des millions de personnes. L'Europe sociale est établie dans les traités et dans la Charte des droits fondamentaux mais il semblerait que, pour qu'elle soit effectivement appliquée, il faut avoir recours à la Cour de justice de l'Union afin de faire valoir les droits des citoyens en matière d'emploi et de droits sociaux.

1. Quel est le modèle social européen que prône la Commission?

2. La Commission est-elle prête à se battre, dans son modèle social européen, pour un salaire minimum européen, une retraite minimum européenne, une rente basique européenne?

3. La sortie de la crise passant par la création d'emplois, quelles mesures ont été prises par la Commission pour en finir avec la compétitivité vers le bas des salaires et avec la dégradation des relations dans le milieu de l'emploi?

4. La Commission va-t-elle faire des propositions en matière de salaire, de retraite et de rente basique minimums européens?

Réponse donnée par M. Andor au nom de la Commission
(12 mai 2014)

1. Le modèle social européen se fonde sur la conviction que le progrès économique et le progrès social sont indissociables. Le principe est consacré dans les traités de l'UE, y compris la Charte des droits fondamentaux, qui établissent notamment que les politiques doivent prendre en compte les exigences liées à la promotion d'un niveau d'emploi élevé, à la garantie d'une protection sociale adéquate, à la lutte contre l'exclusion sociale ainsi qu'à un niveau élevé d'éducation, de formation et de protection de la santé humaine ([1]). En outre, l'Union reconnaît et promeut le rôle des partenaires sociaux ([2]).

2. La promotion d'un revenu adéquat fait partie des stratégies intégrées d'inclusion active ([3]), de même que les mesures inclusives en faveur du marché de l'emploi et l'accès à des services de soutien. Le paquet «Investissements sociaux» ([4]) présente une analyse détaillée sur la mise en œuvre des stratégies d'inclusion active dans les États membres.

3. Le paquet «Emploi» de la Commission en faveur d'une relance génératrice d'emplois ([5]) a appelé à garantir des rémunérations décentes et viables et à éviter les pièges des bas salaires. Tout en reconnaissant que la fixation des salaires relève de la compétence des États membres et, dans de nombreux cas, des partenaires sociaux, il a rappelé que la fixation de salaires minimaux adaptés peut aider à prévenir une augmentation du nombre de travailleurs pauvres et peut constituer également un moyen efficace de préserver la demande.

4. La Commission met actuellement en œuvre un projet pilote d'un million d'euros ([6]) visant à soutenir la création d'un réseau sur le revenu minimum. Elle a également commencé à élaborer, en concertation avec les États membres, une méthodologie commune sur les budgets de référence, comme elle l'avait annoncé dans le paquet «Investissements sociaux». Les budgets de référence ([7]) peuvent servir d'étalon pour les régimes de revenu minimum.

([1]) Article 9 du TFUE.
([2]) Article 152 du TFUE.
([3]) 2008/867/CE.
([4]) Paquet «Investissements sociaux», COM(2013) 83.
([5]) COM(2012) 173 final.
([6]) 2011.
([7]) Paniers de consommation minimale.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004317/14
to the Commission
Patrick Le Hyaric (GUE/NGL)
(7 April 2014)

Subject: European social model and response to the crisis

Since the very beginning of the financial crisis in 2007, Member States have focused primarily on bailing out banks, establishing the banking union and signing various agreements and treaties which imposed austerity policies and have given rise to catastrophic levels of unemployment (26 million people in the European Union), poverty (an unprecedented explosion in child poverty in Europe means that one in five children now lives below the poverty line) and social exclusion and inequality of every kind.

The ILO says that this very severe crisis, which is affecting millions of people, could be dealt with by implementing a real European social model. Although the concept of 'social Europe' is enshrined in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, it seems that employment and social rights can now only be asserted by bringing an action before the European Court of Justice.

1. What European social model does the Commission advocate?

2. Is the Commission prepared to fight for a European minimum wage, a European minimum pension and a European minimum income as part of its social model?

3. Given that jobs must be created in order to lift the EU out of crisis, what steps has the Commission taken to tackle the issues of the race to the bottom in the area of wages and ever worsening industrial relations?

4. Will the Commission put forward proposals concerning a European minimum wage, pension and income?

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

1. The European social model is based on the conviction that economic progress and social progress are inseparable. The principle is enshrined in the EU Treaties, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, notably in stating that policies shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, the guarantee of adequate social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health. ([1]) The Union also recognises and promotes the role of the social partners. ([2])

2. Promoting adequate income is part of integrated active inclusion strategies, ([3]) together with inclusive labour market measures and access to enabling services. The Social Investment Package (SIP) ([4]) presents a detailed analysis on how Member States implemented active inclusion strategies.

3. The Commission's Employment Package for a job-rich recovery ([5]) called for decent and sustainable wages and avoiding low-wage traps. While recognising that wage setting is a competence of Member States, and in many cases social partners, it recalled that setting minimum wages at appropriate levels can help prevent growing in-work poverty while it can also be an effective means to uphold demand.

4. The Commission is implementing a Pilot Project of 1 M EUR ([6]) to promote the creation of a minimum income network. It has also started to develop, together with the Member States, a common methodology on reference budgets as announced in the SIP. Reference budgets ([7]) can serve as a benchmark for minimum income schemes.

([1]) Article 9 TFEU.
([2]) Article 152 TFEU.
([3]) 2008/867/EC.
([4]) Social Investment Package COM(2013) 83.
([5]) COM(2012)173.
([6]) 2011.
([7]) Minimum consumption baskets.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004318/14
aan de Commissie
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(7 april 2014)

Betreft: Herziening van verordeningen inzake biologische productie: kasteelt

Voor de producenten is een gelijk speelveld in de EU van het grootste belang. Verschillen in de toepassing en uitleg van het EU-recht in de lidstaten kunnen oneerlijke concurrentie tot gevolg hebben.

In 2009 heeft de Commissie de Groep van deskundigen voor technisch advies over de biologische productie (EGTOP) ingesteld, om haar van advies te dienen over diverse onderwerpen, waaronder de biologische teelt in kassen. De Subgroep kasteelt binnen EGTOP heeft in september 2013 een rapport uitgebracht, dat door DG AGRI in aanmerking wordt genomen bij de opstelling van wetgevingsvoorstellen ter uitvoering van Verordening (EG) nr. 889/2008 alsook met het oog op de herziening van Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007.

Er komen steeds meer hydrocultuursystemen op de markt die gebaseerd zijn op plantenvezelsubstraat en verkocht worden in modulaire, vooraf verpakte eenheden. Afgezien van de samenstelling van het substraatmateriaal berusten deze systemen op dezelfde beginselen als de materialen die in artikel 2, onder g), van Verordening (EG) nr. 889/2008 vermeld staan.

1. Beschouwt de Commissie de teelt op plantenvezelsubstraat als substraatteelt? Is de Commissie bereid een aanpassing van artikel 2, onder g), in overweging te nemen om duidelijk te maken dat plantenvezelsubstraten onder de definitie van substraatteelt vallen?

In een aantal lidstaten staan de nationale autoriteiten het gebruik van „afgebakende bedden" in de biologische kasteelt toe, die een uitzondering vormen op het beginsel van de bodemgebonden teelt. EGTOP doet in zijn eindverslag over de kasteelt de aanbeveling dat de uitzondering voor bestaande praktijken wordt gehandhaafd, maar dat een verdere uitbreiding van dergelijke systemen in de biologische teelt in deze of andere lidstaten wordt verboden. Artikel 22, lid 2, van Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 bepaalt duidelijk dat uitzonderingen op de algemene productievoorschriften „tot een minimum beperkt [blijven]" en „in voorkomend geval van beperkte duur [zijn]".

2. Overweegt de Commissie de vaststelling van een einddatum voor de uitzondering voor biologische productie in afgebakende bedden?

3. Indien een specifieke uitzondering voor afgebakende bedden wordt aanvaard, hoe wil de Commissie dan zorgen voor transparantie en consumentenvertrouwen?

4. Erkent de Commissie een categorie tussen biologisch en niet-biologisch?

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

Plantenvezels kunnen in de landbouw worden gebruikt als bodemverbeteraar of als meststof die door de bodem wordt opgenomen. Een andere mogelijkheid is het gebruik ervan als substraat waarop gewassen worden geteeld, geïrrigeerd en bemest.

Terwijl de eerste gebruiksmogelijkheid verenigbaar is met de biologische landbouw ([1]), is de Commissie van mening dat de tweede tot een niet-bodemteelt leidt, aangezien gewassen niet direct in de bodem worden geteeld. Dit zorgt voor twijfel over de verenigbaarheid van een dergelijk systeem met de principes van grondgebonden gewasteelt ([2]) en met het hoofdzakelijk toedienen van voedingsstoffen aan planten via het bodemecosysteem ([3]). In feite heeft de EGTOP dit standpunt reeds bevestigd in haar verslag over kasteelt van 2012 ([4]), toen zij concludeerde dat „geoogste biologische groenten of fruit afkomstig moeten zijn van bodem- en niet van substraatteelten".

([1]) Bijlage II bij Verordening (EG) nr. 889/2008 van de Commissie van 5 september 2008 tot vaststelling van bepalingen ter uitvoering van Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 van de Raad inzake de biologische productie en de etikettering van biologische producten, wat de biologische productie, de etikettering en de controle betreft, PB L 250 van 18.9.2008.

([2]) Artikel 4, onder a), punt ii), van Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 van de Raad van 28 juni 2007 inzake de biologische productie en de etikettering van biologische producten en tot intrekking van Verordening (EEG) nr. 2092/91 (PB L 189 van 20.7.2007).

([3]) Artikel 5, onder a), van Verordening (EG) nr. 834/2007 van de Raad van 28 juni 2007 inzake de biologische productie en de etikettering van biologische producten en tot intrekking van Verordening (EEG) nr. 2092/91 (PB L 189 van 20.7.2007).

([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/final-reports/final_report_egtop_on_greenhouse_production_en.pdf

De Commissie buigt zich momenteel over de vraag op welke manier de kwestie van de afgebakende bedden het beste kan worden aangepakt. Het behoud van het producenten- en consumentenvertrouwen in de biologische landbouw is één van de criteria waarmee rekening zal worden gehouden bij het selecteren van de meest geschikte optie.

Het is de Commissie bekend dat er naast de biologische landbouw nog andere productiesystemen bestaan die tot een duurzamere landbouw willen bijdragen, zoals geïntegreerde landbouw of op bodembehoud gerichte landbouw. Sommige ervan worden door nationale autoriteiten of privé-instellingen gecertificeerd. De biologische landbouw is echter het enige systeem waarvoor op EU-niveau een brede en veeleisende regelgeving is vastgesteld.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004318/14
to the Commission
Esther de Lange (PPE)
(7 April 2014)

Subject: Revision of regulations on organic production: greenhouse production

A level playing field within the EU is of the utmost importance to producers. Differences in the use and explanation of EC law in Member States may cause unfair competition.

In 2009 the Commission established the Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) in order to receive advice on several issues, including organic production of crops in greenhouses. The EGTOP Subgroup on Glasshouse Production published a report in September 2013 and DG AGRI is taking it into consideration both for preparing the legislative proposals to implement Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 and for the revision of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

Hydroponic systems based on plant fibre substrates are becoming increasingly available on the market, sold in modular, pre-packaged formats. Except for the composition of the substrate material, these systems are based on the same principles as those of the materials mentioned in Article 2(g) of Regulation (EC) No 889/2008.

1. Does the Commission consider production on plant fibre substrates to be hydroponic? Would the Commission consider rephrasing Article 2(g) in order to clarify that plant fibre substrates are included in the definition of hydroponic systems?

In a number of Member States, national authorities allow the use of 'demarcated beds' in organic greenhouse production, as an exception to the principle of soil-based production. In its Final Report on Greenhouse Production, EGTOP recommends maintaining this exception for existing practices but prohibiting further expansion of such systems within organic production in these or other Member States. Article 22.2 of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 clarifies that exceptions to the general production rules 'shall be kept to a minimum and, where appropriate, limited in time'.

2. Is the Commission considering putting a time limit on the exception for organic production in demarcated beds?

3. If a specific exception for demarcated beds is accepted, how does the Commission plan to ensure transparency and consumer confidence?

4. Does the Commission recognise a category in between organic and non-organic?

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

Plant fibre materials may be used in agriculture as soil amendment or fertiliser to be incorporated in soil. They could also be used as substrate in which crops are grown, irrigated and fertilised.

While the first type of use may be authorised in organic production ([1]), the Commission considers that the second type of use leads to the establishment of an out of soil system since crops are not grown directly in the soil. This would put into question the compatibility of such a system with the principles of land-related crop cultivation ([2]) and of nourishing plants primarily through the soil ecosystem ([3]). EGTOP has actually confirmed this view in its 2012 report on greenhouse production ([4]) when it concluded that 'harvested organic vegetables or fruits should come from plants grown in the soil, and not from substrate cultures.'

The Commission is currently reflecting on different options to address the issue of demarcated beds. Maintaining producers' and consumers' confidence in the organic scheme is one of the criteria that will be taken into account to select the most appropriate option.

([1]) Annex II to Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 of 5.9.2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control (OJ L 250, 18.9.2008).
([2]) Article 4(a)(ii) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28.6.2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007).
([3]) Article 5(a) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28.6.2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 (OJ L 189, 20.7.2007).
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-policy/expert-advice/documents/final-reports/final_report_egtop_on_greenhouse_production_en.pdf

Apart from organic farming, the Commission is aware of various production systems aiming at enhancing the sustainability of agricultural production, such as integrated production or conservation agriculture. Some may be certified under national or private schemes. However, organic production is the only system for which a comprehensive and demanding set of rules have been adopted at EU level.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004319/14
alla Commissione
Mario Pirillo (S&D)
(7 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Licenziamenti dipendenti Calabria IT

Premesso che:

— Calabria IT è una società in house della Regione Calabria e che tra le sue attività svolge anche la funzione di organismo intermediario dei Programmi Operativi Regionali finanziati con risorse comunitarie, nazionali e/o regionali, volti al rafforzamento del sistema economico e territoriale regionale (FESR, FSE, FEAOG, ecc.);

— Calabria IT è una società partecipata da Fincalabra S.p.A., società quest'ultima a capitale pubblico, interamente partecipata dalla Regione Calabria, che concorre all'attuazione delle politiche di sviluppo attraverso la gestione ed attuazione di fondi regionali e/o comunitari finalizzati a promuovere e sostenere, sul territorio, la creazione e lo sviluppo di iniziative imprenditoriali;

— Fincalabra Spa ha messo in liquidazione la società Calabria IT, che occupa 130 persone, in assenza di un vero piano di recupero e che a tutti i dipendenti sono state recapitate le lettere di licenziamento;

— la legge regionale n. 24 del 16 maggio 2013 sul riordino di enti, aziende e società regionali imponeva a Fincalabra S.p.A. il riassorbimento del personale di Calabria IT;

ciò premesso si chiede alla Commissione:

se il licenziamento avviato nei confronti dei 130 lavoratori in mancanza di un accordo sindacale non sia in palese violazione della direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi, in particolare in relazione all'articolo 2: «Quando il datore di lavoro prevede di effettuare licenziamenti collettivi, deve procedere in tempo utile a consultazioni con i rappresentanti dei lavoratori al fine di giungere ad un accordo».

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

La Commissione non è in grado di valutare i fatti o di stabilire se un datore di lavoro abbia rispettato o no disposizioni nazionali che attuano una direttiva dell'UE. Spetta alle autorità nazionali competenti, quali i tribunali, garantire la corretta ed efficace applicazione, da parte del datore di lavoro, della normativa nazionale di recepimento delle direttive dell'UE cui l'onorevole parlamentare fa riferimento ([1]), tenendo conto delle circostanze specifiche di ciascun caso.

([1]) Direttiva 98/59/CE del Consiglio, del 20 luglio 1998, concernente il ravvicinamento delle legislazioni degli Stati membri in materia di licenziamenti collettivi.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004319/14
to the Commission
Mario Pirillo (S&D)
(7 April 2014)

Subject: Redundancies at Calabria IT

Calabria IT is an in-house company of Calabria Region. Its work includes acting as an intermediary body for Regional Operational Programmes financed with EU, national and/or regional money, which are designed to strengthen the region economically and territorially (ERDF, ESF, EAGGF, etc.).

Calabria IT is a subsidiary of Fincalabra S.p.A., a public limited company entirely owned by Calabria Region, which contributes to the implementation of development policy by managing and investing regional and/or EU funds aimed at promoting and supporting the creation and development of business initiatives in the region.

Fincalabra S.p.A. has put Calabria IT, which employs 130 people, into liquidation without a real recovery plan, and all its employees have been sent redundancy notices.

Regional Law No 24 of 16 May 2013 on the reorganisation of regional entities, businesses and companies requires Fincalabra S.p.A. to absorb the staff of Calabria IT.

Can the Commission say whether the 130 redundancies made without a trade union agreement are in clear breach of Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, and Article 2 in particular: 'Where an employer is contemplating collective redundancies, he shall begin consultations with the workers' representatives in good time with a view to reaching an agreement'?

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

The Commission is not in a position to assess the facts or state whether an employer has or has not complied with any national provisions which serve to implement EU directives. It is for the competent national authorities, including the courts, to ensure that the national legislation transposing the EU Directive to which the Honourable Member refers ([1]), is correctly and effectively applied by the employer concerned, having regard to the specific circumstances of the case.

([1]) Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies, OJ L 225, 12.8.1998.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004320/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Inversiones extranjeras en agricultura y el caso Agrogeba

A través de varios artículos aparecidos en distintos medios de comunicación ([1]) ([2]) ([3]) ([4]), sobre la base de un informe elaborado por una ONGD española ([5]), hemos conocido los graves impactos sobre la población que está teniendo la inversión de la empresa española Agrogeba, productora de arroz, a saber: más de 600 personas expulsadas de sus tierras, explotación laboral, aumento de la desnutrición o incremento de los casos de malaria.

En dichos artículos se recoge la posibilidad expuesta por la Delegación de la Comisión Europea en Guinea-Bisáu a los responsables de la empresa Agrogeba de apoyar específicamente a esta empresa con un proyecto de apoyo al desarrollo agrícola en Guinea-Bisáu (por importe de 10 millones de euros). Este apoyo financiero facilitaría la extensión de su explotación y, por tanto, de los posibles efectos negativos sobre la población.

A este respecto, ¿cuáles son los argumentos en los que se ha basado la Delegación de la Unión Europea ante la República de Guinea-Bisáu para contemplar la inversión de la empresa Agrogeba como buena praxis técnica, social y ambiental exportable a otras comunidades agrícolas de Guinea-Bisáu? ¿Qué mecanismos de seguimiento y control de los posibles efectos negativos derivados de las inversiones empresariales sobre los medios de vida de las comunidades se prevé poner en práctica?

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

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a las respuestas a las preguntas escritas E-990/2014 y E-991/2014.

Como se concluye en las respuestas anteriores, la UE se ha comprometido a ayudar al pueblo de Guinea-Bisáu y ha apoyado el respeto de los derechos humanos, en particular las normas medioambientales y laborales internacionales, así como la prestación de servicios sanitarios y la seguridad alimentaria.

En este contexto, el proyecto AINDA (*Actions Intégrées en Nutrition et Développement Agricole*) se está aplicando desde febrero de 2014, por un importe de 10,4 millones EUR. Este proyecto tiene por objeto obtener un análisis preciso de la situación en materia de seguridad alimentaria y nutricional en Guinea-Bisáu, así como crear un sistema para prestar apoyo a las personas más afectadas por la inseguridad alimentaria y reforzar las cadenas de valor agrícolas a fin de aumentar el acceso a los alimentos y promover un crecimiento económico integrador.

En este marco, no se ha previsto una cooperación directa con la empresa española Agrogeba, y no existe ninguna propuesta de contrato de la Delegación de la UE con Agrogeba. Sin embargo, se realizará un estudio sobre la cadena de valor de la producción de arroz y, por tanto, en la zona en que opera Agrogeba. Este estudio deberá establecer un inventario de todas las partes interesadas de la cadena de valor (proveedores de insumos, productores, comerciantes, transformadores, distribuidores y prestadores de servicios), incluidas sus estrategias e interacciones (comunicación, intercambio de información, normas, contratos y relaciones de poder). Si se confirman las alegaciones de apropiación de tierras, la UE planteará la cuestión ante las autoridades recientemente elegidas de Guinea-Bisáu.

Por último, la Delegación de la UE en Bisáu está participando en la recientemente creada Comisión Nacional para la Revisión de la Legislación sobre la Tierra, y, por tanto, seguirá de cerca todas las cuestiones relacionadas con la supuesta apropiación de tierras.

([1]) http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/02/20/planeta_futuro/1392920428_268776.html
([2]) http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140227/abci-guinea-bissau-arroz-201402261705.html
([3]) http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/expulsado-Guinea-Bissau-Susana-Hidalgo_0_222228021.html
([4]) http://periodismohumano.com/temas/agrogeba
([5]) http://www.alianzaporlasolidaridad.org/publicaciones/marca-espana-inversiones-espanolas-que-generan-pobreza

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004320/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Foreign investment in agriculture and the case of Agrogeba

Various articles published in the media ([1]) ([2]) ([3]) ([4]) and based on a report by a Spanish NGDO ([5]) have drawn attention to the grave impact of investment by the Spanish rice producer Agrogeba on the local population, namely: over 600 people expelled from their land, labour exploitation, increased malnutrition and an increased number of cases of malaria.

The articles refer to the proposal made by the Commission Delegation in Guinea-Bissau to representatives from Agrogeba that it support their company, specifically, with an agricultural development support project in Guinea-Bissau (to the value of EUR 10 million). This financial backing would facilitate extension of the area farmed and, therefore, of the possible adverse effects on the population.

On the basis of what arguments does the EU Delegation to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau consider investment by Agrogeba to be a good technical, social and environmental practice which could be exported to other rural communities in Guinea-Bissau?

What mechanisms does it plan to implement to monitor and control the possible adverse effects of corporate investment on the livelihood of local communities?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to the answers to written questions E-990/2014 and E-991/2014.

As concluded in those previous answers, the EU is committed to helping the people of Guinea Bissau and has been supporting the respect of human rights, including international labour and environmental standards, as well as health service delivery and food security.

In this respect, the project AINDA (Actions Intégrées en Nutrition et Développement Agricole) is being implemented since February 2014 for EUR 10.4 million. This project aims to obtain an accurate analysis of the food and nutrition security situation in Guinea Bissau and to set up a system to provide support to the most food-insecure people, as well as to scale up agricultural value chains to increase access to food and to promote inclusive economic growth.

In this framework, there is no direct cooperation planned with the Spanish company Agrogeba and no contract proposal exists from the EU Delegation to Agrogeba. However, a study will be launched on the rice production value chain and thus in the area Agrogeba is operating in. This study will establish a mapping of all stakeholders in the value chain (input suppliers, producers, traders, processors, distributors, service providers), including their strategies and interactions (communication, information exchange, regulations, contracts, power relationships). If the allegations of land grabbing are confirmed, the EU will raise the issue with newly elected authorities in Guinea Bissau.

Finally, the EU Delegation in Bissau is participating in the recently created National Commission for the Revision of the Law of the Land, and will thus follow up closely on all issues linked to any alleged land grabbing.

([1]) http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/02/20/planeta_futuro/1392920428_268776.html
([2]) http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140227/abci-guinea-bissau-arroz-201402261705.html
([3]) http://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/expulsado-Guinea-Bissau-Susana-Hidalgo_0_222228021.html
([4]) http://periodismohumano.com/temas/agrogeba
([5]) http://www.alianzaporlasolidaridad.org/publicaciones/marca-espana-inversiones-espanolas-que-generan-pobreza

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004321/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Manipulación de los mercados bursátiles

Según denuncia el escritor Michael Lewis en su libro *Flash Boys*, máquinas de alta frecuencia manipulan el mercado bursátil en beneficio de ciertos agentes financieros. Es la denominada *high frequency trading* (HFT). Esa manipulación perjudica a los pequeños y medianos inversores que carecen de capacidad de acceso a los datos y al control de esos sistemas.

Por su parte, el FBI está investigando las operaciones de las máquinas de alta frecuencia, ya que sospecha que las firmas de HFT utilizan en su propio beneficio la información que manejan de otros inversores, con información privilegiada e incluso fraude.

Teniendo en cuenta que el 36 % de las operaciones bursátiles en Europa se hace a través de máquinas de alta frecuencia, ¿piensa impulsar la Comisión alguna iniciativa para salvaguardar los intereses de los medianos y pequeños inversores europeos frente a posibles operaciones fraudulentas de las firmas de HFT?

¿Considera la Comisión la posibilidad de iniciar una investigación sobre la limpieza y la transparencia de las operaciones de HFT?

Dado que el mercado financiero es global, ¿piensa la Comisión colaborar con las autoridades estadounidenses y/o con otras autoridades en la investigación de las operaciones de HFT?

Respuesta del Sr. Barnier en nombre de la Comisión
(6 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión ha analizado los peligros que plantea la negociación bursátil de alta frecuencia; hacer frente a estos riesgos es un elemento clave en la propuesta de revisión de la Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros (MIFID II) adoptada en 2011 ([1]). La Directiva ya ha sido aprobada por el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo y se espera que sea publicada en el Diario Oficial en junio de 2014.

La Directiva introduce un conjunto completo de controles para las actividades de negociación algorítmica, tanto para las empresas de inversión como para los centros de negociación. En particular, estas salvaguardias exigen que todos los operadores que realicen actividades de negociación algorítmica estén adecuadamente regulados y dispongan de liquidez en el marco de una estrategia de creación de mercado. Además, las empresas de inversión que faciliten acceso electrónico directo a un centro de negociación deberán disponer de sistemas y controles del riesgo para prevenir transacciones que puedan contribuir a alteraciones en el mercado o suponer abuso de mercado.

Además, el Reglamento sobre operaciones con información privilegiada, divulgación indebida de información privilegiada y manipulación del mercado ([2]), recientemente aprobado por el Parlamento Europeo y el Consejo, reforzará la aplicación del régimen de abuso de mercado en relación con la negociación algorítmica. También se espera su publicación en el Diario Oficial en junio de 2014.

La Comisión seguirá vigilando los riesgos que plantea la negociación bursátil de alta frecuencia y colaborará con otros organismos internacionales pertinentes cuando sea necesario.

([1]) Propuesta de Directiva relativa a los mercados de instrumentos financieros, por la que se deroga la Directiva 2004/39/CE del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo (Refundición), COM(2011) 656 final, y Reglamento relativo a los mercados de instrumentos financieros y por el que se modifica el Reglamento [EMIR] relativo a los derivados OTC, las entidades de contrapartida central y los registros de operaciones, COM(2011) 652 final de 20.10.2011.

([2]) Propuesta de Reglamento sobre las operaciones con información privilegiada y la manipulación del mercado (abuso de mercado), COM(2011) 651 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004321/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Stock market manipulation

According to the author Michael Lewis, in his book *Flash Boys*, high-frequency machines are used to manipulate the stock market for the benefit of certain financial agents. The practice is known as 'high frequency trading' (HFT). This manipulation hurts small and medium-sized investors, who are unable to access the data and control mechanisms of the systems in question.

The FBI is investigating the operations of high frequency machines, suspecting that, for their own benefit, HFT firms are using the information obtained from other investors as insider information, including for fraud.

Given that 36% of stock trading in Europe is done by high frequency machines, is the Commission considering any initiatives to safeguard the interests of small and medium-sized European investors against possible fraudulent transactions by HFT firms?

Is the Commission considering the possibility of launching an investigation into the fairness and transparency of HFT operations?

Given the global nature of the financial market, does the Commission intend to work together with the US authorities and/or other authorities in the investigation of HFT operations?

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

The Commission has analysed the dangers posed by high frequency trading (HFT) and addressing these risks was a key element in the proposal to review the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive adopted in 2011 ([1]) (MIFID II). MIFID II has now been agreed by the European Parliament and the Council and is expected to be published in the Official Journal in June 2014.

MiFID II will introduce a comprehensive set of trading controls for algorithmic trading activities, both for investment firms and for trading venues. These safeguards include the requirement for all algorithmic traders to be properly regulated and to provide liquidity when pursuing a market-making strategy. In addition, investment firms which provide direct electronic access to a trading venue will be required to have in place systems and risk controls to prevent trading that may contribute to a disorderly market or involve market abuse.

Moreover the regulation on insider dealing, the improper disclosure of inside information and market manipulation ([2]) (MAR), recently agreed by the European Parliament and the Council, will strengthen the application of the market abuse regime in relation to algorithmic trading. This regulation is also expected to be published in the Official Journal in June 2014.

The Commission will continue to monitor the risks posed by HFT and work together with other relevant international authorities where necessary.

([1]) Proposal for a directive on markets in financial instruments repealing Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (Recast) COM(2011) 656 final, and a regulation on markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation [EMIR] on OTC derivatives, central counterparties and trade repositories, COM(2011) 652 final, 20.10.2011.

([2]) Proposal for a regulation on insider dealing and market manipulation (market abuse), COM(2011) 651 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004322/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Caza de animales vulnerables a la extinción en un parque natural de Galicia

La Xunta de Galicia ha anunciado a través de un comunicado ([1]) que permitirá la caza de varios ejemplares de *Capra pyrenaica victoriae* en el Parque Natural de Baixa-Limia — Serra do Xurés empleando criterios argumentales de escasa credibilidad, y que en realidad generan una justificación dañina para las estrategias de conservación de la biodiversidad en los Estados miembros.

La subespecie identificada para su caza es calificada de «vulnerable» por la Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (UICN), organización reconocida internacionalmente por sus aportaciones y trabajos. La cabra montés, como se conoce popularmente a la subespecie, fue reintroducida en el citado parque natural en 1998, y en menos de una década el Gobierno gallego pretende autorizar la matanza de hasta 13 individuos con la excusa de que la población se ha incrementado.

Siguiendo estas argumentaciones, nada impide que otras especies y subespecies amenazadas del territorio gallego, español e incluso de otros Estados de la Unión Europea, sean señaladas con las miras telescópicas de los rifles con la excusa de que su población, como sería lógico si se han invertido fondos comunitarios, aumentara, lo que sólo puede constituir una buena noticia en la lucha contra la pérdida de la biodiversidad mundial.

Tras la decisión de la Xunta parece esconderse, como denuncia la Asociación Animalista Libera, el apoyo a los grupos de presión que defienden la caza como elemento regulador de los ecosistemas, teoría contraria a cualquier lógica sobre biología y la regulación de las especies. Lo que se ha calificado lamentablemente como «plan de aprovechamiento» podría aplicarse al lince ibérico o al águila real, ya que si el argumento del aumento poblacional es válido, todo animal es potencialmente una pieza de caza.

¿Tiene conocimiento la Comisión del anuncio realizado por la Xunta de Galicia de permitir la caza de la subespecie *Capra pyrenaica victoriae*? ¿Ha invertido la Comisión en la protección y fomento de la preservación de esta subespecie en algún momento? ¿Qué opinión le merece a la Comisión el plan para permitir la caza de un animal vulnerable a la extinción según organismos internacionales? ¿Piensa la Comisión poner en práctica alguna iniciativa extraordinaria para paralizar estos planes cinegéticos?

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

La Comisión toma nota del propósito del Gobierno de Galicia de aprobar un plan de explotación por el que se autorizará la caza de trece ejemplares de cabra montés (*Capra pyrenaica victoriae*) en el Parque Natural de Baixa-Limia — Serra do Xurés.

La Comisión no ha cofinanciado ningún proyecto LIFE que esté dirigido específicamente a la protección y conservación de esa subespecie.

La especie *Capra pyrenaica* (excluida la subespecie *Capra pyrenaica pyrenaica*) está recogida en el anexo V de la Directiva de Hábitats ([2]), que enumera las especies cuya captura en la naturaleza y cuya explotación pueden quedar sujetas a medidas de gestión. Las especies recogidas en ese anexo pueden cazarse siempre que ello sea compatible con las especies cuyo estado de conservación favorable deba mantenerse o restablecerse en caso de haberse perdido. Según la última información presentada por las autoridades españolas de conformidad con el artículo 17 de la citada Directiva, el estado de conservación de las especies en España es favorable en el caso de la región biogeográfica mediterránea. En lo que atañe a la evaluación del estado actual de la *Capra pyrenaica* realizada por la Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (UICN), la Comisión tiene que aclarar que esa organización considera actualmente esta especie como de «preocupación menor» ([3]).

Al no tener en su poder ninguna prueba que indique una posible infracción de la normativa medioambiental de la UE, la Comisión no se propone tomar medidas concretas en este tema.

([1]) http://www.xunta.es/notas-de-prensa/-/nova/1502/medio-ambiente-autoriza-caza-cabra-montes-parque-natural-baixa-limia-serra-xures
([2]) Directiva 92/43/CEE del Consejo, de 21 mayo de 1992, relativa a la conservación de los hábitats naturales y de la fauna y flora silvestres (DO L 206 de 22.7.1992, p. 7).
([3]) http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/3798/0

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004322/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Hunting endangered species in a Galician natural park

The Galician Regional Government has issued a statement ([1]) authorising the hunting of limited numbers of Western Spanish ibex at the Baixa-Limia — Serra do Xurés Natural Park. Its barely credible arguments cast Member States' biodiversity conservation strategies in a particularly damaging light.

The subspecies in question has been classed as 'vulnerable' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) — an organisation which has gained international renown for its work. The Iberian wild goat, as the subspecies is commonly known, was reintroduced into the Park in 1998, and less than a decade later the Galician Regional Government has authorised the culling of up to 13 animals on the grounds of an increase in numbers.

If we follow this line of reasoning, there will be nothing to stop other endangered species and subspecies in Galicia, Spain or even other EU Member States from being shot down on the lone pretext of a population rise. Such a rise should is to be expected if EU funds have been invested to encourage it, and it can only be viewed as a boon to global biodiversity.

The Regional Government's decision appears to have been influenced by pressure groups that defend hunting as a means of regulating ecosystems — a theory which confounds all biological and species-regulation logic. Asociación Animalista Libera (an animal rights organisation) has condemned this alleged influence. The unfortunately titled 'optimisation plan' could also be applied to the Iberian lynx or the royal eagle: if the population-increase argument is valid, any animal becomes a potential hunting target.

Is the Commission aware of the Galician Regional Government's decision to authorise hunting of the Western Spanish ibex? Has the Commission ever invested in the protection and preservation of this subspecies? What does the Commission think about plans to hunt animals classed as vulnerable by international organisations? Is the Commission thinking of adopting any extraordinary measures to put a stop to these plans?

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

The Commission takes note of the plans of the Galician Government to approve an exploitation plan to authorise hunting of 13 specimens of Spanish ibex (*Capra pyrenaica victoriae*) at the Baixa-Limia — Serra do Xurés Natural Park.

The Commission has not co-financed any LIFE project specifically addressing the protection and conservation of this subspecies.

The species *Capra pyrenaica* (except the subspecies *Capra pyrenaica pyrenaica*) is included in Annex V of the Habitats Directive ([2]), which lists species whose taking in the wild and exploitation may be subject to management measures. Species listed in Annex V can be hunted, as long as this is compatible with such species being maintained at or restored to a favourable conservation status. According to the latest information submitted by the Spanish authorities in accordance with Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, the conservation status of the species is favourable in Spain for the Mediterranean biogeographical region. As for the assessment of the status of *Capra pyrenaica* by the IUCN, the Commission would like to clarify that it is currently considered as being of 'Least Concern' by this organisation ([3]).

As the Commission does not possess any evidence indicating a possible breach of the EU environmental legislation it is not considering any particular action on this matter.

([1]) http://www.xunta.es/notas-de-prensa/-/nova/1502/medio-ambiente-autoriza-caza-cabra-montes-parque-natural-baixa-limia-serra-xures
([2]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p7).
([3]) http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/3798/0

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004323/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Rapporti diplomatici fra UE e Corea del Nord

Il segretario della difesa statunitense ha dichiarato che gli Stati Uniti dislocheranno nelle acque del Giappone altri due caccia torpedinieri, dotati di sistema anti-missilistico Aegis, per contrastare le minacce di attacchi missilistici da parte della Corea del Nord.

Può la Commissione riferire circa gli attuali rapporti diplomatici fra UE e Corea del Nord e i rischi per la sicurezza dei suoi cittadini?

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

L'UE intrattiene relazioni diplomatiche con la Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea (RPDC) dal 2001. Nel 2002 è stato concluso un accordo sull'accreditamento diplomatico in forma di scambio di lettere, ma l'accreditamento dell'Ambasciatore non residente della RPDC presso l'UE e del Capodelegazione non residente dell'UE presso la RPDC non è stato perfezionato.

L'UE non è in grado di valutare se l'annuncio della dislocazione di due ulteriori caccia torpedinieri in Giappone ad opera degli USA (che avverrà entro il 2017) abbia avuto un effetto concreto sugli attuali rischi di sicurezza per i cittadini dell'UE presenti nella RPDC o in Giappone. L'UE ha costantemente invocato, in tutta la regione, una diminuzione e un allentamento pacifici delle tensioni.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004323/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Diplomatic relations between the EU and North Korea

The US Defence Secretary has declared that the United States will deploy, in Japanese waters, another two destroyers, equipped with Aegis anti-missile systems, to thwart the threats of missile attacks by North Korea.

Can the Commission provide information on current diplomatic relations between the EU and North Korea, and the security risks for EU citizens?

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

The EU has had diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) since 2001. An agreement on diplomatic accreditation in the form of an exchange of letters was concluded in 2002 but the accreditation of the DPRK's non-resident Ambassador to the EU and of the non-resident Head of the EU Delegation to the DPRK has not been finalised.

The EU is not in a position to assess whether the announced US deployment to Japan of two additional destroyers (which will occur by 2017) has had a concrete effect on the current security risk for EU citizens in the DPRK or Japan. The EU has been consistently calling for a peaceful diminishing and ending of the tensions in the entire region.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004324/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Riserve di Shale Gas in Europa ed eventuale sfruttamento per far fronte al fabbisogno energetico dell'UE

Negli ultimi anni si è assistito ad un notevole aumento, in molte parti del mondo, della produzione di Shale Gas, gas non convenzionale ricavato da scisti bituminosi; fra i maggiori produttori risultano gli Stati Uniti d'America che entro il 2020 dovrebbero raggiungere la piena indipendenza dalle importazioni di gas e diventarne addirittura esportatori.

Si osservi che, secondo alcune le stime, l'Unione entro il 2035 necessiterà di circa 479 mmc annui per soddisfare i propri bisogni energetici.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. A quanto ammontano le riserve di Shale Gas nell'UE?

2. In che percentuale sono effettivamente utilizzabili?

3. Quali sono le prospettive per il loro sfruttamento al fine di compensare, almeno parzialmente, la diminuzione della produzione interna di gas naturale e la dipendenza energetica da Paesi terzi?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(12 giugno 2014)

Sebbene siano state fatte varie stime sul gas originariamente presente nelle formazioni di scisto e sulle risorse tecnicamente recuperabili nell'UE ([1]), la Commissione non è a conoscenza di stime affidabili sulle risorse economicamente recuperabili o sulle riserve di gas di scisto nell'UE. La percentuale di gas originariamente presente che può essere sfruttata può variare considerevolmente a seconda delle condizioni geologiche, dei prezzi del gas e dei progressi delle tecnologie di produzione.

Il programma di lavoro per il periodo 2014-2015 di Orizzonte 2020 prevede che il Centro comune di ricerca della Commissione europea conduca una valutazione delle risorse presenti in Europa sulla base di indagini geologiche, in particolare analizzando i risultati delle valutazioni fatte dagli Stati membri e i risultati dei progetti di esplorazione in corso. I primi risultati sono previsti per il 2016. Con lo sviluppo dei progetti di esplorazione potremo disporre di conoscenze più vaste.

Secondo la Commissione, anche se l'UE non potrà diventare autosufficiente in termini di gas naturale, la produzione di gas naturale dalle formazioni di scisto potrebbe compensare almeno in parte il calo della produzione di gas convenzionale dell'UE ed evitare un aumento della dipendenza dalle importazioni. Nell'ipotesi più ottimistica, il gas di scisto dovrebbe contribuire a quasi il 50 % della produzione totale di gas dell'UE e soddisfare circa il 10 % della domanda di gas nell'Unione entro il 2035 ([2]).

([1]) Si veda ad esempio «Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union», JRC, 2012.
([2]) Stime Agenzia internazionale per l'energia, 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004324/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Possibility of meeting EU energy requirements from domestic shale gas reserves

Over the last few years, there has been a surge in an alternative form of gas production, extraction from bituminous shale, in many parts of the world, including the United States, which by 2020 should be not only fully independent of gas imports but also a net exporter.

It is also estimated that the European Union will, by 2035, require around 479 billion m^3 per year to meet its energy needs.

In view of this:

1. Can the Commission quantify EU shale gas reserves?

2. Can it say what percentage thereof can be effectively exploited?

3. Can it give its views regarding the prospect of shale gas production offsetting at least partially falling domestic natural gas production and energy dependence on third countries?

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

While various estimates have been made on the original gas in place in shale formations and technically recoverable resources in the EU ([1]), the Commission is not aware of reliable estimates of economically recoverable resources or reserves of shale gas in the EU. The percentage of original gas in place which can be exploited can vary substantially depending on the geological conditions, gas prices and improvements in production technologies.

The Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2014 — 2015 foresees that the European Commission's Joint Research Centre carries out an assessment of Europe's resources in cooperation with geological surveys, especially by analysing results from current assessments conducted by Member States and from on-going exploration projects. Initial results are expected by 2016. As exploration projects develop, further knowledge will be gained.

In the Commission's view, while the EU will not become self-sufficient in natural gas, natural gas production from shale formations could, at least partially, compensate the decline in the EU's conventional gas production and avoid an increase in the EU's reliance on gas imports. It could, in a best case scenario, contribute almost half of the EU's total gas production and meet about around 10% of the EU gas demand by 2035 ([2]).

([1]) See for instance 'Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union', JRC 2012.
([2]) International Energy Agency estimates, 2012.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004325/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Sicurezza del bancomat in UE

A partire dall'8 aprile Microsoft terminerà il supporto degli aggiornamenti di sicurezza per il suo sistema operativo Windows XP, ormai datato 2001. Secondo stime pubblicate dal Financial Times il 95 % dei bancomat nel mondo utilizzano ancora tale sistema operativo e le banche hanno rimandato l'aggiornamento a causa dei costi elevati della migrazione a un SO di recente progettazione.

Considerando che il mantenimento di un software non più supportato rende estremamente vulnerabili i bancomat e, di conseguenza, i conti dei cittadini ad attacchi hacker; considerando che gli istituti bancari erano da mesi a conoscenza della fine del supporto tecnico da parte di Microsoft, può la Commissione indicare:

1. se dispone di dati sulla percentuale di bancomat ancora non aggiornati in UE e, in caso contrario, se intende svolgere uno studio in merito?

2. se sono stati erogati finanziamenti specifici alle banche al fine di effettuare gli aggiornamenti e, se sì, a quanto ammontano?

3. perché le banche non si sono mosse per tempo per effettuare gli aggiornamenti che avrebbero garantito la sicurezza dei propri correntisti?

4. come intende agire per garantire la sicurezza dei conti correnti dei propri cittadini?

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

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'annuncio della Microsoft, ma non possiede le informazioni necessarie per verificare le ipotesi sulle quali si basano le stime del Financial Times o la loro esattezza.

1. La Commissione non possiede informazioni sul numero di sportelli automatici all'interno dell'UE che potrebbero essere eventualmente colpiti dalla soppressione degli aggiornamenti di sicurezza di Windows XP.

2. Va ricordato che è responsabilità dei gestori di Bancomat garantire che il software sia sicuro. La Commissione non è a conoscenza di finanziamenti speciali concessi alle banche al fine di aggiornare i sistemi di sicurezza dei loro Bancomat.

3. Dalle informazioni a disposizione della Commissione la sicurezza delle operazioni Bancomat dipende da una serie di elementi informatici, tra cui il sistema operativo di software, e soprattutto da elementi fisici di sicurezza dei distributori. La Commissione si aspetta che i gestori adottino tutte le misure necessarie per garantire che le transazioni in contante continuino ad essere sicure. La Commissione non dispone di informazioni su azioni specifiche che i gestori potrebbero aver preso in risposta all'annuncio di Microsoft.

4. Ai sensi dell'articolo 60 della direttiva sui servizi di pagamento ([1]) (PSD), i gestori di Bancomat sono totalmente responsabili di tutte le operazioni non autorizzate derivanti da disfunzioni dei loro sistemi di sicurezza. Inoltre, la proposta della Commissione per una revisione della direttiva sui servizi di pagamento introduce nuovi requisiti di sicurezza per tutti gli istituti di pagamento. Tra questi figurano il regolare aggiornamento delle politiche di sicurezza e l'attuazione di misure di attenuazione e meccanismi di controllo in risposta ai rischi individuati, nonché la presentazione di relazioni periodiche alle autorità nazionali competenti.

([1]) Direttiva 2007/64/CE relativa ai servizi di pagamento nel mercato interno, GU L 319 del 5.12.2007, pag. 1.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004325/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Safety of cashpoints in the EU

As from 8 April, Microsoft will stop providing security updates for its Windows XP operating system, which dates back to 2001. According to estimates published by the *Financial Times*, 95% of cashpoints (ATMs) throughout the world are still using this operating system and banks have postponed their upgrades because of the high costs of migrating to a new type of operating system.

By continuing to use software that is no longer supported, cashpoints -and therefore people's bank accounts — will become extremely vulnerable to hackers. And yet banks have known for months that technical support from Microsoft was about to come to an end.

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. whether it has any data on the percentage of cashpoints that have not yet been updated in the EU and, if not, whether it will conduct a study on the matter;

2. whether any special funding has been granted to banks for these updates; if so, how much;

3. why the banks have not taken timely action to carry out updates that would guaranteethe security of their account-holders;

4. what action it intends to take to ensure that the bank accounts of EU citizens are safe?

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

The Commission is aware of the Microsoft announcement, but it does not possess the necessary information to check the assumptions on which the estimates of the *Financial Times* are based or to verify their accurateness.

1. The Commission does not posess the information on the number of ATMs within the EU that might be possibly affected by the discontinuation of security updates for Windows XP.

2. It should be recalled that it is the responsibility of the ATM operators to ensure that the software they use is secure. The Commission is not aware of special funding granted to banks for the purpose of updating the security of their ATMs.

3. In the understanding of the Commission the security of ATM operations depends on a number of IT elements, one of them being the operating system software, but it also relies heavily on the physical security features of the cash dispensers. The Commission expects that ATM operators take all the necessary actions to ensure that cash transactions continue to remain secure. The Commission has no information about what specific actions might or might not have been taken by ATM operators in reaction to the announcements of Microsoft.

4. In accordance with Article 60 of the Payment Services Directive ([1]) (PSD) ATM operators are fully liable for any unauthorised transactions resulting from their security failures. Furthermore, the Commission proposal for a revision of the PSD introduces new security requirements for all payment institutions. These include a regular updating of their security policy and implementation of migitation measures and control mechanisms in response to identified risks, as well as regular reporting to the national competent authorities.

([1]) Directive 2007/64/EC on payment services in the internal market, OJ L 319 of 5.12.2007, p.1.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004326/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Infiltrazioni jihadiste di Boko Haram in Camerun

Il gruppo integralista di Boko Haram sta utilizzando il Camerun, uno dei pochi paesi dell'area centro africana che gode di una pace stabile da un decennio, come base e trampolino per condurre i propri attacchi specialmente sul suolo nigeriano. Oltre a compiere nel paese vari rapimenti, non ultimo quello di due sacerdoti italiani di Vicenza e una suora canadese, le cellule jihadiste danno la caccia a propri disertori che hanno abbandonato il movimento e che si sono rifugiati in Camerun.

La Commissione:

1. è al corrente della situazione sopra descritta?

2. Come valuta la possibilità che Boko Haram e altri gruppi estremisti islamici proseguano nell'infiltrazione in questo Stato e inizino a reclutare cittadini camerunensi?

3. Come intende agire per supportare il Camerun nella lotta al terrorismo?

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

Le questioni riguardanti la sicurezza dei cittadini UE in Camerun vedono impegnate le missioni degli Stati membri in uno stretto coordinamento, con frequenti scambi formali e informali di informazioni e indicazioni ai viaggiatori coordinate.

La marginalizzazione della regione al confine con la Nigeria alimenta l'insicurezza, il terrorismo e l'ulteriore infiltrazione della setta islamica Boko Haram.

L'UE è determinata a avvalersi degli strumenti a sua disposizione per contribuire a migliorare la sicurezza nella regione. Il recente sequestro sottolinea ancora una volta l'estrema insicurezza della regione, alimentata in particolare alla presenza della setta Boko Haram. Nel quadro della politica estera e di sicurezza comune (PESC), l'UE può prendere in considerazione misure restrittive contro l'attività di individui o soggetti non statali (per es. singoli terroristi o gruppi terroristici); tuttavia, per prassi consolidata, il Consiglio non commenta circa l'intenzione di sottoporre individui o gruppi, come Boko Haram, a sanzioni UE.

Le questioni problematiche vengono affrontate dall'UE anche nel quadro del dialogo politico con le autorità camerunesi e i problemi di sicurezza sono stati al centro dell'ultima riunione del 6 dicembre 2013 con il ministro degli Affari esteri. L'UE incoraggia il Camerun, la Nigeria e i paesi limitrofi a collaborare strettamente per affrontare meglio i problemi di sicurezza nella regione del Sahel, in particolare le minacce rappresentate dalle azioni della setta Boko Haram nelle province settentrionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004326/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Cameroon infiltrated by Jihadist Boko Haram fighters

Cameroon, one of the few central African countries that have enjoyed a decade of ongoing peace and stability, is now being targeted by Boko Haram fundamentalists as a base from which to launch their attacks, particularly against Nigeria. As well as abducting two Italian priests from Vicenza and a Canadian nun among others, they have been hunting down deserters from the movement seeking refuge in Cameroon.

In view of this:

1. Is the Commission aware of the above situation?

2. How likely is it that Boko Haram and other Islamic fundamentalist groups are continuing to infiltrate Cameroon and starting to recruit nationals of that country?

3. What action will it take to assist Cameroon in combating terrorism?

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

The EU MS's Missions in Cameroon are closely liaising on issues relating to the security of EU citizens in the country through frequent, formal and informal, exchanges of information and coordination of travel advisories.

The marginalization of the region close to Nigeria's borders contributes to the increase of insecurity and development of terrorism and further infiltration of Boko Haram.

The EU is determined to use the instruments that it has at its disposal to contribute to the improvement of the security situation in that region. The recent abduction has once again highlighted the extreme insecurity in that part of the country linked in particular to the presence of the Islamist sect, Boko Haram. Within the framework of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP), the EU can consider the option of restrictive measures concerning activities of non-state entities and individuals (such as terrorist groups and terrorists); nevertheless, as a matter of established practice, the Council does not comment on whether it is considering listing individuals or entities, such as Boko Haram, under EU sanctions.

The EU is also using the political dialogue with the authorities of Cameroon to raise the issues of concern as security-related topics have been raised during the last session of the dialogue held on 16 December 2013 with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The EU encourages Cameroon, Nigeria and the neighbouring countries to cooperate closely in order to better meet security-related challenges in the Sahel area, and in particular Boko Haram's threats in the Northern provinces.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004327/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Produzione di carburante partendo dall'acqua marina

Nei laboratori del Naval Research Laboratory della Marina militare americana, gli scienziati sono riusciti a produrre del cherosene utilizzabile nei motori di navi ed aerei partendo dalla semplice acqua di mare.

Il progetto mira a diminuire la dipendenza dal petrolio permettendo alle navi della marina di produrre scorte di combustibile direttamente in mare.

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza di quanto sopra esposto?

2. Può indicare se nell'UE sono in corso studi simili e, se sì, può riferire se hanno beneficiato di finanziamenti europei e a che stadio di sviluppo sono giunti?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(2 giugno 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del progetto di ricerca di laboratorio cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato. Alcuni elementi dell'intero processo sembrano coinvolgere tecnologie conosciute (ad es. elettrolisi dell'acqua, sintesi GTL) mentre l'utilizzo di acqua di mare come fonte di CO_2 sembra rivestire un carattere innovativo.

2. Concetti e idee analoghi sono stati e sono tuttora finanziati nell'ambito di progetti del Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013). Questi progetti si incentrano sull'utilizzo di fonti di energia rinnovabili per decomporre l'acqua o il CO_2. Forse non è questo il caso del progetto della marina militare statunitense in quanto nel processo viene utilizzata elettricità. I due progetti più interessanti sono SOLARH2 ([1]) che utilizza composti molecolari per mimare la fotosintesi e SOLAR-JET ([2]) che utilizza radiazioni solari concentrate. Il progetto SOLARH2 è riuscito a produrre idrogeno, ma è ancora a livello di ricerca. Il progetto SOLAR-JET ha consentito per la prima volta di produrre carburante «solare» dall'acqua e dall'anidride carbonica (CO_2) ([3]). Questo eccezionale progresso conferma la leadership della ricerca europea e dell'industria in tale settore.

3. Nell'ambito di Orizzonte 2020 esiste la possibilità di ottenere finanziamenti per lo sviluppo di tali tecnologie. Nell'invito concorrenziale sull'energia a basse emissioni di carbonio, pubblicato l'11 dicembre 2013, è prevista una tematica specifica sullo sviluppo della prossima generazione di tecnologie sostenibili per i biocarburanti e i carburanti alternativi sostenibili. La prima scadenza era il 1° aprile 2014 e la prossima scadenza è il 3 settembre 2014. Ulteriori informazioni sono reperibili nel portale dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([4]).

([1]) http://www.fotomol.uu.se/Forskning/Biomimetics/solarh2/documents/SolarH2Poster.pdf
([2]) http://www.solar-jet.aero/
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-481_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004327/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Production of fuel from sea water

Scientists at the US Naval Research Laboratory have managed to produce kerosene — which can be used to power ship and aircraft engines — from ordinary sea water.

The aim of the project is to reduce dependence on oil by enabling naval vessels to make their own fuel supplies at sea.

1. Is the Commission aware of the above facts?

2. Is research of this kind also being carried out in the EU? If so, has it received European funding and how far has it progressed?

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

1. The Commission is aware of the laboratory-scale research project referred to by the Honourable Member. Some elements of the overall process appear to involve known technologies (e.g. electrolysis of water, gas-to-liquid synthesis) while the use of seawater as a source of CO_2 appears to be innovative.

2. Similar concepts and ideas have been and are still financed through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities (FP7, 2007-2013) projects. These projects focus on the use of directly renewable energy sources to split water or CO_2. This may not be the case for the US Navy project as electricity is used for the process. The two most interesting projects are SolarH2 ([1]), which uses molecular compounds to mimic photosynthesis, and Solar-Jet ([2]), which uses concentrated solar radiation. The SolarH2 project has succeeded in producing hydrogen but still remains at research level. The Solar-Jet project has produced the world's first 'solar' jet fuel from water and carbon dioxide (CO2) ([3]). This breakthrough demonstrates the leadership of the European research and industries in that field.

3. Opportunities to obtain finance for the development of such technologies exist in Horizon 2020. In the call on competitive low carbon energy, published on 11 December 2013, there is a dedicated topic on the development of next generation technologies for biofuels and sustainable alternative fuels. The first deadline was 1 April 2014 and the next deadline is 3 September 2014. Further information is available on the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([4]).

([1]) http://www.fotomol.uu.se/Forskning/Biomimetics/solarh2/documents/SolarH2Poster.pdf
([2]) http://www.solar-jet.aero/
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-481_en.htm
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004328/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Due sacerdoti vicentini e una suora canadese rapiti in Camerun

Nella notte tra venerdì 4 e sabato 5 aprile 2014, due sacerdoti di Vicenza, Gianantonio Allegri e Giampaolo Marta, sono stati rapiti, insieme alla suora canadese Gilberte Bussier, da uomini armati appartenenti al gruppo islamista dei Boko Haram nel nord del Camerun.

La diocesi di Vicenza vede da sempre personalità religiose e laiche impegnate in missioni nel continente africano, dove lavorano e rischiano la vita per la pace e il benessere della collettività internazionale. Religiosi come don Giampaolo e don Gianantonio, che hanno dedicato la propria vita ad aiutare il prossimo in contesti durissimi e spesso rischiosi, non possono e non devono essere abbandonati dalle istituzioni europee, che hanno il dovere di dispiegare tutti i mezzi disponibili per metterli al sicuro.

1. Ciò premesso, può l'Alto Rappresentante far sapere se intende attivare subito tutti i canali diplomatici disponibili per liberare i due sacerdoti vicentini e la suora canadese rapiti in Camerun?

2. Può indicare come intende intervenire a supporto della liberazione dei religiosi rapiti?

3. Può fornire un resoconto sull'attività del gruppo Boko Haram in Camerun?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004329/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

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Preso atto che la diocesi di Vicenza vede da sempre personalità religiose e laiche impegnate in missioni nel continente africano, dove lavorano e rischiano la vita per la pace e il benessere della collettività internazionale. Religiosi come don Giampaolo e don Gianantonio, che hanno dedicato la propria vita ad aiutare il prossimo in contesti durissimi e spesso rischiosi, non possono e non devono essere abbandonati dalle istituzioni europee, che hanno il dovere di dispiegare tutti i mezzi disponibili per metterli al sicuro.

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

Il rilascio di persone sequestrate è una questione che deve essere trattata da servizi nazionali specializzati e con la massima cautela.

Le questioni riguardanti la sicurezza dei cittadini UE in Camerun vedono impegnate le missioni degli Stati membri in uno stretto coordinamento, con frequenti scambi formali e informali di informazioni e indicazioni ai viaggiatori coordinate.

L'UE è determinata a avvalersi degli strumenti a sua disposizione per contribuire a migliorare la sicurezza nella regione. Il recente sequestro sottolinea ancora una volta l'estrema insicurezza della regione, alimentata in particolare alla presenza della setta islamica Boko Haram.

La marginalizzazione di una regione povera e con un alto tasso di analfabetismo, l'elevata disoccupazione e il cattivo stato dell'economia contribuiscono all'insicurezza e al terrorismo. Per quanto riguarda la relazione sull'attività di Boko Haram, la Commissione e all'Alta Rappresentante informano e riferiscono al Parlamento europeo nel quadro delle consuete prassi e procedure.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004328/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Two Italian priests and a Canadian nun kidnapped in Cameroon

In the early hours of Saturday, 5 April 2014, two priests from Vicenza in Italy, Gianantonio Allegri and Giampaolo Marta, and a Canadian nun, Gilberte Bissiere, were kidnapped in northern Cameroon by gunmen belonging to the Islamist group Boko Haram.

The diocese of Vicenza has long been sending priests and nuns and lay missionaries to Africa, where they work and risk their lives for peace, in the interests of the international community. People who dedicate their lives to helping others in extremely difficult and often dangerous circumstances must not simply be left to their fate by the European institutions, which must do everything in their power to bring them back to safety.

1. Does the High Representative intend to explore all available diplomatic means of securing the release of the two Italian priests and the Canadian nun who have been kidnapped in Cameroon?

2. What can she do to help secure their release?

3. Can she provide a report on Boko Haram activities in Cameroon?

Question for written answer E-004329/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Two Italian priests and a Canadian nun kidnapped in Cameroon

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1. Does the Commission intend to explore all available diplomatic means of securing the release of the two Italian priests and the Canadian nun who have been kidnapped in Cameroon?

2. What can it do to help secure their release?

3. Can it provide a report on Boko Haram activities in Cameroon?

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

The issue of release of kidnapped persons is a matter which needs to be handled extremely carefully and carried out by specialized national services.

The EU Member States' missions in Cameroon are closely liaising on issues relating to the security of EU citizens in the country through frequent, formal and informal, exchanges of information and coordination of travel advisories.

The EU is determined to use the instruments that it has at its disposal to contribute to the improvement of the security situation in that region. The recent abduction has once again highlighted the extreme insecurity in that part of the country linked in particular to the presence of the Islamist sect, Boko Haram.

The marginalization of the region, where poverty is combined with high illiteracy, high unemployment and the poor state of the economy, contributes to the increase of insecurity and development of terrorism. With regard to the report on Boko Haram activities, the Commission and the High Representative provide the information and report to the European Parliament following the normal practice and procedures.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004330/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Fallimenti di imprese e raccolta dati Eurostat

Nel 2013 in Italia si sono registrati 14.269 fallimenti di imprese, con un aumento del 14 % rispetto al 2012 e del 54 % rispetto al 2009.

Considerando i dati sopra citati e la crisi che sta investendo tutta l'Europa da anni e preso atto che, nelle risposte a mie precedenti interrogazioni sullo stato del tessuto imprenditoriale negli Stati membri, la Commissione ha risposto che «Eurostat non raccoglie statistiche sui fallimenti di imprese, né sulle loro motivazioni e nemmeno sull'impatto che essi hanno sul mercato del lavoro e sul PIL dell'Europa», può la Commissione far sapere se non ritiene che si renda necessaria la raccolta di questi dati per capire meglio la crisi e approntare migliori piani d'azione per affrontarla?

Risposta di Algirdas Šemeta a nome della Commissione
(30 maggio 2014)

La Commissione condivide il parere dell'on. parlamentare: l'elaborazione di indicatori periodici di qualità sulle tendenze nazionali nel settore dei fallimenti è di grande interesse per i decisori politici e per il pubblico interessato. Il regolamento n. 295/2008 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, dell'11 marzo 2008, relativo alle statistiche strutturali sulle imprese (rifusione) ([1]) contiene un modulo dettagliato per la raccolta di statistiche sulla demografia delle imprese ([2]) (nascita e mortalità delle imprese, tassi di sopravvivenza).

In questo contesto, la possibilità concreta di produrre statistiche sui fallimenti è verificata mediante una raccolta di dati pilota. È difficile ottenere cifre comparabili dal momento che le procedure di fallimento si basano sulla legislazione nazionale. Sono attualmente in corso lavori per risolvere questo tipo di problemi.

Sulla base della raccolta di dati pilota, un numero crescente di fallimenti è stato osservato tra il 2011 e il 2012 in Portogallo, Spagna, Paesi Bassi e Belgio, mentre il numero è rimasto sostanzialmente stabile in Francia, Italia e Danimarca ed è diminuito in Germania, Slovacchia, Austria e Bulgaria.

Nella prima metà del 2013, rispetto allo stesso periodo del 2012, un aumento del numero di fallimenti è stato osservato in Slovacchia, Spagna e Belgio; il numero è rimasto pressoché invariato in Francia e in Italia ed è diminuito in Austria, Danimarca, Germania, Portogallo, Paesi Bassi e Bulgaria.

Tuttavia, poiché la raccolta sperimentale di dati sui fallimenti nazionali riguarda solo il periodo 2011 — 2° trimestre 2013, le cifre non consentono un confronto con la situazione che precedeva la crisi finanziaria. Sulla base di cifre provenienti da altre fonti, la Commissione ritiene che il numero di insolvenze sia aumentato negli ultimi anni rispetto ai livelli pre-crisi ([3]).

([1]) GU L 97 del 9.4.2008, pagg. 13-59.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/european_business/special_sbs_topics/business_demography
([3]) Documento di lavoro dei servizi della Commissione che accompagna la raccomandazione della Commissione su un nuovo approccio al fallimento delle imprese e all'insolvenza, 12.3.2014 C(2014) 1500 def.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004330/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Company bankruptcies and Eurostat statistical reporting

In Italy 14 269 companies went bankrupt in 2013, an increase of 14% compared with 2012 and 54% compared with 2009.

In the light of these figures and of the crisis which has been besetting the whole of Europe for years, and bearing in mind that when it replied to my earlier questions about the state of the economic fabric in the Member States, it made the point that 'Eurostat does not collect statistics on company bankruptcies … [or on] their reasons and their impact on the European employment market and … GDP', does not the Commission believe that the relevant data ought to be compiled in order to give a clearer picture of the crisis and improve the effectiveness of the action plans drawn up to tackle it?

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

The Commission shares the view of the Honourable Member that the compilation of timely and quality indicators showing national trends in companies' bankruptcies is of high interest for policy-makers and the interested public. Regulation No 295/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2008 concerning structural business statistics (recast) ([1]) provides a detailed module for the collection of statistics on business demography ([2]) (enterprise births, deaths and survival rates).

In this context, the feasibility of producing statistics on bankruptcies is tested by way of a pilot data collection. Compiling comparable figures is difficult, as bankruptcy procedures are based on national law. Work to address these issues is on-going.

On the basis of this pilot data collection, an increasing number of bankruptcies were observed between 2011 and 2012 in Portugal, Spain, Netherlands and Belgium, while the number remained quite stable in France, Italy and Denmark and decreased in Germany, Slovakia, Austria and Bulgaria.

In the first half of 2013, compared with the same period of 2012, an increase in the number of bankruptcies was reported by Slovakia, Spain and Belgium; the number remained quite stable in France and Italy and decreased in Austria, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Netherlands and Bulgaria.

However, given that the test data collection on national bankruptcies concern only the period 2011 — 2nd quarter 2013, these figures do not allow a comparison with the situation prior to the financial crisis. Based on figures from other sources, the Commission considers that the number of insolvencies has increased in recent years compared to pre-crisis levels ([3]).

([1]) OJ L 97, 9.4.2008, p. 13-59.
([2]) http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/european_business/special_sbs_topics/business_demography
([3]) Commission Staff Working Document accompanying Commission Recommendation on a new approach to business failure and insolvency, 12.3.2014 C (2014) 1500 final.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004331/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: Európában tájidegen növények

Európai uniós szinten vetődött fel az akácfa, mint tájidegen, nem európai növény eltávolításának szükségessége.

Miközben az akác kiválóan alkalmas a futóhomok megkötésére, méze pedig a bio-étkezés egyik alapanyaga.

De védi az esőerdőket is, mert a trópusi fafajok kiváltására is szolgáló keményfa.

Várható-e a Bizottság részéről a közeljövőben a többi tájidegen, nem európai eredetű növény kiirtására irányuló törekvés is?

El kívánják-e távolítani például Európából a paprikát, paradicsomot, burgonyát, kukoricát, rizst, cseresznyét is?

Janez Potočnik válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 22.)

2013. szeptember 9-én a Bizottság rendeletjavaslatot terjesztett elő az idegenhonos özönfajok tekintetében. A javaslatot a társjogalkotókkal mélyrehatóan megtárgyalták, a jogalkotási folyamat pedig a végéhez közeledik. A jövőbeli rendelet az Európai Unióban tájidegen fajok közül kizárólag azokra vonatkozik, amelyek súlyos, kedvezőtlen hatást gyakorolnak a biológiai sokféleségre, a népegészségügyre és a gazdaságra. E fajok, melyek idegenhonos özönfajoknak tekintendők, jelenleg évente 12 milliárd euróval terhelik az európai gazdaságot. Így tehát kockázatalapú, tudományos megközelítést alkalmazva kívánunk megoldást találni azon fajok tekintetében, melyek jelenleg több milliárd eurónyi kárt okoznak, vagy valószínű, hogy okozni fognak. A készülő jogszabály tehát nem vonatkozik minden tájidegen fajra.

A rendelet ezen túlmenően megállapítja az idegenhonos özönfajok kezelésének keretét, de egyelőre nem tartalmazza e fajok felsorolását: az uniós szintű problémákat okozó fajokat felsoroló listát a Bizottság és a tagállamok a jogszabályban megállapított kritériumok alapján készítik el. Körültekintő kockázatértékelést követően javasolják majd a legnagyobb kárt okozó fajok felvételét a listára. Az értékelés során az érintett fajok által okozott károk mellett kellőképpen figyelembe veszik azokat a társadalmi-gazdasági előnyöket, amelyek egyes fajok esetében léteznek. Végezetül a javasolt intézkedések nem jelentik szükségszerűen a listára felkerülő fajok kiirtását: a felszámolásra csak abban az esetben kerül sor, ha az lehetséges és megvalósítható, egyéb esetekben pedig az intézkedések az e fajok kezelésére szorítkoznak.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004331/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Species of flora alien to Europe

At European Union level, the need has been pointed out to eradicate acacia, as an alien, non-European species of flora.

At the same time, acacia is a very suitable means of binding loose sand, while honey from it is one of the raw materials used in organic food production.

Moreover, it protects the rain forests too, as it is a hardwood that can be substituted for tropical wood species.

Is the Commission likely in the near future to propose the eradication of other alien species of flora which are not of European origin?

Does it also wish, for example, to eradicate from Europe paprika, tomatoes, potatoes, maize, rice and cherries?

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

On 9 September 2013, the Commission proposed a regulation to tackle invasive alien species (IAS). The proposal has been extensively discussed with the co-legislators and the legislative process is nearing its end. The forthcoming Regulation is designed to address only those species alien to the EU that have serious negative consequences on biodiversity, public health and the economy. Such species are considered invasive and currently cost EUR 12 billion annually to the European economy. It is thus a risk- and science-based approach that aims to tackle species that are causing or likely to cause billions of euros worth of damage; it does not intend to address all alien species.

Furthermore, the regulation sets out the framework to tackle invasive alien species but does not yet list which species will need to be subject to measures: this list of species of Union concern will be prepared by the Commission and the Member States on the basis of criteria set out in the legislation. Listing will be proposed on the basis of robust risk assessments and will focus on the species causing the worst damage. Such assessments will also duly consider the socioeconomic benefits of certain species and balance them against the damages caused. Finally, the measures proposed do not necessarily imply the eradication of the listed species: species should only be eradicated where it is possible and feasible, as set out by the regulation; in other cases the measures taken will focus on management.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004332/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: Veszélyes szénerőművek

Az Egészségügyi és Környezetvédelmi Szövetség (HEAL) jelentése szerint évi több mint 18 ezer ember korai halálában játszik közre a szénnel fűtött erőművek okozta környezetszennyezés az Európai Unióban, az erőművek okozta egészségkárosodás kezelésének költsége pedig évi 42,8 milliárd euró.

A jelentés szerint a szénerőművek környezetszennyezése évente 8500 új krónikus bronchitiszes megbetegedést okoz, és több mint négymillió kieső munkanapért felelős.

Jean-Paul Sculier, az Európai Tüdőgyógyász Társaság illetékese hangsúlyozta: csupán a szénerőművek légszennyezési problémáinak megoldásával jelentős megtakarításokat lehetne elérni a közegészségre fordított költségvetésben, különös tekintettel arra, hogy egy szénerőmű legalább negyven évig működik.

Nem volna-e időszerű kezdeményeznie a Bizottságnak az EU-s energiapolitika sürgős újragondolását?

Miért nem érvényesül az egészséghez és egészséges környezethez való jog?

Miért fontosabb a szén-lobbi, mint az európai polgárok egészsége?

Janez Potočnik válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. június 11.)

A szennyező anyagok nagy tüzelőberendezésekből történő kibocsátásának szabályozása uniós szinten történik. A legutóbbi irányadó jogszabály az ipari kibocsátásokról szóló 2010/75/EU irányelv ([1]), amelynek értelmében az üzemek tekintetében a rendelkezésre álló legkiválóbb technológiák alapján minden érintett szennyező anyag vonatkozásában kibocsátási határértéket kell rögzíteni. A széntüzelésű erőművek esetében ez azt jelenti, hogy az égéstermékek tisztítása érdekében hatékony szennyezőanyagkibocsátás-csökkentési rendszereket kell alkalmazni. A tagállamok felelősek annak biztosításáért, hogy az uniós irányelveket helyesen hajtsák végre, illetve a helyi környezeti minőségi problémákat megfelelően kezeljék.

A Bizottság – a légszennyezés régóta fennálló problémájának átfogó és költséghatékony megoldása érdekében – a közelmúltban elfogadta a „Tiszta levegőt” politikai csomagot. E csomag végrehajtása 2030-ra becslések szerint évi 58000-rel segít majd csökkenteni az idő előtti elhalálozások számát, az egészségügyi szempontú károkat pedig mintegy 40–140 milliárd euróval mérsékli (ideértve a kieső munkanapok előfordulásának csökkentését és az egészségügyi költségek visszaszorítását). A javaslatcsomagot jelenleg tárgyalja az Európai Parlament és a Tanács.

A Bizottság 2014 januárjában terjesztette elő 2030-ra szóló energiaügyi és éghajlat-változási csomagját, amely kötelezettségvállalásokat tartalmaz arra vonatkozóan, hogy az üvegházhatásúgáz-kibocsátás uniós átlagértéke az 1990. évi értékekhez képest legalább 40%-kal csökkenjen, a megújuló energiaforrások aránya az energiafelhasználásban pedig az EU-27 átlagát tekintve legalább 27%-ot tegyen ki. A Bizottság által az energiaügyi forgatókönyvek kidolgozására használt PRIMES modell előrejelzései szerint az EU energiafelhasználásában az elkövetkező években csökkenni fog a szén jelentősége. Az EU jövőbeli energiaszerkezetében a szén kétségtelenül továbbra is jelen lesz, ugyanakkor csak abban az esetben biztosított a szerepe, ha az nem ellentétes az EU éghajlat-politikai célkitűzéseivel.

([1]) HL L 334., 2010.12.17.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004332/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Hazardous coal-fired power stations

According to a report by the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), more than 18 000 people per annum die prematurely because of pollution from coal-fired power stations in the European Union, while the cost of treating health problems caused by them is EUR 42.8 billion per annum.

According to the report, every year, pollution from coal-fired power stations causes 8 500 new cases of chronic bronchitis, and more than four million working days are lost on account of it. Jean-Paul Sculier, of the European Respiratory Society, stresses that simply solving the problems of air pollution from coal-fired power stations would make it possible to save substantial amounts of money on public health budgets, particularly bearing in mind that a coal-fired power station operates for at least 40 years.

Would it not be timely for the Commission to initiate an urgent review of the EU's energy policy?

Why is no law adopted on health and a healthy environment?

Why is the coal lobby more important than the health of European citizens?

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

Emissions of pollutants from large combustion plants are regulated at the EU level, most recently through Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions ([1]), which requires that, for all relevant pollutants, the plants shall be subject to emission limits based on the use of the best available techniques. For coal-fired power plants, this requires the application of effective abatement systems to clean the exhaust gases. Member States are responsible for ensuring that EU Directives are correctly implemented and for addressing local environmental quality problems.

In order to tackle the persistent problem of air pollution in a holistic and cost-effective manner, the Commission has recently adopted a Clean Air Policy Package. The implementation of this Package is estimated, by 2030, to contribute to cutting premature deaths by 58 000 per year and to reduce by about EUR 40-140 billion the health-related damage, including by lowering the incidence of lost working days and curbing healthcare costs. The package is currently being discussed within the European Parliament and the Council.

In January 2014 the Commission unveiled its 2030 Energy and Climate package, which contains engagements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% on EU average, compared to 1990 values, and on the share of renewable energy sources in the energy consumption, being at least 27% on EU level. The PRIMES model, used by the Commission for developing energy scenarios, foresees a decreasing share of coal in the EU energy consumption in the forthcoming decades. Coal definitely has its place in the EU energy mix in the future, however, only if its role is compatible with the EU climate objectives.

([1]) OJ L 334, 17.12.2010.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004333/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: Választási demokrácia

Az új magyar szabályozás szerint a külföldön élő és külföldi lakcímmel rendelkező magyar állampolgárok levélben is szavazhatnak.

Ugyanakkor a külföldön élő és magyarországi lakcímmel rendelkező magyar állampolgárok nem szavazhatnak levélben.

Tehát például egy Svédországban, Angliában, Németországban dolgozó magyar állampolgárnak sok száz kilométert kell utaznia, hogy a külképviseleten szavazhasson személyesen.

A Bizottság szerint megkülönböztethetők-e EU-s állampolgárok ilyen durván?

Összeegyeztethető-e az európai demokrácia eszményével a magyar kormányzatnak az ilyen szavazáskorlátozó gyakorlata?

Viviane Reding válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. június 17.)

A tisztelt képviselő által konkrétan említett, az állampolgárok választásokon való részvételére vonatkozó rendelkezések a tagállamok hatáskörébe tartoznak.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004333/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Electoral democracy

According to new Hungarian legislation, Hungarian citizens who live abroad and who are permanently resident abroad may vote by post.

However, Hungarian citizens living abroad who are permanently registered in Hungary may not vote by post.

This means that, for example, a Hungarian who works in Sweden, England or Germany has to travel hundreds of kilometres to vote, in person, at the consulate.

In the Commission's view, is it right to make distinctions like this between EU citizens?

Is this practice of the Hungarian Government whereby restrictions are imposed on voting compatible with the European democratic ideal?

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

The arrangements for the participation of nationals in elections to which the Honourable Member specifically refers are a matter falling within the competences of the Member States.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004334/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: A munkavállalók anyagi felelőssége

Egyes munkakörökben a dolgozók anyagilag teljes mértékben felelnek a rájuk bízott árukért, elsősorban a kereskedelemben, szállításban.

Több olyan információt kaptam, hogy áru megsérülése vagy hiánya esetén a bolti kiskereskedelmi árat térítteti meg a munkáltató a dolgozójával, miközben az ő valós kára csak a beszerzési árnak felel meg.

Készült-e az EU-ban felmérés az ilyen jellegű visszaélésekről?

Van-e ilyen gyakorlat a régi EU-s tagországokban, vagy csak az újabban csatlakozott tagállamokban engedik ezt meg maguknak a multinacionális cégek?

Meg kívánja-e védeni a Bizottság a munkavállalókat a multinacionális cégek túlkapásaitól?

Andor László válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 28.)

A Bizottságnak nincs tudomása a Tisztelt Képviselő által említett visszaélés-típusra vonatkozó uniós felmérésről, sem pedig arról, hogy a „régi tagállamokban" hasonló visszaéléseket tapasztaltak volna.

A munkavállalók anyagi felelősségének kérdése jelenleg az adott tagállam nemzeti jogának hatálya alá tartozik, ami azt jelenti, hogy a munkáltatók által a dolgozóktól követelt kártérítés tisztességes voltát a nemzeti bíróságokon lehet vitatni. A Bizottság jelenleg nem tervez intézkedéseket hozni a szóban forgó területen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004334/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Employees' financial responsibility

In some areas of work, particularly in commerce and transport, employees bear full financial responsibility for the goods entrusted to them.

I have heard of a number of cases where employers have charged employees the shop (retail) price for goods which are damaged or lost, whilst the loss suffered by the employers is limited to the purchase price.

Have any surveys been carried out in the EU into this kind of abuse?

Have similar instances been recorded in the old Member States, or is it only in the newer Member States that multinationals indulge in these practices?

Does the Commission intend to protect employees from the abuses perpetrated by multinationals?

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

The Commission is not aware of any survey in the EU covering the kind of abuse referred to by the Honourable Member, nor of records of such abuses in the 'old' Member States.

The issue of employees' financial responsibility is currently regulated by the national law of the Member State concerned meaning that the fairness of the compensation requested by employers from their employees can be disputed in national courts. The Commission does not envisage at present to take action in this area.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004335/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: Repülőtéri átvilágítás rejtett veszélye

A homeopátiás gyógyszerek hatása ma már nem vitatott, számos országban gyakran és eredményesen alkalmazzák ezeket.

Az állampolgárok mobilitása folyamatosan nő, mind többen utaznak repülővel.

A biztonsági vizsgálat során feleslegesen és értelmetlenül átvilágítják a homeopátiás szereket is, amitől azok elveszítik hatásosságukat.

Ezzel az állampolgárok kárt szenvednek, sőt egészségük is veszélybe kerül.

Miért nem tájékoztatják részletesen írásban a biztonsági vizsgálatok ártalmairól kötelező jelleggel az EU-s polgárokat?

Hogyan kíván a Bizottság ezen az elfogadhatatlan gyakorlaton változtatni?

Siim Kallas válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 27.)

A repülőterek területére bevitt tárgyak mindegyikét ellenőrzésnek kell alávetni annak biztosítása érdekében, hogy azok nem tartalmaznak tiltott tárgyakat vagy anyagokat. Ez vonatkozik a gyógyszerek vagy más folyadékok szállítására szolgáló tárolóedényekre is.

A biztonsági röntgenberendezések sugárzást bocsátanak ki, ugyanakkor – megfelelő karbantartás és működtetés mellett – nem jelentenek egészségügyi kockázatot működtetőikre, az ellenőrzött tárgyakra vagy a nagyközönségre nézve. A berendezésen belül keletkező alacsony szintű röntgensugárzást ólombélés árnyékolja le teljes mértékben, így az nem veszélyezteti a közelében elhaladó utasokat vagy az egység mellett naponta 8-10 órát eltöltő dolgozókat.

Az Európai Unió repülőterein biztonsági ellenőrzésre használt röntgenberendezések olyan uniós jogszabályok hatálya alá tartoznak, amelyek biztosítják azok biztonságosságát. Ilyen jogszabály például az ionizáló sugárzás miatti sugárterhelésből származó veszélyekkel szembeni védelmet szolgáló alapvető biztonsági előírások megállapításáról szóló, 2013. december 5-i 2013/59/Euratom tanácsi irányelv ([1]).

Ezek a berendezések alacsony dózisú röntgensugarat alkalmaznak. A legtöbb ellenőrzött tárgy körülbelül 1 mikrosievert sugárzásnak van kitéve (ez nagyjából a természetes háttérsugárzás napi mennyiségének egytizedét teszi ki). Összehasonlításként meg kell jegyezni, hogy a légi utasokat és csomagjaikat repülés közben érő sugárzás óránként körülbelül 5 mikrosievert.

([1]) A Tanács 2013. december 5-i 2013/59/Euratom irányelve az ionizáló sugárzás miatti sugárterhelésből származó veszélyekkel szembeni védelmet szolgáló alapvető biztonsági előírások megállapításáról, valamint a 89/618/Euratom, a 90/641/Euratom, a 96/29/Euratom, a 97/43/Euratom és a 2003/122/Euratom irányelv hatályon kívül helyezéséről (HL L 13., 2014.1.17., 1–73. o.).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004335/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Concealed danger of X-rays at airports

The effects of homeopathic medicines are no longer disputed, and they are often used — and successfully so — in many Member States.

The mobility of members of the public is constantly increasing: more and more of them are travelling by air.

During security checks, homeopathic medicines too are unnecessarily and pointlessly X-rayed, rendering them ineffective.

This causes harm to citizens, and even their health may be endangered.

Why are the public not compulsorily informed in detail, in writing, about the dangers arising from security checks?

How will the Commission bring about changes in this unacceptable practice?

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

All items that are brought into an airport must be screened to ensure that they do not contain prohibited items or materials. This includes vessels containing medicines or other liquids.

Security x-ray machines generate radiation, but they do not pose health risks to operators, items screened or the general public if they are maintained and operated correctly. The low level of x-rays produced within the machine are completely shielded by lead lining, so that there is no hazard to passengers walking by or to people who work by the unit 8 to 10 hours a day.

Security x-ray screening equipment in use at EU airports are subject to EC laws to ensure that they are safe, for example Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom ([1]) of 5 December 2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation.

These machines use a low-dose x-ray beam. Most items screened receive about 1 microsievert of exposure (about a tenth of a day's worth of natural background radiation). In comparison whilst flying on an airliner, a passenger and their belongings are exposed to around 5 microsieverts every hour.

([1]) Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom of 5 December 2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation, and repealing Directives 89/618/Euratom, 90/641/Euratom, 96/29/Euratom, 97/43/Euratom and 2003/122/Euratom , OJ L 13, 17.1.2014, p. 1-73.

(Magyar változat)

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004336/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 8.)

Tárgy: A hormonrendszer támadói

A Glasgowban tartott európai mellrák-konferencián ismertetett kutatás azt vizsgálta, milyen kezelést kapnak azok a nők, akiknél DCIS-t diagnosztizáltak.

A DCIS esetében a mell tejcsatornáiban azonosítanak rákos sejteket. Kezelés nélkül a páciensek felénél valószínűleg mellrák alakul ki.

A kutatók több mint nyolcezer esetet vizsgáltak meg, közülük körülbelül 2500 nőnek távolították el a mellét.

Megállapították, hogy az esetek 49 százalékában a műtét vagy felesleges volt, vagy azért hajtották végre, mert a megelőző operáció sikertelen volt.

A tanulmány szerint az orvosok gyakran rosszul becsülik fel a betegség kiterjedtségét, ez pedig azt jelenti, hogy olyanoknak is eltávolítják a mellét, akiknek nem kellett volna, miközben kisebb beavatkozást végeznek másoknál, akiken a nagy műtét segített volna.

A kutatók arra hívták fel a figyelmet, hogy óriásiak a különbségek az egyes kórházak között, ezért nők ezreit kezelik tévesen.

Összeegyeztethető-e az egészséghez való joggal, hogy az esetek felében végeznek indokolatlan műtéteket?

Dolgozik-e a Bizottság egységes információs bázisok létrehozásán a hasonlóan problémás betegségek kapcsán?

Írásbeli választ igénylő kérdés E-004432/14
a Bizottság számára
Kovács Béla (NI)
(2014. április 9.)

Tárgy: A nők egészségének védelme

A Glasgowban tartott európai mellrák-konferencián ismertetett kutatás azt vizsgálta, milyen kezelést kapnak azok a nők, akiknél DCIS-t diagnosztizáltak.

A DCIS esetében a mell tejcsatornáiban azonosítanak rákos sejteket. Kezelés nélkül a páciensek felénél valószínűleg mellrák alakul ki.

A kutatók több mint nyolcezer esetet vizsgáltak meg, közülük körülbelül 2500 nőnek távolították el a mellét.

Megállapították, hogy az esetek 49 százalékában a műtét vagy felesleges volt, vagy azért hajtották végre, mert a megelőző operáció sikertelen volt.

A tanulmány szerint az orvosok gyakran rosszul becsülik fel a betegség kiterjedtségét, ez pedig azt jelenti, hogy olyanoknak is eltávolítják a mellét, akiknek nem kellett volna, miközben kisebb beavatkozást végeznek másoknál, akiken a nagy műtét segített volna.

A kutatók arra hívták fel a figyelmet, hogy óriásiak a különbségek az egyes kórházak között, ezért nők ezreit kezelik tévesen.

Összeegyeztethető-e az egészséghez való joggal, hogy az esetek felében végeznek indokolatlan műtéteket?

Dolgozik-e a Bizottság egységes információs bázisok létrehozásán a hasonlóan problémás betegségek kapcsán?

Tonio Borg egyesített válasza a Bizottság nevében
(2014. május 27.)

A Bizottságnak tudomása van a kérdéses tanulmányról, de nincs abban a helyzetben, hogy külső kutatási projektek eredményeit véleményezze.

Az in situ ductalis carcinoma (DCIS) egy nem invazív emlőrák-típus, amely azonban invazív tumorrá fejlődhet. A mammográfiás emlőrákszűrés széles körű elterjedése óta látványosan megnőtt a diagnosztizált DCIS-esetek száma.

A DCIS megszokott kezelése a közelmúltig az emlőeltávolítás volt. Miután a sugárkezeléssel kombinált emlőmegtartó műtét komoly eredményeket mutatott fel az invazív emlőrák kezelése terén, az új eljárás fokozatosan teret nyer és átveszi az emlőeltávolítás helyét.

Az Európai Rákkutató és Terápiás Társaság (EORTC) randomizált mintavétel alapján prospektív klinikai vizsgálatokat végzett annak megállapítása érdekében, hogy a sugárkezeléssel kombinált emlőmegtartó műtét ésszerűen alkalmazható-e a DCIS kezelésére. Ezek a vizsgálatok igazolták a módszert.

Az emlőrákszűréshez és -diagnózishoz nyújtott – a mellrák minden fázisára kiterjedő – európai minőségbiztosítási iránymutatások következő, 2016-ban esedékes verziója ezért várhatóan külön foglalkozik majd az invazív rákbetegségek egyes típusainak túlkezeléséhez kapcsolódó problémákkal is.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004336/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Attacks on the hormone system

Research presented at the European Breast Cancer Conference in Glasgow examined the kinds of treatment given to women diagnosed with DCIS (ductal carcinoma in situ).

In this condition, cancer cells are identified inside a milk duct in the breast. Without treatment, half of patients will probably develop breast cancer.

The researchers examined over 8 000 cases, around 2 500 of which involved breast removal.

They found that in 49% of the cases the operation was either unnecessary or it was carried out because the initial operation had been unsuccessful.

According to the study, doctors often assess the extent of the illness inaccurately. This results in the unnecessary removal of breasts in some cases, whilst more minor interventions are performed in cases where the full-scale operation should have been undertaken.

The researchers drew attention to the enormous differences between individual hospitals, which is why thousands of women receive the wrong treatment.

1. Is this situation whereby unjustified operations are carried out in half the cases studied compatible with the right to health?

2. Is the Commission working to set up a single information base for illnesses which are similarly problematic?

Question for written answer E-004432/14
to the Commission
Béla Kovács (NI)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Protection of women's health

Research presented at the European Breast Cancer Conference in Glasgow examined the kinds of treatment given to women diagnosed with DCIS (ductal carcinoma in situ).

In this condition, cancer cells are identified inside a milk duct in the breast. Without treatment, half of patients will probably develop breast cancer.

The researchers examined over 8 000 cases, around 2 500 of which involved breast removal.

They found that in 49% of the cases the operation was either unnecessary or it was carried out because the initial operation had been unsuccessful.

According to the study, doctors often assess the extent of the illness inaccurately. This results in the unnecessary removal of breasts in some cases, whilst more minor interventions are performed in cases where the full-scale operation should have been undertaken.

The researchers drew attention to the enormous differences between individual hospitals, which is why thousands of women receive the wrong treatment.

Is this situation whereby unjustified operations are carried out in half the cases studied compatible with the right to health?

Is the Commission working to set up a single information base for illnesses which are similarly problematic?

Joint answer given by Mr Borg on behalf of the Commission
(27 May 2014)

The Commission is aware of the study, but is not in a position to comment on the results of external research projects.

Ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) is a non-invasive condition but DCIS can progress to become invasive cancer. The frequency of the diagnosis of DCIS has increased markedly since the widespread use of screening mammography.

Until recently, the customary treatment of DCIS was mastectomy. In view of the success of breast-conserving surgery combined with breast radiation for invasive carcinoma, this new approach is being progressively extended and is replacing mastectomy.

To determine whether breast-conserving surgery plus radiation therapy is a reasonable approach to the management of DCIS, the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC) has completed prospective randomized trials, confirming this approach.

Due in 2016, the next version of the European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis covering all stages of breast cancer care is due to address problems related to overtreatment for certain types of invasive cancer.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej E-004337/14
do Komisji
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(8 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Sprzeciw wobec budowy wschodniej obwodnicy Olkusza (etap II) w przebiegu trasy zaproponowanej przez Zarząd Województwa Małopolskiego

Zarząd Województwa Małopolskiego złożył w ramach konkursu nr 9/2009/4.1a wniosek o uzyskanie z Małopolskiego Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego dofinansowania na realizację budowy wschodniej obwodnicy Olkusza (etap II) ([1]).

Przebieg obwodnicy od siedmiu lat budzi ostry sprzeciw mieszkańców skupionych w Komitecie Protestacyjnym Osiedla Młodych i Osiedla Pakuska w Olkuszu. Powodem negatywnej oceny jest m.in. fakt, że obwodnica ma przebiegać w odległości kilkunastu metrów od zabudowań. Jednocześnie we wniosku o dofinansowanie inwestycji ze środków MRPO jako uzasadnienie dla jej realizacji zapisano konieczność wyprowadzenia ruchu tranzytowego poza teren zabudowany.

Komitet Protestacyjny Mieszkańców 13 marca 2014 r. skierował do Prokuratury zawiadomienie o możliwości popełnienia przestępstwa dotyczącego niedotrzymania procedur prawnych przewidzianych przy realizacji inwestycji.

Sprawa została również w dniu 10 marca 2014 r. zgłoszona przez mieszkańców Olkusza do Europejskiego Urzędu ds. Zwalczania Nadużyć Finansowych (OLAF). W zgłoszeniu mieszkańcy wskazują na brak należycie przeprowadzonych konsultacji społecznych, brak możliwości realizacji zapisu wniosku o dofinansowanie zakładającego wyprowadzenie ruchu tranzytowego z miasta oraz bezpośrednie zagrożenie życia i zdrowia mieszkańców.

W związku z powyższym zwracam się z prośbą o odpowiedź na następujące pytania:

1. Czy podległe Komisji instytucje dokonają audytu procesu prawnego realizowanej inwestycji, w szczególności procedury konsultacji społecznych?

2. Czy Komisja nakaże wstrzymanie inwestycji do momentu wyjaśnienia spornych kwestii?

3. Czy Komisja nakaże zmodyfikowanie projektu wschodniej obwodnicy Olkusza tak, aby odpowiadał on zapisom o wyprowadzeniu ruchu poza teren zabudowany?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Johannesa Hahna w imieniu Komisji
(5 czerwca 2014 r.)

Projekt wspomniany przez Szanownego Pana Posła wchodzi w zakres wyłącznej kompetencji instytucji zarządzającej Małopolskiego Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego. W związku z tym wszelkimi stosownymi weryfikacjami w celu zagwarantowania zgodności projektu z przepisami europejskimi i krajowymi zajmuje się Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego. Ocenie Komisji poddawane są tylko duże projekty.

Instytucja zarządzająca poinformowała Komisję, że przed rozpoczęciem realizacji przedmiotowej inwestycji miała miejsce ocena oddziaływania na środowisko (OOŚ), obejmująca trzy etapy konsultacji społecznych. Przeanalizowano trzy alternatywne opcje inwestycyjne. Wybrana opcja miała najmniejszy wpływ na środowisko. Legalność decyzji w sprawie OOŚ została potwierdzona przez Generalną Dyrekcję Ochrony Środowiska w Polsce. OLAF przeanalizował informacje i oddalił sprawę ze względu na brak dostatecznych podejrzeń nadużycia finansowego lub nielegalnych działań naruszających interesy finansowe UE. Właściwe organy krajowe w Polsce zostały poinformowane i są świadome kwestii poruszonej przez Szanownego Pana Posła. Szanowny Pan Poseł może również skontaktować się bezpośrednio z instytucją zarządzającą Małopolskiego Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego:

Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego
ul. Racławicka 56
30-017 Kraków
Polska

([1]) Projekt nr MRPO.04.01.01-12-097/13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004337/14
to the Commission
Ryszard Antoni Legutko (ECR)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Opposition to Phase II of the construction of the Olkusz eastern ring road at the location proposed by the authorities of Małopolska province

As part of competition No 9/2009/4, the authorities of Małopolska Province applied for funding under the Małopolska Regional Operational Programme (MRPO) to carry out Phase II of the construction of the Olkusz eastern ring road ([1]).

The route envisaged for the road has provoked fierce opposition among residents in the Młodych and Pakuska Estates Protest Committee. One reason for this negative reaction is that the ring road will be situated only a few metres from built-up areas.

This is at odds with the justification given by the authorities in their application for funding under the MRPO, namely the necessity to divert through traffic away from built-up areas.

On 13 March 2014, the residents' protest committee asked the public prosecutor's office to look into whether the law would not be broken if the project went ahead, as proper procedures had not been followed.

On 10 March 2014, residents of Olkusz reported the matter to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF). They cited a lack of public consultation, a direct threat to residents' lives and health, and the fact that the objective set in the funding application, namely to divert through traffic away from the town, would not be met.

1. Will the Commission audit the legal implementation of this investment, including the process of public consultation?

2. Will it order that the project be suspended until the dispute has been resolved?

3. Will it order that plans for the construction of the Olkusz eastern ring road be duly altered so that they meet the objective of diverting traffic away from built-up areas?

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

The project mentioned by the Honourable Member falls under the exclusive competence of the Małopolskie programme managing authority. Consequently, the Marshall Office for Malopolskie is in charge of all appropriate verifications to ensure that the project complies with European and national rules. Only major projects undergo an appraisal by the Commission.

The Commission was informed by the managing authority that the environmental impact assessment (EIA), including three stages of public consultations, took place prior to the implementation of the project in question. Three alternative investment options were analysed. The selected option had the smallest environmental impact. The legality of the EIA decision was confirmed by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection in Poland. OLAF assessed the information and the case has been dismissed on the ground of the lack of sufficient suspicion of fraud or illegal activities affecting the financial interests of the EU. The relevant national authorities in Poland have been informed and are aware of the matter raised by the Honourable Member. The Honourable Member may also contact directly the managing authority of the Regional Operational Programme for Małopolskie:

Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Małopolskiego
Racławicka 56
30 017 Kraków
Poland

([1]) Project code MRPO.04.01.01-12-097/13.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004338/14
a la Comisión
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Ayudas europeas para cursos de formación falsos

Recientemente, se ha descubierto en Madrid una supuesta estafa (*caso Aneri)* de cursos de formación subvencionados con fondos públicos. Según las últimas informaciones, la supuesta estafa asciende a más de 16 millones de euros.

Lamentablemente, la existencia de estudiantes falsos en los cursos de formación financiados con fondos europeos no es algo nuevo. En el período 2005-2007 también se destaparon graves irregularidades en un informe realizado por la Cámara de Cuentas.

Algunas informaciones recientes han señalado que parte del dinero que recibió la red de consultoras responsables de la supuesta estafa podría provenir del Fondo Social Europeo (FSE).

¿Puede confirmar la Comisión si va a investigar la posible utilización de fondos europeos por parte de esta organización? ¿Suspenderá la Comisión los pagos si se demuestran las presuntas deficiencias?

¿Considera la Comisión que es urgente revisar los sistemas de control para promover que las ayudas del FSE lleguen a los verdaderos beneficiarios?

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

La Comisión está informada acerca de los diversos procedimientos de investigación emprendidos por las autoridades españolas en relación con los cursos de formación, principalmente en la Comunidad de Madrid. Inmediatamente después de que se publicara en la prensa, la Comisión informó a la OLAF y solicitó a la autoridad nacional responsable de la gestión del Fondo Social Europeo que verificara si el supuesto fraude implica una cofinanciación del FSE o incide únicamente en el presupuesto nacional, y que adoptara las correspondientes medidas correctivas y preventivas.

La autoridad nacional de gestión del FSE en España comunicó a la Comisión que no se había producido ninguna cofinanciación del FSE en el período de programación 2007-2013 para los cursos de formación objeto de la investigación. Actualmente, se llevan a cabo verificaciones adicionales a nivel nacional en relación con anteriores períodos de programación del FSE.

Por lo general, la Comisión supervisa periódicamente la aplicación del FSE a través de distintos instrumentos, como los comités de seguimiento y las reuniones de análisis anuales. Por lo que respecta a la gestión financiera, la Comisión controla de cerca la ejecución financiera y realiza periódicamente controles y auditorías. Además, aplica en todos los casos los procedimientos previstos en los Reglamentos cuando se detectan deficiencias en los sistemas de gestión y control o irregularidades.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004338/14
to the Commission
María Irigoyen Pérez (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: EU aid for fake training courses

A suspected racket involving the fraudulent use of public funds to subsidise training courses was recently uncovered in Madrid (in the 'Aneri' case). According to the latest information, over EUR 16 million has been embezzled.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that fake students have been signed up to EU-funded training courses. A number of serious irregularities which occurred between 2005 and 2007 were also disclosed in a report compiled by the Madrid Chamber of Accounts.

Recent information suggests that some of the money taken by the consultancy network accused of the suspected racket might have come from the European Social Fund (ESF).

Can the Commission say whether it is going to investigate the claims that the organisation concerned has made use of EU funding? Will the Commission stop the payments if the alleged problems are confirmed?

Does the Commission believe that an urgent review of control systems should be carried out to ensure that ESF funding is reaching the intended recipients?

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

The Commission is aware of various investigation procedures being undertaken by the Spanish authorities in relation to training courses, including in the Madrid region. Immediately after the publication in the press, the Commission informed OLAF and requested the national authority managing the European Social Fund (ESF) to verify if the alleged potential fraud was co-funded by the ESF or is only having an impact on national budget, and to take the corresponding corrective and preventive measures.

The national management authority of the ESF in Spain communicated to the Commission that there was no ESF co-financing in the programming period 2007-2013 for the training courses under investigation. At present additional verifications are undergoing at national level regarding previous ESF programming periods.

In general terms, the Commission follows up the implementation of the ESF regularly through different tools including the annual Monitoring Committees and Examination Meetings. As regards the financial management, the Commission closely monitors the financial execution and carries out regular controls and audits. The Commission in all cases applies the procedures foreseen in the regulations whenever deficiencies in the management and control systems or irregularities have been detected.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004339/14
to the Commission
Robert Sturdy (ECR)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Practice of insurance companies in Spain

While the internal market in financial services is not yet complete and legislation at EU level on insurance companies not comprehensive, it would be beneficial to know how and when the EU can step in in cases of breach of EC law on consumer choice and anti-competitive behaviour in these fields.

It is a practice in Spain that you must give notice to end an insurance contract two months before expiry, but you cannot get quotes from other insurance companies until one month before the expiry of your current contract. This makes changing insurance companies quite difficult. Furthermore, in order to contact the insurance companies you must use a premium-rate telephone number starting with 901 or 902.

1. Do these practices contravene Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, which requires traders to display in a clear, intelligible and timely manner material information that consumers need in order to make informed choices, including on the main characteristics of the product in question?

2. Could these actions be construed as anti-competitive behaviour? If so, under which conditions would the Commission become involved?

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

Directive 2005/29/EC ([1]) prohibits onerous or disproportionate non-contractual barriers imposed by the trader where a consumer wishes to exercise rights under a contract, including rights to terminate a contract or to switch to another product or another trader. Directive 93/13/EEC ([2]) provides that any term which has not been individually negotiated shall be regarded as unfair and not binding on the consumer if, contrary to the requirement of good faith, it causes a significant imbalance in the parties' rights and obligations to the detriment of the consumer.

In the field of consumer protection the Commission does not have enforcement powers against individual traders. However, the Honourable Member could bring the practices referred to in this question to the attention of the relevant national enforcement authorities.

EU competition rules concern merger control, the assessment of agreements between undertakings, potential abuses of dominant position and of state aid, which may affect competition and trade between Member States. Citizens and undertakings may contact the Commission or national competition authorities about suspected infringements of EU competition rules ([3]). If the practices referred to in this question only concern the Spanish market, the Spanish competition authority would be well placed to make an investigation.

EU Insurance Directives ([4]) do not regulate switching between insurance companies.

([1]) Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices, OJ L 149 of 11.6.2005, p. 22.
([2]) Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts, OJ L 095 of 31.4.1993, p. 29.
([3]) Cf. Council Regulation 1/2003.
([4]) OJ L 228, 16.8.1973, p. 3-19; OJ L 172, 4.7.1988, p. 1-2; OJ L 228, 11.8.1992, p. 1-23, OJ L 345, 19.12.2002, p. 1-51.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004340/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Nuova strage di cristiani in Nigeria legata allo sfruttamento dei terreni

In Nigeria, più esattamente nel villaggio di Galadima, durante una riunione dei rappresentanti delle comunità di diversi villaggi e di diverse confessioni religiose dello Stato di Zamfara, un gruppo di pastori nomadi musulmani di etnia Fulani ha massacrato almeno 79 persone. Motivo ufficiale dello scontro una divergenza nella gestione dei terreni anche se alla base del massacro si porrebbero le diverse confessioni religiose.

Può l'Alto Rappresentante indicare:

1. se è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Che provvedimenti intende prendere per tutelare l'incolumità dei cristiani in Nigeria?

3. Se fra i finanziamenti comunitari alla Nigeria ve ne sono mirati al sostegno del governo per far fronte alla situazione sopra descritta e in che modo essi sono stati impiegati?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004341/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuova strage di cristiani in Nigeria legata allo sfruttamento dei terreni

In Nigeria, più esattamente nel villaggio di Galadima, durante una riunione dei rappresentanti delle comunità di diversi villaggi e di diverse confessioni religiose dello Stato di Zamfara, un gruppo di pastori nomadi musulmani di etnia Fulani ha massacrato almeno 79 persone. Motivo ufficiale dello scontro una divergenza nella gestione dei terreni anche se alla base del massacro si porrebbero le diverse confessioni religiose.

Può la Commissione indicare:

1. se è al corrente dei fatti sopra descritti?

2. Che provvedimenti intende prendere per tutelare l'incolumità dei cristiani in Nigeria?

3. Se fra i finanziamenti comunitari alla Nigeria ve ne sono mirati al sostegno del governo per far fronte alla situazione sopra descritta e in che modo essi sono stati impiegati?

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

Le persistenti violenze in diverse parti della Nigeria, tra cui lo Stato di Zamfara menzionato dall'onorevole deputato, destano grande preoccupazione.

Questi atti colpiscono sia cristiani che musulmani. Gli interventi dell'UE si basano su un'analisi estremamente accurata della situazione e sugli orientamenti dell'Unione in materia di diritti umani, compresi quelli sulla promozione e sulla protezione della libertà di religione o di credo.

L'UE collabora con le autorità nigeriane per contribuire a porre fine alla spirale di violenza attraverso un dialogo politico costante e aiuti mirati volti ad eliminare le cause profonde della violenza.

Il 10° Fondo europeo di sviluppo sostiene numerosi interventi a livello di democratizzazione, Stato di diritto, risorse idriche, impianti igienico-sanitari e salute materna. Lo strumento per la stabilità (IfS) finanzia diversi programmi di pacificazione e mediazione nonché progetti volti a riformare la giustizia penale. Lo strumento europeo per la democrazia e i diritti umani (EIDHR) finanzia azioni a tutela dei diritti umani, attuati per la maggior parte tramite ONG.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004340/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — New slaughter of Christians in Nigeria linked to land use

In Nigeria, more specifically in the village of Galadima, at a meeting of community leaders of various villages and various faiths in Zamfara State, a group of nomadic Muslim herders of Fulani ethnicity killed at least 79 people. The official reason for the clash was a difference of opinion about land management, although it is likely that the different faiths were behind the massacre.

Can the High Representative state:

1. whether she is aware of these events;

2. what measures she intends to take to ensure the safety of Christians in Nigeria;

3. whether Community funding in Nigeria includes any funds intended to support the government in dealing with the situation described above, and how they have been used?

Question for written answer E-004341/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: New slaughter of Christians in Nigeria linked to land use

In Nigeria, more specifically in the village of Galadima, at a meeting of community leaders of various villages and various faiths in Zamfara State, a group of nomadic Muslim herders of Fulani ethnicity killed at least 79 people. The official reason for the clash was a difference of opinion about land management, although it is likely that the different faiths were behind the massacre.

Can the Commission state:

1. whether it is aware of these events;

2. what measures it intends to take to ensure the safety of Christians in Nigeria;

3. whether Community funding in Nigeria includes any funds intended to support the government in dealing with the situation described above, and how they have been used?

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

The continued violence in various parts of Nigeria, including in Zamfara State mentioned by the Honourable Member of Parliament, is of great concern.

In Nigeria violence targets both Christians and Muslims. The EU is guided in its actions by a very careful case by case analysis of the situation and by its human rights guidelines, including those on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief.

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

The 10th European Development Fund is supporting a broad range of actions including in the field of democratisation, rule of law, water, sanitation and maternal health. The Instrument for Stability (IfS) is supporting several peace and mediation programmes and projects to reform criminal justice. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) funds actions to protect human rights, mostly implemented through NGOs.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004342/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Allarme sicurezza in Iraq: tutela dei cittadini europei nel paese

L'ambasciata statunitense in Iraq ha emanato una nota con la quale alza il livello di sicurezza e richiede ai propri cittadini di evitare il transito dall'aeroporto di Baghdad e di mantenere in tutto il paese un basso profilo modificando le proprie consuetudini negli spostamenti e facendo grande attenzione nell'uso dei veicoli. Si avvicina la data delle prime elezioni parlamentari, il 30 aprile, dal ritiro delle truppe americane e si teme che il processo di voto sia posto a rischio dai gruppi ribelli che sempre più guadagnano forza nel paese.

Può pertanto l'Alto Rappresentante precisare quanto segue:

1. È al corrente dei fatti sopra esposti?

2. Come valuta il rischio dei cittadini europei che sono attualmente in Iraq?

3. Quali misure intende mettere in atto per tutelarne la salvaguardia?

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004343/14
alla Commissione
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Può pertanto la Commissione precisare quanto segue:

1. È al corrente dei fatti sopra esposti?

2. Come valuta il rischio dei cittadini europei che sono attualmente in Iraq?

3. Quali misure intende mettere in atto per tutelarne la salvaguardia?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente è ben consapevole del deterioramento della situazione della sicurezza in Iraq ed è chiaramente preoccupata per eventuali ulteriori atti di violenza nel periodo precedente le elezioni. Per questo motivo il personale dell'UE in servizio a Baghdad è sottoposto a misure di sicurezza molto rigorose.

Per quanto riguarda i cittadini dell'UE che si trovano in Iraq, la responsabilità per la loro protezione rientra innanzitutto nella sfera di competenza dei rispettivi Stati membri, che si occupano di garantire l'applicazione delle più adeguate misure di sicurezza a titolo di prevenzione e di inviare i necessari segnali di allerta per la sicurezza.

Mediante un apposito sito web protetto (*Consular on Line*) gestito dalla *Consular Crisis Management Division* (divisione consolare che si occupa della gestione delle crisi) del SEAE, gli Stati membri condividono informazioni riguardanti i consigli di viaggio e la protezione dei cittadini dell'UE nei paesi terzi.

L'UE confida nel fatto che gli Stati membri dell'UE si impegnino a garantire l'adozione delle misure più sicure per i loro cittadini.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004342/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Security alert in Iraq: protection of European citizens in the country

The US Embassy in Iraq has issued a memorandum raising the security level and asking its citizens to avoid travelling through Baghdad airport and to keep a low profile throughout the country, changing their routine movements and being very careful with the use of vehicles. The date of the first parliamentary elections since the withdrawal of US troops, 30 April, is approaching, and there is concern that the voting process may be put at risk by rebel groups, who have continued to gather strength in the country.

Therefore,

1. Is the High Representative aware of these facts?

2. How does the High Representative assess the risk to European citizens currently in Iraq?

3. What measures does she intend to put in place to ensure their safety?

Question for written answer E-004343/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Security alert in Iraq: protection of European citizens in the country

The US Embassy in Iraq has issued a memorandum raising the security level and asking its citizens to avoid travelling through Baghdad airport and to keep a low profile throughout the country, changing their routine movements and being very careful with the use of vehicles. The date of the first parliamentary elections since the withdrawal of US troops, 30 April, is approaching, and there is concern that the voting process may be put at risk by rebel groups, who have continued to gather strength in the country.

Therefore,

1. Is the Commission aware of these facts?

2. How does the Commission assess the risk to European citizens currently in Iraq?

3. What measures does it intend to put in place to ensure their safety?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of the deteriorating security situation in Iraq and is indeed concerned by the possibility of additional violence in the run up to Election Day. This is why EU staff posted in Baghdad is submitted to very strict security measures.

With regard to EU citizens present in Iraq, responsibility for their protection primarily falls within the competence of their respective Member States, which ensure the application of the most appropriate security measures in order to prevent risks as well as issue the necessary security alerts.

Member States share information regarding travel advice and the protection of EU citizens in third countries.in a dedicated protected Web Site (Consular on Line) managed by the Consular Crisis Management Division of the EEAS.

The EU is confident that the EU Member States will comply in guaranteeing the adoption of the safest measures for their citizens.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004344/14
a la Comisión
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Cofinanciación por la UE de la política regional

En el Programa Operativo de Desarrollo Regional 2007-2013, eje 3, Medio Ambiente, se recogen una serie de actuaciones en cuanto a saneamiento y depuración de aguas residuales en la Comunidad Autónoma de Castilla y León. Dichas actuaciones cuentan con una cofinanciación de la UE que oscila entre el 70 % y el 80 %, en cumplimiento de la Directiva sobre saneamiento y depuración de aguas.

¿Cuáles de estas obras comprometidas en dicho programa han recibido ya la cofinanciación de la UE?

¿Cuáles de estas actuaciones están ya finalizadas y cuál ha sido el importe de cofinanciación por parte de la UE?

¿Cuáles de estas actuaciones están pendientes de finalización?

¿Ha recibido la Comunidad Autónoma de Castilla y León algún anticipo por parte de la UE para aquellas actuaciones licitadas en medios oficiales y aún no adjudicadas? En caso afirmativo, ¿cuáles son esas actuaciones y qué anticipo han recibido en cada caso?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(15 de mayo de 2014)

Los siguientes proyectos han recibido cofinanciación con arreglo a la prioridad n° 3 del Programa del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional 2007-2013 de Castilla y León:

— conexiones y estaciones depuradoras de aguas residuales de Cantimpalos, Arcos de Jalón, Turégano, Belorado, Roa, Herrera de Pisuerga, Medina de Rioseco, Renedo, Cabrejas del Pinar, Valdorros, Carpio y Mayorga;

— ampliación de las estaciones depuradoras de aguas residuales de la Fuente de San Esteban, Lerma;

— estación depuradora de aguas residuales de La Seca;

— eliminación de aportes de agua de lluvia a los colectores de saneamiento de Cabrejas del Pinar;

— tratamiento de aguas residuales del Bajo Bierzo;

— conexiones y estaciones depuradoras de aguas residuales de Mozoncillo, Montemayor de Pililla, Riaza, Campaspero, Torquemada, Matapozuelos, Trespaderne, Mojados, Villarramiel, Alaejos y Nava del Rey, Sanchonuño y Paredes de Nava;

— ampliación de las estaciones depuradoras de aguas residuales de Carrión de los Condes, Cuéllar y Santovenia del Pisuerga;

— estación depuradora de aguas residuales de Serrada;

— inicio de la estación depuradora de aguas residuales de Arija;

— tratamiento de aguas residuales en el espacio natural de la Montaña Palentina;

— conexiones con las estaciones depuradoras de aguas residuales de Simancas y Zaratán (Valladolid) y de Lerma y Villalmanzo (Burgos);

— mejora de la estación depuradora de aguas residuales del Cañón del Río Lobos;

— tratamiento de las aguas residuales del río Pedroso.

Ya ha finalizado el primer grupo de proyectos, que contó con ayudas de la UE por un total de 58 millones de euros (con una tasa de cofinanciación del 80 %). Está previsto que el segundo grupo termine antes de finales de 2015.

Los organismos intermedios encargados de la puesta en práctica del programa han recibido tres anticipos (el 7,5 %) del importe total previsto inicialmente. No obstante, la legislación no regula expresamente los anticipos para proyectos individuales.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004344/14
to the Commission
Iratxe García Pérez (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: EU co-financing for regional policy

Priority 3, Environment, of the Operational Programme for Regional Development 2007-2013 includes a series of projects for wastewater drainage and treatment in the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon. Under the Wastewater Treatment Directive, these projects benefit from EU co-financing ranging between 70% and 80%.

Which of the projects firmly scheduled in this programme have already received EU co-financing?

Which of these projects have already been completed and how much EU co-financing did they receive?

Which of these projects are pending completion?

Has the Autonomous Community of Castile and Leon received any advance from the EU for projects that have been put out to tender through official channels and not yet awarded? If so, which projects are involved and how much did they receive as an advance in each case?

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

The following projects have received co-financing under priority 3 of the 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund programme for Castilla y León:

— connections and waste water treatment plants of Cantimpalos, Arcos de Jalón, Turegano, Belorado, Roa, Herrera de Pisuerga, Medina de Ríoseco, Renedo, Cabrejas del Pinar, Valdorros, Carpio, Mayorga;

— enlargement of wastewater treatment plants in la Fuente de San Esteban, Lerma;

— wastewater treatment plant of La Seca;

— removal of rainwater to the collectors of Cabrejas del Pinar;

— wastewater treatment of el Bajo Bierzo.

— connections and waste water treatment plants of Mozoncillo, Montemayor de Pililla, Riaza, Campaspero, Torquemada, Matapozuelos, Trespaderne, Mojados, Villarramiel, Alaejos y Nava del Rey, Sanchonuño, Paredes de Nava;

— enlargement of wastewater treatment plants in Carrion de los Condes, Cuellar, Santovenia del Pisuerga;

— wastewater treatment plant of Serrada;

— start of the wastewater treatment plant of Arija;

— wastewater treatment of the natural space of Montaña Palentina;

— connections to wastewater treatment plants of Valladolid in Simancas and in Zaratan and of Lerna in Villalmanzo;

— improvement of the wastewater treatment plant of Cañon de Rio de Lobos;

— wastewater treatment of river Pedroso.

The first group of projects above are already finalised and EU support for these projects totals EUR 58 million (at a co-financing rate of 80%). The second group have still to be finalised before end-2015.

The intermediate bodies implementing the programme have received 3 advance payments (7,5%) of the total amount initially programmed. However, advances to individual projects are not provided for by the legislation.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004345/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rapimento di religiosi in Camerun

Il 6 aprile 2014 due sacerdoti italiani e una suora canadese sono stati rapiti nel nord del Camerun.

Don Giampaolo Marta e don Gianatonio Allegri sono ora nelle mani di un gruppo armato di matrice islamica che ha fatto irruzione nella parrocchia in cui prestavano servizio. Al momento sembra che i tre religiosi stiano bene, ma le notizie sono scarse.

Il ministero degli Esteri italiano sta lavorando per trovare una soluzione al caso.

Questo episodio è solo l'ultimo di una lunga serie che prosegue ormai da anni. Violenze contro religiosi e comunità cristiane si ripetono senza sosta in Africa e in molti paesi asiatici, senza che l'Europa intraprenda alcuna forte azione di difesa di queste popolazioni per fermare i massacri ai quali assistiamo con orrore.

Spesso missionari e cittadini europei che si recano in questi paesi in preda a emergenze umanitarie per aiutare la popolazione locale vengono aggrediti, sequestrati, torturati e uccisi da gruppi di fanatici in ragione della loro fede, davanti agli occhi di una Unione che ha fatto della libertà di pensiero e di espressione uno dei propri cardini.

Ciò premesso, non ritiene il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante di dover aiutare la diplomazia italiana, impegnandosi in prima linea, al fine di pervenire a una rapida liberazione dei sacerdoti rapiti?

Non ritiene il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante che gli strumenti diplomatici usati finora siano stati insufficienti, e che sia quindi necessario intervenire con un maggiore impegno, in particolar modo attraverso il Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna, al fine di fermare le persecuzioni e gli atti di violenza?

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

Finora le autorità italiane non hanno chiesto all'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente della Commissione di intervenire nel caso in oggetto. Le trattative per la liberazione delle persone rapite competono in primo luogo alle autorità nazionali, che devono procedere con estrema cautela. Gli Stati membri con una rappresentanza in Camerun collaborano sulle questioni relative alla sicurezza dei cittadini dell'UE mediante frequenti scambi di informazioni e il coordinamento dei consigli per i viaggiatori.

L'UE è fermamente decisa a utilizzare gli strumenti di cui dispone per contribuire a migliorare la sicurezza nell'Africa centrale. Il recente rapimento è un'ulteriore dimostrazione dell'insicurezza che regna tuttora nel nord del Camerun.

Durante l'ultima sessione del dialogo politico UE-Camerun, svoltasi il 16 dicembre 2013, si è discusso di varie questioni inerenti alla sicurezza.

L'UE incoraggia il Camerun, la Nigeria e i paesi limitrofi a collaborare strettamente per affrontare in modo più efficace i problemi di sicurezza della regione, in particolare la minaccia che Boko Haram rappresenta per le province settentrionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004345/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Antonio Cancian (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Abduction of priests and a nun in Cameroon

On 6 April 2014 two Italian priests and a Canadian nun were abducted in northern Cameroon.

Father Giampaolo Marta and Father Gianantonio Allegri are now in the hands of an armed Islamist group that raided the parish in which they served. At present the three are apparently well, but there is little news.

The Italian Foreign Ministry is working to find a solution to the case.

This episode is just the latest in a long series that has been going on for years. Acts of violence against priests, nuns and Christian communities are occurring incessantly in Africa and in many Asian countries, without Europe taking any firm action to defend these people and stop these horrific massacres.

Often, European missionaries and citizens who travel to these countries undergoing humanitarian emergencies, in order to help the local population, are attacked, abducted, tortured and murdered by fanatical groups because of their faith, under the nose of an EU which has made freedom of thought and expression one of its cornerstones.

That said, does the Vice-President/High Representative not think she should help the Italian diplomats by becoming directly involved, in order to secure the release of the abducted priests as soon as possible?

Does the Vice-President/High Representative not agree that the diplomatic tools used so far have been insufficient and that it is therefore necessary to take firmer action, especially through the European External Action Service, in order to stop these persecutions and acts of violence?

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

Up to now, the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission has not been requested by the Italian authorities to intervene on this case. The issue of release of kidnapped persons is primarily a matter for national authorities which need to handle it with great care. Member States represented in Cameroon liaise closely on issues relating to the security of EU citizens through frequent exchanges of information and coordination of travel advisories.

The EU is determined to use the instruments that it has at its disposal to contribute to the improvement of the security situation in Central Africa. The recent abduction has once again highlighted the continued insecurity in northern Cameroon.

A number of security-related topics were raised during the last session of the EU-Cameroon political dialogue held on 16 December 2013.

The EU encourages Cameroon, Nigeria and the neighbouring countries to cooperate closely in order to better meet security-related challenges in the region, and in particular Boko Haram's threats in the Northern provinces.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-004346/14
do Komisji
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(8 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Europejski Fundusz Społeczny dla mniejszości narodowych na Litwie

Mając na uwadze coraz częstsze łamanie praw mniejszości narodowych na Litwie, zwracam się do Komisji Europejskiej z pytaniem dotyczącym podejmowanych działań w celu ochrony mniejszości narodowych na Litwie w odniesieniu do równego korzystania przez nie ze środków Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego (EFS) i uwzględniania ich potrzeb w działaniach programów operacyjnych finansowanych przez ten fundusz.

Raport pt. Evaluation of ESF Support for Enhancing Access to the Labour Market and the Social Inclusion of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities (Country report – Lithuania; http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?pager.offset=55&catId=3&langId=en) jasno wyraża, że w latach 2007-2013 w ogólnym planie wydatkowania funduszy z EFS mniejszościom narodowym nie poświęcono najmniejszej uwagi. W programie Rozwoju Zasobów Ludzkich, który był finansowany z EFS, brak było bowiem jakichkolwiek sprecyzowanych działań na rzecz tych grup. Zwrócić przy tym należy uwagę, że nie było żadnych dowodów na to, że zmniejszone zostały różnice w zatrudnieniu oraz poziomie wykształcenia między mniejszościami narodowymi a litewską większością. Organizacje pozarządowe mniejszości narodowych nie były bezpośrednio zaangażowane w planowanie wydatków programowych zarówno w latach 2004-2006, jak i 2007-2013.

Mając na uwadze art. 2 Traktatu o Unii Europejskiej, zgodnie z którym Unia opiera się na wartościach poszanowania praw człowieka, w tym praw osób należących do mniejszości narodowych oraz przywołując art. 21 Karty Praw Podstawowych Unii Europejskiej, mówiący o zakazie wszelkiej dyskryminacji, w tym ze względu na pochodzenie etniczne lub społeczne czy przynależność do mniejszości narodowej, zwracam się z pytaniem o działania Komisji w celu zapewnienia równego dostępu do środków EFS dla mieszkańców Litwy, w tym osób należących do mniejszości narodowych.

Jakie działania podejmuje Komisja Europejska w celu zapewnienia, by mniejszości narodowe miały wystarczający dostęp do planowania programów operacyjnych na Litwie na lata 2014-2020?

Czy KE może zapewnić, że w kolejnym programowaniu mniejszości narodowe zostaną uwzględnione zarówno w konsultacjach jak i w działaniach programów operacyjnych na Litwie?

Jak Komisja Europejska planuje zapewnić by mniejszości narodowe na Litwie miały wystarczające środki z EFS w celu zmniejszenia przeszkód utrudniających dostęp do litewskiego rynku pracy?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza László Andora w imieniu Komisji
(12 maja 2014 r.)

Litwa, tak samo jak wszystkie państwa członkowskie, musi przestrzegać zasad antydyskryminacyjnych i zasady partnerstwa przy wdrażaniu swoich programów Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego. Komisja nie ma żadnych konkretnych informacji, które wskazywałyby na naruszenie tych zasad.

W okresie finansowania 2007-2013 Litwa otrzymała 6,8 mld EUR z Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego (EFRR), Funduszu Spójności i Europejskiego Funduszu Społecznego (EFS) oraz dodatkowe 4,2 mld EUR poprzez Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich. Całe społeczeństwo Litwy, w tym mniejszości etniczne, może na równych zasadach korzystać z tych funduszy wspierających m.in. inwestycje w dziedzinie kształcenia i szkolenia, zatrudnienia, włączenia społecznego, rozwoju obszarów wiejskich itp.

W raporcie krajowym, na który powołuje się szanowny Pan Poseł, stwierdzono, że EFS nie miał istotnego bezpośredniego wpływu na promowanie dostępu do rynku pracy lub włączenia społecznego mniejszości narodowych, ponieważ szczególne środki nie były wyraźnie ukierunkowane na te grupy. Pośrednio jednak mniejszości odniosły korzyści ze wsparcia na poprawę swoich zdolność do zatrudnienia dzięki ogólnym działaniom realizowanym przez EFS. Ponieważ mniejszości narodowe stanowią około 17 % ludności Litwy, mają one odpowiadający tej wielkości udział w liczbie beneficjentów końcowych EFS" (s. 72).

W odniesieniu do przygotowania nowego okresu finansowania na lata 2014-2020 Litwa, tak jak wszystkie państwa członkowskie, muszą zapewnić przygotowanie umów partnerstwa i programów operacyjnych z uwzględnieniem zasad partnerstwa i zasad antydyskryminacyjnych (art. 5 ust. 1 i art. 7 rozporządzenia (UE) nr 1303/2013; europejski kodeks postępowania w zakresie partnerstwa). Trwa obecnie proces programowania i Litwa będzie musiała przedłożyć Komisji Europejskiej raport, jak zasady te były przez nią przestrzegane.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004346/14
to the Commission
Jarosław Kalinowski (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: European Social Fund for national minorities in Lithuania

Given the increasingly frequent violations of national minorities' rights in Lithuania, I would like to put a question to the Commission regarding the steps that are being taken to protect national minorities in Lithuania in terms of ensuring that they have equal access to financing from the European Social Fund (ESF) and that their needs are taken into account in the actions of operational programmes financed by the ESF.

A report entitled 'Evaluation of ESF Support for Enhancing Access to the Labour Market and the Social Inclusion of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities' (Country report — Lithuania; http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?pager.offset=55&catId=3&langId=en) clearly demonstrates that, between 2007 and 2013, the general plan for the disbursement of EFS funds did not take the slightest notice of national minorities. The Human Resources Development Operational Programme, which was funded from the ESF, did not include any specific actions aimed at these groups. At the same time, it should be pointed out that there is no evidence proving that the discrepancies in employment and educational levels that exist between the Lithuanian majority and national minorities have been reduced. NGOs acting on behalf of national minorities were not directly involved in the process of planning programme expenditure in the years 2004-2006 and 2007-2013.

Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that 'the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities', and Article 21 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states that any discrimination based on any grounds, such as ethnic or social origin or membership of a national minority, is prohibited. In this context, what steps is the Commission taking to ensure that the residents of Lithuania — including members of national minorities — have equal access to ESF funds?

What steps is the Commission taking to ensure that national minorities can make an appropriate contribution to the planning of operational programmes in Lithuania in the 2014-2020 period?

Can the Commission ensure that national minorities are included during consultations on and actions under operational programmes in Lithuania over the next programming period?

How does the Commission plan to ensure that national minorities in Lithuania have adequate access to ESF funds, with a view to reducing the barriers to employment that exist on the Lithuanian jobs market?

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

Lithuania, like all Member States, has to respect the principles of anti-discrimination and partnership in implementing its ESF programmes. The Commission has no specific information that this is not the case.

Over the 2007-2013 funding period, Lithuania received EUR 6.8 billion under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund (ESF), and a further EUR 4.2 billion through the Rural Development Fund. The whole population of Lithuania, including ethnic minorities, can equally benefit from these funds supporting *inter alia* investments in education, employment, training, social inclusion, rural development, etc.

The country report referred to by the Honourable Member concludes that 'the ESF has not had a significant direct impact in promoting access to the labour market or the social inclusion of national minorities, because these groups have not been explicitly targeted through specific measures. However, indirectly, minorities will have benefited from support to strengthen their employability through general ESF measures. Since national minorities account for approximately 17% of the Lithuanian population, they account for a corresponding share of ESF final beneficiaries' (p.72).

With regard to the preparation for the new 2014-2020 funding period, Lithuania, like all Member States, has to ensure that the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes are prepared taking into consideration the principles of partnership and non-discrimination (Articles 5(1) and 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013; European Code of Conduct on Partnership). The programming process is ongoing and Lithuania will have to report to the European Commission how these principles have been respected.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys P-004347/14
komissiolle
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(8. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Tiedon lisääminen kantasolurekistereistä ja vapaaehtoisten luovuttajaehdokkaiden rekrytointi

Veren kantasolut ovat soluja, joista kaikki verisolut eli punasolut, valkosolut ja verihiutaleet muodostuvat. Luovutetuilla veren kantasoluilla voidaan hoitaa eräitä vakavia verisairauksia, esimerkiksi leukemiaa ja aplastista anemiaa. Useimmiten kantasolut kerätään luovuttajalta antamalla hänelle kasvutekijäpistoksia, jolloin kantasoluja siirtyy luuytimestä verenkiertoon, josta ne voidaan kerätä tavallisena verenluovutuksena. Noin kolmellekymmenelle prosentille veren kantasoluja tarvitsevista potilaista löytyy sopiva luovuttaja omasta perhepiiristä, mutta valtaosa joutuu turvautumaan tuntemattomaan luovuttajaan, joka on rekisteröity kantasolurekistereihin. Kantasolurekisteriin voi liittyä, mikäli henkilö täyttää tarvittavat terveys- ja ikäkriteerit. Valtaosaa rekisteriin kuuluvista luovuttajaehdokkaista ei koskaan kutsuta luovuttamaan kantasoluja. Esimerkiksi Suomessa kantasolurekisteriin kuuluu 22 000 henkilöä, mutta vuosittain kantasoluja luovuttaa 20–40 henkilöä. Maailmanlaajuisesti kantasolurekistereihin on liittynyt yli 20 miljoonaa vapaaehtoista.

Kantasoluhoidon onnistumisen kannalta tärkeintä on, että luovuttajan kudostyyppi on potilaalle sopiva. Tämä edellyttää mahdollisimman kattavaa potentiaalisten luovuttajien rekisteriä, jotta sopivan kudostyypin omaava luovuttaja löytyisi hoitoa tarvitsevalle potilaalle, erityisesti mikäli potilaalla on harvinainen kudostyyppi. Sopivaa kantasoluluovuttajaa voidaan myös etsiä kansainvälisestä kantasolurekistereiden verkostosta, jolloin sopivan luovuttajan löytymisen mahdollisuus moninkertaistuu. Kantasolurekistereihin kaivataan etenkin lisää nuoria miehiä, koska biologisista syistä johtuen mies valikoituu luovuttajaksi useammin kuin nainen.

Kantasolurekistereihin liitytään vapaaehtoisesti. Jotta rekistereihin saataisiin lisää vapaaehtoisia luovuttajaehdokkaita, on tärkeää, että tietoa kantasolurekistereistä ja niiden tärkeydestä lisätään.

Mihin toimiin komissio aikoo ryhtyä, jotta EU:n tasolla lisättäisiin tietoa kantasolurekistereistä ja niiden tärkeydestä, etenkin nuorten miesten keskuudessa?

Miten komissio voisi omalta osaltaan toimia, jotta lisää vapaaehtoisia luovuttajaehdokkaita, etenkin nuoria miehiä, kannustettaisiin liittymään kantasolurekistereihin jäsenvaltioissa?

Tonio Borgin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(10. toukokuuta 2014)

Komissio katsoo arvoisan parlamentin jäsenen tavoin, että on tarpeen lisätä veren kantasolujen mahdollisten luovuttajien määrää Euroopan unionissa. Mahdollisen luovuttajien hankkimista (myös tiedotustoimia) koskeva sääntely kuuluu edelleen EU:n jäsenvaltioiden vastuulle. Direktiivin 2004/23/EY ([1]) 12 artiklan mukaan jäsenvaltioiden on annettava komissiolle kolmen vuoden välein kertomus toimenpiteistä, jotka on toteutettu sen varmistamiseksi, että kudos- ja soluluovutukset tapahtuvat vapaaehtoisesti ja maksutta. Komissio toimittaa puolestaan Euroopan parlamentille ja neuvostolle kertomuksen tällaisista toimenpiteistä. Komissio laatii parhaillaan tällaista kertomusta, ja tämä viimeisin kertomus sisältää luvun tiedotustoimista, joita on toteutettu luovutusten edistämiseksi.

Yleisemmällä tasolla direktiivissä 2004/23/EY säädetään ihmiskudosten ja -solujen luovuttamista, hankintaa, testausta, käsittelyä, säilömistä, säilytystä ja jakelua koskevista vaatimuksista. Lisäksi tällä hetkellä on käynnissä komission rahoittama yhteinen toimi ([2]), jossa on osallistujia 17 jäsenvaltiosta ja jossa tarkastellaan muun muassa tapoja parantaa veren kantasolujen luovuttajien turvallisuutta ja erityisesti mahdollisuutta perustaa seurantarekistereitä, joilla varmistetaan, että luovuttajille annetaan luovutuksen jälkeistä hoitoa. Laatiessaan laatua ja luovuttajien turvallisuutta koskevia vaatimuksia ja varmistamalla niiden täytäntöönpanon eri puolilla EU:ta komissio itse asiassa edistää kudosten ja solujen luovutusta perussopimukseen perustuvan toimivaltansa mukaisesti ([3]).

([1]) Euroopan parlamentin ja neuvoston direktiivi 2004/23/EY, 31.3.2004, EUVL L 102, 7.4.2004, s. 48.
([2]) Yhteinen toimi "ARTHIQS": Lisääntymisteknologiaa varten tarkoitettujen sukusolujen sekä elinsiirtoja varten tarkoitettujen hematopoeettisten kantasolujen luovutusta, keruuta, testausta, käsittelyä, varastointia ja jakelua koskevat hyvät käytännöt.
([3]) Euroopan unionin toiminnasta tehdyn sopimuksen 168 artiklan 4 kohdan a alakohta.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004347/14
to the Commission
Sari Essayah (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Spreading awareness of stem cell registers and recruitment of volunteer potential donors

Hematopoietic stem cells (HSCs) are the blood cells that give rise to all other blood cells: erythrocytes, leucocytes and platelets. Donated HSCs can be used to treat various serious blood diseases, such as leukaemia and aplastic anaemia. HSCs are most commonly harvested from donors by giving them growth factor injections, inducing HSCs to move from bone marrow into the bloodstream, from which they can be harvested by means of normal blood donation. Suitable donors for some 30% of patients who require HSCs can be found among their own relatives, but the majority of patients are dependent on anonymous donors who are entered in stem cell registers. It is possible to be entered in such a register if one meets the requisite health and age criteria. Most potential donors who are registered are never actually asked to donate stem cells. In Finland, for example, 22 000 people are registered, but only 20-40 people per annum donate cells. Worldwide, more than 20 million volunteers are registered.

In order for stem cell treatment to be a success, the most important thing is that the tissue type of the donor should match that of the patient. This requires as comprehensive as possible a register of potential donors, so that a donor with the right tissue type can be found for a patient requiring treatment, particularly if the patient has a rare type of tissue. A suitable HSC donor may also be sought from the international network of HSC registers, making it many times more likely that a matching donor can be found. There is a particular need to persuade more young men to register as donors, because, for biological reasons, men are selected as donors more often than women.

Registration as an HSC donor is voluntary. In order to encourage more volunteers to register, it is important to spread awareness of HSC registers and their importance.

What will the Commission do to increase at EU level the information that reaches people — especially young men — about HSC registers and their importance?

What could the Commission, for its part, do to encourage more people, particularly young men, to volunteer as potential donors and to have their particulars recorded in HSC registers in the Member States?

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

The Commission shares the Honourable Member's concerns on the need to increase the number of potential hematopoietic stem cell (HSCs) donors within the European Union. Regulation of the recruitment of such potential donors including promotional activities related to such recruitment remains the responsibility of EU Member States. Article 12 of Directive 2004/23/EC ([1]) obliges Member States to report to the Commission every three years on measures taken to ensure donations of tissues and cells remain voluntary and unpaid. In turn the Commission transmits to the European Parliament and to the Council of Ministers a report on such measures. The latest report is currently being prepared by the Commission and includes a chapter on promotional activities undertaken in order to encourage such donation.

In more general terms Directive 2004/23/EC lays down a framework of quality and safety standards for the donation, procurement, testing, processing, preservation, storage and distribution of human tissues and cells. In addition a Commission-funded Joint Action ([2]) is currently underway featuring participants from 17 Member States looking at, *inter alia*, ways to improve donor safety in the HSC sector, in particular through the set-up of follow-up registries to ensure follow-up care is provided to HSC donors. By creating and ensuring the implementation of a high level of quality and safety for such donors across the EU, the Commission is *de facto* encouraging tissue and cell donation in line with its Treaty mandate ([3]).

([1]) Directive 2004/23/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 March 2004, OJ L 102, 7.4.2004, p. 48.
([2]) Joint Action 'Arthiqs': Good practices for the donation, collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of gametes for assisted reproductive technologies and hematopoietic stem cells for transplantation.
([3]) Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Article 168 (4)(a).

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004348/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Ayuda estatal: El Tribunal de Cuentas eleva las ayudas a la banca a 107 914 millones de euros, cifra que engloba los recursos públicos empleados en la reestructuración de entidades financieras

El Tribunal de Cuentas ha elevado a 107 914 millones de euros «los recursos públicos empleados o comprometidos en la reestructuración de entidades financieras, como consecuencia de las actuaciones realizadas entre 2009 y 2012». Así lo señala en un informe remitido al Congreso de los Diputados ([1]).

Esta cifra es superior en un 75 % a la de 61 366 millones anunciada el pasado año por el Banco de España, ya que el Tribunal de Cuentas ha decidido contabilizar otras partidas adicionales como son los Esquemas de Protección de Activos (EPA) concedidos al Banco Sabadell por la absorción de la Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo, o a CaixaBank por el Banco de Valencia, entre otros. Los EPA suman 28 666 millones. El Tribunal de Cuentas también contabiliza, por ejemplo, líneas de crédito comprometidas por valor de 16 300 millones o el coste del informe de Oliver Wyman, que alcanzó los 37,9 millones de euros.

La aportación directa de capital al sector financiero fue de 57 004 millones de euros, a lo que hay que añadir «conceptos de naturaleza diversa» y que alcanzan prácticamente el doble.

Fuentes del Fondo de Reestructuración Ordenada Bancaria (FROB) señalaron que no comparten las cifras del Tribunal y pusieron como ejemplo que contabiliza más de 1 000 millones de euros de línea de crédito a CajaSur, de los que no se llegó a disponer. Sin embargo, el informe deja fuera el posible coste para las arcas públicas de la Sareb, el banco malo creado para dar salida a activos inmobiliarios de la banca.

A la luz de lo anterior:

¿Puede la Comisión confirmar estos números?

¿Aplicó la Comisión las normas sobre ayudas estatales a todos los casos contemplados en estos 107 914 millones de euros?

¿Está segura la Comisión de que estas ayudas estatales (artículo 107 del TUE) no distorsionan la competencia dentro del sector bancario español y europeo?

Teniendo en cuenta las nuevas normas sobre ayudas estatales, ¿requerirán las futuras recapitalizaciones con dinero público la aplicación de una recapitalización interna (*bail-in*)?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión está al corriente del informe emitido por el Tribunal de Cuentas español. La Comisión no puede confirmar las cifras recopiladas por las Administraciones Nacionales. La Comisión, no obstante, analiza y aprueba las ayudas estatales otorgadas a las entidades financieras de España y otros Estados miembros de forma individual ([2]).

Las normas sobre ayudas estatales se han aplicado en España ([3]) y en otros Estados miembros en los que las medidas fueron notificadas por los Estados miembros de conformidad con los Tratados de la UE. Para que las medidas de ayuda estatal puedan ser legalmente concedidas ([4]), deben notificarse formalmente a la Comisión.

Por definición, las medidas de ayuda estatal pueden tener por efecto el falseamiento de la competencia en el ámbito nacional o europeo. Sin embargo, no conceder ayudas a los bancos españoles en un momento de grandes tensiones hubiera dado lugar a un notable riesgo para la estabilidad financiera del país. La Comisión analiza el posible falseamiento de la competencia en cada una de sus decisiones, y las medidas se declararon compatibles con el mercado interior, dada la existencia de una serie de medidas destinadas a limitar dicho falseamiento.

La nueva Comunicación bancaria de 2013 exige, en la línea de las normas acordadas en el memorándum de entendimiento entre el Eurogrupo y el Gobierno español, que los accionistas y los acreedores subordinados deben contribuir a la recapitalización del banco en la mayor medida posible a través de la aplicación de diferentes medidas antes de que el Estado inyecte capital en el banco. Si bien existen dos excepciones muy limitadas y específicas a la norma general, podemos confirmar que la distribución adecuada de las cargas por parte de los accionistas y los acreedores subordinados es obligatoria en España y los demás Estados miembros desde el 1 de agosto de 2013.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/economia/2014/04/07/5342f178e2704efc648b4582.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/scoreboard/amounts_used_2008-2012.xls
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-126_es.htm
([4]) Es decir, declaradas compatibles con el mercado interior.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004348/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: State aid: Court of Auditors raises aid to the banking system to EUR 107 914 million, encompassing public funds used to restructure financial entities

The Spanish Court of Auditors has raised the amount of public money used or committed for the restructuring of financial entities as a result of the actions carried out between 2009 and 2012 to EUR 107 914 million, according to a report submitted to the Congress of Deputies ([1]).

This represents a 75% increase on the EUR 61 366 million announced last year by the Bank of Spain, since the Court of Auditors has decided to include other additional headings such as the asset protection schemes (APS) granted to Banco Sabadell for the absorption of Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo and to CaixaBank for Banco de Valencia, among others. These APS total EUR 28 666 million. The Court of Auditors also included in its calculations committed credit lines worth EUR 16 300 million and the cost of the Oliver Wyman report, EUR 37.9 million.

The direct capital contribution to the financial sector stood at EUR 57 004 million, to which should be added 'miscellaneous' contributions amounting to almost double that sum.

Sources from the Fund for Orderly Bank Restructuring (FROB) have said that they do not endorse the Court's figures and cited the example of the EUR 1 billion plus credit line for CajaSur, which was included in the calculations but never in fact made available. On the other hand, the report fails to take account of the possible cost to the Treasury resulting from Sareb, the bad bank set up to dispose of banks' property assets.

Can the Commission confirm these figures?

Has the Commission applied the state aid rules to all the cases involved in this EUR 107 914 million sum?

Is the Commission sure that this state aid (Article 107 TEU) has not distorted competition in the Spanish and European banking sector?

Bearing in mind the new rules on state aid, will future recapitalisations with public money require internal recapitalisation (a bail-in)?

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

The Commission is aware of the report issued by Spanish Court of Auditors. The Commission cannot confirm the figures compiled by national administrations. The Commission does, however, analyse and approve state aid measures granted to financial institutions in Spain and in other Member States on an individual basis ([2]).

State aid rules have been applied in Spain ([3]) and in other Member States where the measures were notified by the Member States in accordance with the EU Treaties. For state aid measures to be legally granted ([4]), they need to be formally notified to the Commission.

By definition, state aid measures may have the effect of distorting competition at domestic and/or European level. However, not granting aid to Spanish banks at a time of great distress would have resulted in a massive risk for the country's financial stability. The Commission analyses the potential distortion of competition in each of its decisions, and the measures were declared compatible with the internal market, taking into account a number of measures aimed at limiting those distortions.

The new 2013 Banking Communication does require, along the lines of the rules agreed under the memorandum of understanding between the Eurogroup and the Spanish Government, that existing shareholders and junior creditors must contribute to the recapitalisation of the bank to the maximum extent through the implementation of different measures, prior to the State injecting fresh capital into the bank. While there are two very limited and specific exceptions to the general rule, we can confirm that adequate burden-sharing by shareholders and subordinated creditors is required in Spain and all other Member States as of 1 August 2013.

([1]) http://www.elmundo.es/economia/2014/04/07/5342f178e2704efc648b4582.html
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/scoreboard/amounts_used_2008-2012.xls
([3]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-126_en.htm
([4]) i.e. declared compatible with the internal market.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004349/14
alla Commissione
Mara Bizzotto (EFD) e Mario Borghezio (NI)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuovi domini web nel settore vitivinicolo mettono a rischio le denominazioni d'origine — Richiesta di intervento da parte dell'UE

Il Commissario europeo all'agricoltura Dacian Ciolos, in una recente dichiarazione sul tema della liberalizzazione da parte dell'ICANN, l'organismo responsabile della gestione del sistema dei nomi di dominio Internet, dei domini web .vin e .wine, ha affermato che è inaccettabile una semplice liberalizzazione di essi senza garanzie specifiche a tutela delle indicazioni geografiche aggiungendo che esse «… sono una delle principali priorità nei negoziati commerciali internazionali dell'UE. Essi rappresentano uno strumento fondamentale per tutelare i consumatori e valorizzare gli sforzi dei produttori, non solo in Europa, ma in tutto il mondo».

Si tengano presenti le recenti dichiarazioni e la risposta all'interrogazione E-009482-13 dell'interrogante «Nuovi domini web nel settore vitivinicolo mettono a rischio le denominazioni d'origine» nella quale la Commissione affermava che si sarebbe adoperata presso l'ICANN per salvaguardare gli interessi pubblici dell'UE e che si sarebbe messa «anche in diretto contatto con il comitato direttivo dell'ICANN per garantire che gli interessi dell'UE siano presi nella dovuta considerazione prima di approvare i due nomi di dominio .wine e .vin.».

Alla luce di quanto precede, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. Può riferire in merito agli sviluppi della situazione?

2. Può riferire come intende fattualmente evitare che tali domini vengano sfruttati da persone fisiche o società che nulla hanno a che fare con la produzione di vini tutelati da indicazioni geografiche di origine?

3. Intende chiedere l'interdizione della creazione stessa dei domini sopra indicati se non dovesse essere possibile fornire garanzie specifiche ed elevate per evitare lo sfruttamento improprio delle denominazioni?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(28 maggio 2014)

I domini di primo livello generici (gTLD) .wine e .vin sono stati oggetto di un acceso dibattito in occasione della recente riunione del Comitato consultivo governativo (GAC) dell'ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), durante la quale la Commissione ha difeso con forza la protezione delle indicazioni geografiche (IG) per i nomi di dominio. Nelle sue azioni la Commissione è stata sostenuta da una solida rete di cooperazione interservizi nei settori delle indicazioni geografiche, degli scambi e dei diritti di proprietà intellettuale.

In risposta alla recente decisione dell'ICANN di assegnare le stringhe senza prevedere garanzie adeguate, la Commissione europea, insieme agli Stati membri dell'UE, ha assunto una posizione ferma. Attraverso pressioni dirette e tramite azioni all'interno del GAC è stata chiesta una revisione totale della decisione. Questa posizione ha permesso di ottenere, il 4 aprile 2014, che l'ICANN rinviasse la decisione sulle estensioni .wine e .vin, concedendo alle parti ([1]) un ulteriore termine di 60 giorni per negoziare una soluzione accettabile per tutti. La Commissione ha accolto pubblicamente con favore tale decisione ma ha comunque avviato, a titolo cautelativo ([2]), un'azione procedurale nel confronti dell'ICANN, presentando una richiesta di riesame (ricorso formale davanti al consiglio dell'ICANN) ([3]).

Negli ultimi 13 mesi la Commissione è riuscita ad ottenere il rinvio dell'assegnazione dei gTLD in questione ed si sta adoperando per facilitare i negoziati tra i titolari dei diritti sulle indicazioni geografiche e i richiedenti dei domini .wine e .vin. Stando alle norme interne all'ICANN, la Commissione non può impedire l'utilizzo, nel nome di un dominio, di un'indicazione geografica di un vino da parte di soggetti che non hanno alcun legame con l'IG in questione se questi hanno ricevuto l'autorizzazione dal comitato direttivo dell'ICANN senza adeguate garanzie. Il blocco dei gTLD in questione per impedirne l'utilizzo nell'UE dovrebbe essere coordinato a livello nazionale.

([1]) Titolari dei diritti sulle indicazioni geografiche e richiedenti dei nuovi gTLD. La questione non riguarda solo i titolari dei diritti sulle indicazioni geografiche bensì anche l'insieme astratto di tutte le persone fisiche/giuridiche che rispettano e utilizzano le caratteristiche proprie di una data IG.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-108_en.htm
([3]) http://www.icann.org/en/groups/board/governance/reconsideration/14-13

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004349/14
to the Commission
Mara Bizzotto (EFD) and Mario Borghezio (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: New web domains in the wine-growing sector threaten designations of origin — request for EU intervention

In a recent statement on the release by ICANN, the body responsible for the management of the Internet domain naming system, of the domains .vin and .wine, the European Commissioner for Agriculture, Dacian Ciolos, stated that their simple release is unacceptable without specific safeguards to protect geographical indications, which, he added, '… are one of the main priorities in international trade negotiations within the EU. They represent a basic tool to protect consumers and add value to the work of producers, not only in Europe but throughout the world'.

We recall recent statements and the answer to our Question E-009482-13 'New web domains in the wine-growing sector threaten designations of origin', in which the Commission stated that it would make every effort with ICANN to safeguard EU public interests and that it would also 'make direct contact with the executive committee of ICANN to ensure that proper consideration is given to EU interests before approving the two domain names .wine and .vin'.

In view of the foregoing,

1. Can the Commission comment on the developments of the situation?

2. Can the Commission state how it in fact intends to prevent such domains from being used by individuals or companies unconnected with the production of wines protected by geographical indications of origin?

3. Does the Commission intend to prohibit the creation of the domains referred to where it is not possible to put strong, specific safeguards in place to prevent designations from being improperly used?

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

The generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs) .wine and .vin have been heavily debated in recent meeting of the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), where the Commission has strongly advocated the protection of Geographical Indications (GIs) in domain names. Commission actions have been backed by a solid inter-service cooperation in the areas of Geographical Indications, Trade and Intellectual Property Rights.

In reaction to ICANN's recent decision to delegate the strings without specific safeguards, the Commission and EU Member States have taken a strong stance. Through direct pressure and through actions in the GAC we have demanded a full review of the decision. As a consequence, on 4 April 2014, ICANN postponed the .wine and .vin extensions, granting 60 additional days for the parties ([1]) to negotiate towards an agreeable solution. The Commission publicly welcomed this decision but nevertheless took procedural action against ICANN as a precautionary measure ([2]) by introducing a Reconsideration Request (formal appeal to the ICANN Board) ([3]).

The Commission has managed to postpone the delegation of the wine gTLDs for the last 13 months and is actively facilitating the negotiations between right-holders of GIs and the applicants of .vin and .wine. According to ICANN's rules there is no possibility for the Commission to prevent wine GIs from being used in a domain name by actors unconnected with the GI in question if the ICANN Board eventually was to delegate them without appropriate safeguards. Blocking of those gTLDs to prevent their use in the EU would have to be coordinated at national level.

([1]) Right holders of GIs and the applicants for the new gTLDs. Please note that GI right holders are not only those involved in this dispute, but the abstract collectivity of natural/legal persons respecting and making use of the enshrined specification of a given GI.
([2]) http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-14-108_en.htm
([3]) http://www.icann.org/en/groups/board/governance/reconsideration/14-13

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004350/14
aan de Commissie
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(8 april 2014)

Betreft: Europese Cloud Strategie

1. Heeft de Europese Commissie gehoord van de Amerikaanse wetten Patriot en FISA en kent zij de implicaties daarvan voor het werken met IT-bedrijven uit de Verenigde Staten?

2. Is de Commissie bekend met het rapport van het Europees Parlement over de onthullingen van de klokkenluider Edward Snowden, die in detail verslag heeft gedaan over de praktijken van de Amerikaanse inlichtingendiensten? Is de Commissie bekend met programma's van NSA die erop gericht zijn massaal data te ontfutselen aan de diensten van cloud computing-bedrijven?

3. Erkent de Commissie dat als gebruik wordt gemaakt van Amerikaanse leveranciers van software er een extra groot risico bestaat dat deze software ingebouwde aftapvoorzieningen bevat ten behoeve van Amerikaanse inlichtingendiensten? Hoe verenigt de Commissie haar keuze voor Hewlett Packard met de uitspraken van Commissaris Neelie Kroes in de Telegraaf van 24 september 2013 dat Europa een eigen cloudinfrastructuur nodig heeft om de gegevens van Europese burgers, bedrijven en overheden veilig te kunnen opslaan ([1])?

4. Welke stappen heeft de Commissie tot nu toe precies gezet om de ontwikkeling van een onafhankelijke Europese cloudindustrie te stimuleren in reactie op het rapport van het Parlement over de door de Commissie voorgestelde cloudstrategie ([2])? Kan de Commissie een overzicht geven van haar investeringen en subsidies voor ontwikkeling van cloud computing-diensten aan Europese, Amerikaanse en overige bedrijven in de afgelopen vijf jaar?

Antwoord van mevrouw Kroes namens de Commissie
(2 juni 2014)

Wat betreft de door het geachte Parlementslid aangehaalde kwesties, keurde de Commissie op 27 november 2013 haar mededeling aan het Europees Parlement en de Raad goed betreffende „Herstellen van vertrouwen in de gegevensstromen tussen de EU en de VS", waarbij zij zich liet leiden door het verslag van het Europees Parlement van 12 maart 2014.

Wat betreft de steun van de Commissie voor het ontwikkelen van Europese aanbieders van cloud computing, verwijst zij het geachte Parlementslid naar de aanbevelingen over Trusted Cloud Europe die recent werden gepubliceerd door het Europees cloud-partnerschap. In aansluiting op een openbare raadpleging over deze aanbevelingen zal de Commissie verdere mogelijke beleidsactiviteiten over dit onderwerp in overweging nemen.

Op het gebied van financiering ondersteunt de Commissie de ontwikkeling van cloud-computing in Europa door middel van het zevende kaderprogramma voor onderzoek en innovatie (FP7) en Horizon 2020. Volgens de regels voor deelname aan deze programma's kunnen in de EU gevestigde bedrijven in aanmerking komen voor financiële steun, waaronder ook bedrijven die deel uitmaken van een grotere commerciële groep met filialen buiten de EU. Onafhankelijke beoordelaars maken een selectie van de projecten op basis van wetenschappelijke kwaliteit, projectbeheer en impact van het project, maar niet op basis van de geografische herkomst van het bedrijf.

Het project „Confidential and Compliant Clouds" (Coco Cloud) wordt door het FP7 gefinancierd onder subsidieovereenkomst nr. 610853. Aan het projectconsortium nemen negen partners deel, uit vier verschillende lidstaten en Noorwegen. De coördinator van het consortium is Hewlett Packard Italiana SRI, een in de EU gevestigd bedrijf dat aan alle noodzakelijke vereisten voldoet om aan FP7-projecten te kunnen deelnemen.

Op die plaatsen waar ze in de operationele programma's van de lidstaten tot de prioriteiten behoorde, is ook financiële steun verstrekt uit de structuurfondsen ten behoeve van de cloud-infrastructuur.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/digitaal/21916656/__Kroes_wil_Europese_cloud_voor_data__.html.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0535&format=XML&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004350/14
to the Commission
Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: European Cloud Strategy

1. Has the Commission heard about the US Patriot Act and FISA, and is it aware of their implications for working with IT companies from the USA?

2. Is the Commission aware of the European Parliament's report on the revelations by the whistle-blower Edward Snowden, who reported in detail on the practices of the US intelligence services? Is the Commission aware of NSA programmes which have the purpose of gaining access by stealth, on a massive scale, to data which cloud computing firms store as a service to customers?

3. Does the Commission recognise that, if American software suppliers are used, there is an extra-large risk that the software may contain built-in loopholes to enable the US intelligence services to access it? How does the Commission reconcile its choice of Hewlett Packard with the statement by Commissioner Neelie Kroes in *de Telegraaf* of 24 September 2013 that Europe needs its own cloud infrastructure in order to be able to store the data of European citizens, businesses and authorities securely ([1])?

4. Exactly what steps has the Commission so far taken in order to encourage the development of a separate, European cloud industry in response to Parliament's report on the cloud strategy proposed by the Commission ([2])? Can the Commission provide an overview of its investments and subsidies to European, American and other businesses for the development of cloud computing services in the past five years?

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

In relation to the issues raised by the Honourable Member, the Commission adopted on 27 November 2013 a communication to the European Parliament and the Council on 'Rebuilding Trust in EU-US Data Flows' and has taken fully into account the European Parliament's report adopted on 12 March 2014.

As regards its support for development of European cloud computing providers, the Commission refers the Honourable Member to the recommendations on Trusted Cloud Europe that were recently published by the European Cloud Partnership. Following a public consultation on these recommendations, the Commission will consider possible future policy activities in this field.

As regards funding, the Commission supports the development of cloud computing in Europe through the Seventh Research and Innovation Framework Programme (FP7) and Horizon 2020. The rules of participation in these programmes determine that EU-based firms, including those that may be part of a wider commercial group with presence also in non-EU countries, can receive support. The project selection is made by independent evaluators against the criteria of scientific quality, project management and impact, not the geographic origin of the firm.

The 'Confidential and Compliant Clouds' (Coco Cloud) project is funded under FP7, grant agreement n°610853. The project consortium has nine partners from four different EU Member States and Norway, with Hewlett Packard Italiana SRL as its coordinator, which is an EU-based company fulfilling all the necessary prerequisites to participate in FP7 projects.

Cloud infrastructure provision has also been supported under the Structural Funds, where prioritised in Member States Operational Programmes.

([1]) http://www.telegraaf.nl/digitaal/21916656/__Kroes_wil_Europese_cloud_voor_data__.html
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0535&format=XML&language=EN

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004351/14
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8. April 2014)

Betrifft: Betrugsfälle bei Parallelschaltungen von SIM-Karten

Zwischen Handynetzbetreibern in Europa und Drittstaaten sind etliche Fälle von Parallelschaltungen bekannt geworden. Jüngstes Beispiel ist ein Telefonat mit einem österreichischen Handy in Spanien zu Mehrwertnummern. Hier kommt der Verdacht auf, dass es sich um organisierten Betrug handelt.

1. Diese Parallelschaltungsbetrüge funktionieren ähnlich wie Kreditkartenbetrug. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, die ähnlich der Zahlungsverkehrsrichtlinie den Konsumenten bei nicht autorisierten Telefonaten mit einer Betrugsobergrenze schützen?

2. Welche Konsumentenschutzmaßnahmen bzw. -anforderungen für Anbieter gibt es bereits bei verloren gegangenen, gestohlenen oder sonst abhandengekommenen Mobiltelefonen?

3. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen bzw. Schutzmechanismen gemeinsam mit dem Gremium Europäischer Regulierungsstellen für elektronische Kommunikation (GEREK) und der Internationalen Fernmeldeunion (ITU), um den Konsumenten und die Betreiber vor solchen Betrugsfällen zu schützen?

4. Plant die Kommission Maßnahmen, um auch die Betreiber von nicht gerechtfertigten Gebühren bei internationalen Telefonaten im Roaming zu schützen? Wer muss die Kosten für einen Betrugsfall wie oben geschildert tragen?

Antwort von Frau Kroes im Namen der Kommission
(12. Mai 2014)

Der EU-Rechtsrahmen für die elektronische Kommunikation enthält verschiedene Bestimmungen zum Schutz der Verbraucher u. a. in Bezug auf vertragliche Informationen, Transparenz, Kontrolle des Nutzungsumfangs und Streitbeilegungsverfahren. Im Hinblick auf spezifische Fälle von Betrug oder Missbrauch wird den nationalen Behörden durch den Rechtsrahmen auch die Befugnis eingeräumt, von Anbietern elektronischer Kommunikationsdienste zu verlangen, dass sie bei Betrug oder Missbrauch den Zugang zu bestimmten Nummern oder Diensten sperren. Die Kommission arbeitet gemeinsam mit dem GEREK ([1]) auf eine intensivere Zusammenarbeit auf EU-Ebene in Betrugs- und Missbrauchsfällen hin ([2]).

Der Vorschlag der Kommission für eine Verordnung über Maßnahmen zum europäischen Binnenmarkt der elektronischen Kommunikation und zur Verwirklichung des vernetzten Kontinents ([3]) umfasst geänderte Vorschriften für das Roaming und die Kosten von Anrufen innerhalb der EU sowie verstärkte Maßnahmen zum Schutz der Endnutzer, unter anderem besondere Vorschriften über die Kontrolle des Nutzungsumfangs, eine angemessene Benachrichtigung und die Möglichkeiten für Endnutzer, Obergrenzen für Entgelte festzulegen, so dass ihre Kosten diese Schwellenwerte nicht überschreiten. Ferner beinhaltet der Vorschlag verbesserte Verfahren für die Beilegung grenzübergreifender Streitigkeiten, Bestimmungen zum Schutz der Verbraucher und solche für die Zusammenarbeit zwischen nationalen Regulierungsbehörden.

Was schließlich die verloren gegangenen oder gestohlenen Geräte anbelangt, so bietet die sichere internationale Mobilfunkgerätekennung (IMEI) in Mobiltelefonen in der EU im Hinblick auf Diebstahlprävention und Verbraucherschutz zusätzlichen Schutz. Die nationalen Behörden sind befugt, gegebenenfalls zusätzliche Maßnahmen zu ergreifen. Die Verbraucher sollten Fälle von verloren gegangenen oder gestohlenen Geräten den für die Durchsetzung der Vorschriften zuständigen Stellen melden; diese fallen in der Regel unter die nationalen Strafrechtsvorschriften und die Vorschriften zur Betrugsverhütung.

([1]) Gremium europäischer Regulierungsstellen für elektronische Kommunikation (GEREK).
([2]) http://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/subject_matter/berec/regulatory_best_practices/guidelines/1226-article-282-universal-service-directive-a-harmonised-berec-cooperation-process-berec-guidance-paper
([3]) KOM(2013)627.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004351/14
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Fraud carried out with parallel SIM card switching

Many cases of parallel switching between mobile network operators in Europe and non-EU countries have come to light. The most recent example was a phone call made in Spain from an Austrian mobile to premium-rate numbers. This leads one to suspect that organised fraud is taking place.

1. This kind of fraud operates in a similar way to credit card fraud. Does the Commission intend to take measures which will protect consumers with a fraud ceiling for unauthorised phone calls, as with the Payment Services Directive?

2. What consumer protection measures and requirements concerning lost or stolen mobiles are in place for service providers?

3. Is the Commission planning to take measures or introduce protection mechanisms in conjunction with the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in order to protect consumers and operators from such instances?

4. Is the Commission also planning to take steps to protect operators from unjustified fees when international calls are made when roaming? Who has to pay when there are instances of fraud such as those described above?

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

The EU regulatory framework for electronic communications contains various provisions protecting consumers with regard to *inter alia* contractual information, transparency, control of consumption and dispute resolution mechanisms. With regard to specific cases of fraud on misuse, the regulatory framework also gives national authorities the power to require undertakings providing electronic communications services to block access to numbers or services in cases fraud or misuse. The Commission is working with the BEREC ([1]) on a reinforced cooperation at EU level in cases of fraud and misuse ([2]).

The Commission proposal for a regulation laying down measures to complete the European single market for electronic communications and to achieve a Connected Continent ([3]) contains revised provisions on roaming and on the costs of intra-EU calls as well as enhanced end-users safeguards including *inter alia* specific provisions on control of consumption, adequate notification and the ability for end-users to set financial limits so that the costs do not exceed these ceilings. The proposal also contains enhanced cross border dispute resolution mechanisms for consumer protection and cooperation between national regulatory authorities.

Finally, with regard to lost or stolen devices, the inclusion of a secure International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) on mobile phones in the EU provides a security identification safeguard in the framework of theft prevention and consumer protection. National authorities are empowered to implement additional measures. Consumers should bring cases of lost or stolen devices to the attention of the competent enforcement bodies which are generally addressed by national criminal law provisions and fraud prevention.

([1]) Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications.
([2]) http://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/subject_matter/berec/regulatory_best_practices/guidelines/1226-article-282-universal-service-directive-a-harmonised-berec-cooperation-process-berec-guidance-paper
([3]) COM(627) 2013.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004352/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Turquía y PKK

Con motivo del Novruz 2014, el líder kurdo Abdullah Öcalan envió un mensaje a sus compatriotas donde llamaba a profundizar en el proceso de paz entre Turquía y el PKK. Öcalan hacía dos consideraciones importantes en el mensaje:

1. La necesidad de un marco legal para sistematizar la negociación entre el Gobierno de Turquía y el PKK.

2. La paz tiene que constituirse sobre bases democráticas.

¿Conoce la Comisión el mensaje del Sr. Öcalan?

¿Qué valoración hace de él?

¿Considera la Comisión que el proceso de diálogo entre el Gobierno turco y el PKK necesitaría algún marco legal como soporte para seguir avanzando?

¿Qué valoración hace de la situación actual del proceso abierto entre el Gobierno turco y el PKK?

Respuesta del Sr. Füle en nombre de la Comisión
(24 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión está al corriente de la carta publicada por el señor Öcalan con ocasión de la celebración del Newroz, el 21 de marzo de 2014.

La cuestión kurda solo podrá solucionarse por consenso, sobre la base de medidas concretas que amplíen los derechos culturales, económicos y sociales de los habitantes del sureste de Turquía. El apoyo de la sociedad civil y de todos los partidos políticos es esencial. Serán las partes interesadas las que tendrán que elegir esas medidas concretas a través de un método que facilite la participación activa de todas ellas.

El conjunto de medidas democratizadoras adoptado el pasado 2 de marzo autorizó a los partidos políticos y candidatos la utilización de lenguas distintas del turco en las campañas de las elecciones municipales y generales. También autorizó que la enseñanza en centros privados se imparta en la lengua vernácula (como el kurdo) y el uso de letras que no figuran en el alfabeto turco (medida dirigida a solucionar los problemas derivados del uso del alfabeto kurdo), así como la posibilidad de recuperar los nombres originales de las poblaciones.

La Comisión apoya firmemente los esfuerzos realizados para encontrar una solución al problema kurdo y sigue de cerca su evolución, sobre la que informará pormenorizadamente en su Informe de situación sobre Turquía de octubre de 2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004352/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Turkey and the PKK

To mark Newroz 2014, Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan delivered a New Year's message to his compatriots calling for a deepening of the peace process between Turkey and the PKK. He outlined two major issues:

1. The need for a legal framework in order to give structure to negotiations between the Turkish Government and the PKK;

2. The importance of democracy as the foundation for peace.

Is the Commission aware of Mr Öcalan's message?

What does the Commission think of it?

Does the Commission believe that the progress of the dialogue between the Turkish Government and the PKK is contingent on the existence of a legal framework to support it?

In its view, what is the current state of the on-going process between the Turkish Government and the PKK?

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

The Commission is aware of Mr Öcalan's letter issued on the occasion of the Newroz celebrations on 21 March 2014.

A solution of the Kurdish issue can only be achieved via consensus over concrete measures expanding the social, economic and cultural rights of the people living in the Southeast of Turkey. Cross-party and civil society support for this initiative is crucial. The choice of concrete measures is to be decided by the interested parties in an inclusive and participatory manner.

The Democratisation Package adopted on 2 March allowed campaigning in languages other than Turkish by political parties and candidates during local and parliamentary elections. The Package also allowed for private education in the mother tongue (like Kurdish), the use of non-Turkish alphabet letters (which addressed problems stemming from the use of the Kurdish alphabet) and the possibility to revert to original village names.

The Commission strongly supports the efforts to find a solution to the Kurdish issue. It is following the issue closely and will report on it in detail in its Progress Report on Turkey in October 2014.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004354/14
a la Comisión
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Investigación de la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude en relación con la Diputación de Pontevedra

¿Puede confirmar la Comisión si la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) ha abierto algún expediente de investigación en relación con la Diputación de Pontevedra (Galicia)?

En caso afirmativo, ¿puede indicar la Comisión qué expedientes se han abierto y cuáles son las causas de fondo de los mismos? ¿Está relacionado algún expediente al uso fraudulento de los Fondos de Cohesión en la construcción de depuradoras de tratamiento y saneamiento de aguas o incluso a la recepción de Fondos de Cohesión sin que se hayan construido dichas depuradoras? ¿Se encuentra en entredicho el proyecto Deputrans?

Respuesta del Sr. Šemeta en nombre de la Comisión
(11 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión ha sido informada por la Oficina Europea de Lucha contra el Fraude (OLAF) de que no efectúa ninguna investigación directa sobre la Diputación Provincial de Pontevedra en relación con asuntos de Fondos Estructurales. En el proyecto Deputrans, la Diputación de Pontevedra y la Diputación Provincial de Orense fueron dos de los cuatro socios participantes mencionados, pero la investigación de la OLAF se centró únicamente en la parte del proyecto ejecutada por la Diputación Provincial de Orense.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004354/14
to the Commission
Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernández (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: European Anti-Fraud Office investigations into the Provincial Council of Pontevedra

Could the Commission confirm whether the European Anti-Fraud Office has launched any investigations into the Provincial Council of Pontevedra (Galicia)?

If so, could the Commission tell us what investigations have been launched, and why? Are there any investigations into whether the Provincial Council has made fraudulent use of Cohesion Funds for the construction of water treatment plants or even received Cohesion Funds for plants which were never constructed? Is the Deputrans project on shaky ground?

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

The Commission has been informed by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) that it has no direct investigation into the Provincial Council of the province of Pontevedra in relation to Structural Funds matters. In the Deputrans project, the Provincial Council of Pontevedra and the Provincial Council of Ourense were two of the four named participating partners, but OLAF's investigation focused only on that part of the project implemented by the Provincial Council of Ourense.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004355/14
an die Kommission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8. April 2014)

Betrifft: Verteilung von Fördergeldern mittels EuropeAid

Die folgende Anfrage bezieht sich auf die Ausschreibung „EuropeAid/133-481/C/ACT/Multi ACP-EU Energy Facility 2nd Call for Proposals“ sowie auf die aktuelle Situation bezüglich Projekten im Themenbereich Energie/Energiebereitstellung.

1. Wie viele Vorschläge sind für die oben genannte Ausschreibung eingelangt?

2. Warum war eine zweite Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen notwendig?

3. Wie viele Vorschläge schieden in den einzelnen Evaluierungsschritten aus?

4. Welcher Vorschlag wurde ausgewählt?

5. Worauf beruhen die Auswahlkriterien, welche bei dieser Ausschreibung angewandt wurden?

6. Was waren die ausschlaggebenden Kriterien für die Auswahl dieses Vorschlags?

7. Wie wird die Zusammensetzung der Auswahlkommission bestimmt, und wer bestimmt sie?

8. Hat der ausgewählte Antragsteller schon früher einen Zuschlag für Projektausschreibungen von EuropeAid erhalten? Falls ja, hat dies bei der Entscheidung für diesen Projektwerber eine Rolle gespielt?

9. Falls der ausgewählte Projektsteller schon früher den Zuschlag für Projektausschreibungen erhalten hat, um wie viele Projekte handelt es sich, und wie hoch ist die jeweilige Förderung durch EU-Organe?

10. Falls diese Projekte schon abgeschlossen sind: Wie und mit welchem Ergebnis wurde der Erfolg evaluiert?

11. Wie viele Projekte laufen aktuell im Themenbereich Energie? Wie viel Fördervolumen entspricht dies?

12. Wie hoch ist das zur Verfügung stehende Gesamtbudget für Maßnahmen im Themenbereich Energie?

Antwort von Herrn Piebalgs im Namen der Kommission
(5. Juni 2014)

1., 3./4. Im Rahmen der genannten Aufforderung wurden 150 Vorschläge eingereicht; 144 dieser Vorschläge gingen fristgerecht ein und wurden nach Maßgabe der Leitlinien für Antragsteller ([1]) und des Handbuchs für Vergabeverfahren im Rahmen von EU-Außenmaßnahmen (PRAG) ([2]) bewertet. 16 Vorschläge wurden ausgewählt und werden einen Zuschuss erhalten. Die Verträge werden derzeit vorbereitet ([3]).

2. Eine zweite Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen war im Finanzierungsbeschluss zur Energiefazilität II bereits vorgesehen.

5./6. Die Auswahlkriterien ([4]) sind in den Leitlinien für Antragsteller aufgeführt, die alle Förder-, Auswahl- und Vergabekriterien für die betreffende Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Einklang mit den PRAG-Bestimmungen enthalten.

7. Der Bewertungsausschuss wurde entsprechend den einschlägigen PRAG-Bestimmungen vom Anweisungsbefugten eingesetzt ([5]).

([1]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=133481
([2]) http://ec.europa.eueuropeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en
([3]) Für 3 der 16 Vorschläge erwartet die Kommission noch zusätzliche Informationen. 20 Vorschläge wurden auf die Reserveliste aufgenommen. 28 Vorschläge erfüllten nicht die in den Leitlinien genannten administrativen Förderkriterien und 80 Vorschläge gelangten nicht in die Vorauswahl, da sie nicht innerhalb des qualitativen und finanziellen Rahmens dieser Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen lagen.
([4]) Kriterien 1.1-1.4 des Bewertungsbogens für Vollanträge in den Leitlinien für Antragsteller.
([5]) S. PRAG Abschnitt 2.8.

8. Bei der Bewertung nach den verschiedenen Auswahlkriterien wurden die Erfahrungen der Antragsteller mit ähnlichen Maßnahmen berücksichtigt ([6]).

9. Von den ausgewählten Antragstellern hatten vier bereits Zuschüsse im Rahmen von EU-Entwicklungsprogrammen erhalten (insgesamt rund 2 Mio. EUR), während ein fünfter ausgewählter Antragsteller (eine in allen Bereichen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit tätige Einrichtung eines Mitgliedstaats) im Rahmen verschiedener EU-Entwicklungsprogramme Finanzmittel für 94 Projekte in Gesamthöhe von 298 Mio. EUR erhalten hatte.

10. Der Erfolg bei der Durchführung früherer Projekte wird von Fall zu Fall auf der Grundlage der für den jeweiligen Vertrag geltenden Vorschriften und Verfahren beurteilt.

11./12. Rund 1,3 Mrd. EUR wurden für über 400 Energieprojekte bereitgestellt, die derzeit im Gange sind. Seit 2005 wurden insgesamt 2 Mrd. EUR für Energieprojekte zur Verfügung gestellt.

([6]) Die in diesem Zusammenhang berücksichtigten bisherigen Erfahrungen beschränken sich nicht auf die Erfahrungen mit der Durchführung von Projekten, die von EuropeAid gefördert wurden.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004355/14
to the Commission
Paul Rübig (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Allocation of funding through EuropeAid

The following question refers both to the 'EuropeAid/133-481/C/ACT/Multi ACP -EU Energy Facility 2nd Call for Proposals' and to the current situation with regard to projects relating to energy/energy supply.

1. How many proposals have been received for the above call for proposals?

2. Why was a second call for proposals necessary?

3. How many proposals were eliminated at the various evaluation stages?

4. Which proposal was selected?

5. What are the selection criteria applied in this call for proposals based on?

6. What were the decisive criteria for the selection of the successful proposal?

7. How is the composition of the selection committee determined and by whom?

8. Has the selected applicant previously won a EuropeAid call for proposals? If so, did this play a role in the decision in favour of this project applicant?

9. If the selected applicant has previously been awarded any contracts for projects following tendering procedures, how many projects are involved, and how much aid is being provided by EU institutions?

10. If these projects have already been completed: how and with what outcome was their success evaluated?

11. How many projects are currently under way in the energy sector? What volume of funding does this correspond to?

12. What is the total available budget for measures in the energy sector?

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

1, 3 and 4. The Call generated 150 proposals; 144 proposals were sent within the deadline and assessed in line with the provisions set out in the Call Guidelines ([1]) and as per the Practical Guide for EU external actions (PRAG) ([2]).16 proposals were selected to get a grant and contract preparation is on-going ([3]).

2. A 2nd Call was foreseen in the financing decision for Energy Facility II.

5 and 6. The selection criteria were listed in the Call Guidelines ([4]) that set all eligibility, selection and award criteria for the Call in line with the provisions of the PRAG.

7. The Evaluation committee was appointed by the Authorising Officer as per the respective provisions of the PRAG ([5]).

8. The applicants' experience in carrying out similar actions was considered in the assessment ([6]) of the respective selection criteria.

([1]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=133481
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en
([3]) For 3 out of the 16 proposals the Commission is expecting to receive complementary information. 20 proposals were included in the reserve list. 28 proposals did not meet the administrative eligibility criteria set out in the Call Guidelines and 80 proposals were not preselected in line with the quality and budget limits of the Call.
([4]) Ref. criteria 1.1 — 1.4 of the evaluation grid for Full Applications set out in the Call Guidelines.
([5]) Ref. PRAG Section 2.8.
([6]) The past experience assessed in this context is not limited only to the experience gained through the implementation of projects supported by EuropeAid.

9. Among the applicants selected, four had already received grants (about EUR 2 million in total) under EU development programmes, whilst a fifth selected applicant (a Member State Agency active in all development cooperation areas) has received funding for 94 projects for a total of EUR 298 million under several different EU development programmes.

10. The success in the implementation of past projects is assessed on a contract by contract basis as per the rules and procedures governing each contract.

11 and 12. About EUR 1.3 billion have been allocated to more than 400 energy projects that are currently under way, whilst, in the period from 2005 to date about EUR 2 billion have been allocated to projects in energy.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord E-004356/14
aan de Commissie
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 april 2014)

Betreft: Kwantitatieve versoepeling door de Europese Centrale Bank (ECB)

De president van de Europese Centrale Bank, Mario Draghi, heeft op 3 april 2014 tijdens een persconferentie gezegd dat de ECB rekening houdt met een lange periode van lage inflatie. Hij voegde hier aan toe dat de Bank geen enkel instrument op voorhand uitsluit, en vastberaden is een hoog niveau van accommoderend monetair beleid te handhaven en indien nodig snel te handelen ([1]). En Jens Weidmann, een lid van de Raad van Bestuur van de ECB, heeft gezegd dat een „asset-purchase"-programma om liquiditeit in het financieel systeem te pompen in principe toelaatbaar is. Deze verklaring verwijst ondubbelzinnig naar kwantitatieve versoepelingsmaatregelen ([2]).

Kan de Commissie, tegen de achtergrond van het bovenstaande en rekening houdend met het gegeven dat artikel 123 van het Verdrag betreffende de werking van de Europese Unie *expressis verbis* verbiedt dat de ECB centrale overheden kredietfaciliteiten verleent:

1. een reactie geven op de verklaring van de heer Weidmann?

2. verduidelijken welke maatregelen en/of initiatieven zij zal nemen om ervoor te zorgen dat de Europese Centrale Bank zich houdt aan het bepaalde in het Verdrag (wetende dat kwantitatieve versoepelingsmaatregelen volledig onverenigbaar zijn met het verbod op bailouts zoals vastgesteld in het Verdrag, alsook met het statuut van het Europees Stelsel van Centrale Banken)?

Antwoord van de heer Rehn namens de Commissie
(11 juni 2014)

Het monetair beleid in de eurozone valt onder de exclusieve bevoegdheid van de ECB. De Commissie heeft niet de gewoonte commentaar te leveren op verklaringen van leden van de Raad van bestuur van de ECB.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/apr/03/ecb-president-mario-draghi-imf-policy-recommendations.
([2]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-04-02/ecb-decision-day-guide-from-low-inflation-to-quantitative-easing.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004356/14
to the Commission
Auke Zijlstra (NI)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Quantitative easing by the ECB

On 3 April 2014, the President of the European Central Bank (ECB), Mario Draghi, told a news conference that the ECB expected a prolonged period of low inflation and that it 'will consider all instruments available', since the bank is 'resolute in its determination to maintain a high degree of monetary accommodation and act swiftly if required' ([1]). Furthermore, Jens Weidmann, a member of the ECB's Governing Council, said that an asset-purchase programme to inject liquidity into the financial system is in principle permissible. This statement clearly refers to quantitative easing measures ([2]).

In the light of this, and taking into account that Article 123 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union expressly bans the ECB from the monetary financing of governments:

1. Can the Commission comment on Mr Weidmann's statement?

2. Since quantitative easing measures are fully incompatible with the prohibition of bailouts established by the Treaty, as well as with the Statute of the European System of Central Banks, can the Commission clarify what actions and/or initiatives it will undertake in order to ensure the respect of the Treaty by the European Central Bank?

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

Monetary policy in the euro area is the exclusive competence of the ECB It is not the Commission's policy to comment on statements by ECB Governing Council Members.

([1]) http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/apr/03/ecb-president-mario-draghi-imf-policy-recommendations
([2]) http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-04-02/ecb-decision-day-guide-from-low-inflation-to-quantitative-easing.html

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004357/14
à la Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(8 avril 2014)

Objet: Chantage au gaz pratiqué par Obama

L'Union européenne traverse une situation difficile et, avec la crise ukrainienne, se pose la question de la dépendance énergétique vis-à-vis de la Russie, dont dépendent 30 % de notre consommation en gaz naturel.

Mais Obama a la solution! Il l'a donnée ce mercredi 26 mars: «Les États-Unis ont la chance d'avoir pu développer des sources d'énergie additionnelles et nous avons autorisé l'exportation d'autant de gaz naturel que l'Europe peut en avoir besoin, mais cela se fera via le marché mondial sur lequel cette énergie est vendue». En somme, Obama nous donnera tout le gaz dont nous avons besoin pour nous passer des approvisionnements russes, mais au prix fort, bien sûr.

Quel est l'intérêt pour les Européens de s'approvisionner en gaz américain plutôt qu'en gaz russe?

De plus, toujours selon Obama, le grand marché transatlantique facilitera les exportations de gaz. En effet, cela permettrait aux compagnies américaines d'obtenir automatiquement des licences d'exploitation auprès du département américain de l'énergie et ainsi d'inonder le marché européen de gaz de schiste. La seule chose que le président Barroso a répondue à ce chantage est que «nous sommes partisans du libre-échange».

La Commission entend-elle vraiment continuer la négociation de l'accord transatlantique dans ce contexte de chantage énergétique?

Car le président américain entend notamment encourager l'exploitation des gaz de schiste en Europe. À ce sujet, le président de la Commission, José Manuel Barroso, a souligné que le fait de pouvoir disposer du gaz de schiste américain serait «une bénédiction».

La Commission entend-elle écouter les peuples européens qui, au contraire, s'opposent à l'exploitation de ces gaz en Europe, comme ailleurs?

Enfin, Obama se permet des remarques sur la politique énergétique européenne dans le contexte de la crise ukrainienne qui «montre la nécessité, pour l'Europe, de chercher comment elle peut diversifier encore plus ses sources d'énergie».

La Commission laissera-t-elle les États-Unis lui dicter sa politique énergétique?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(10 juin 2014)

L'UE croit en un marché d'envergure mondiale ouvert et efficace, s'approvisionnant en énergie auprès de multiples sources de manière à éviter toute dépendance à l'égard d'un fournisseur unique ou d'un seul groupe de fournisseurs.

La Commission estime que les ressources énergétiques devraient s'échanger sur le marché sans aucune restriction à l'exportation et qu'une augmentation de l'offre mondiale de gaz naturel liquéfié, en provenance notamment des États-Unis, profiterait à l'Europe et à d'autres partenaires stratégiques. Dans le cadre des négociations d'un accord de partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement (TTIP), la Commission soutient qu'à l'avenir, l'exportation libre et sans conditions de gaz naturel vers l'UE devrait être garantie par des dispositions juridiquement contraignantes dans cet accord. En tout état de cause, la conclusion du TTIP requiert l'avis conforme du Parlement européen.

L'UE n'étant pas destinée à devenir autosuffisante pour son approvisionnement en gaz naturel, les sources domestiques de gaz naturel, y compris de gaz de schiste, pourraient, sous certaines conditions, contribuer à la sécurité d'approvisionnement et à la compétitivité de l'Union européenne ([1]). Pour compléter l'actuel acquis de l'UE en matière d'environnement, la Commission a adopté une recommandation destinée à aider les États membres à gérer et à limiter les incidences sur l'environnement et les risques de la fracturation hydraulique à grands volumes ([2]) dans le cas où un État membre décide de permettre l'exploitation de gaz de schiste. La législation européenne requiert la participation du public ([3]) avant que des décisions soient prises concernant certains projets ou programmes.

La Commission continuera à examiner les questions de politique énergétique avec ses partenaires extérieurs, notamment avec les États-Unis dans le cadre du Conseil de l'énergie Union européenne/États-Unis, pour un bénéfice mutuel.

([1]) Voir la communication de la Commission relative à l'exploration et à la production d'hydrocarbures (tels que le gaz de schiste) par fracturation hydraulique à grands volumes dans l'Union européenne, COM(2014) 23 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0023R(01)&from=EN

([2]) Recommandation (2014/70/EU) de la Commission du 22 janvier 2014 relative aux principes minimaux applicables à l'exploration et à la production d'hydrocarbures (tels que le gaz de schiste) par fracturation hydraulique à grands volumes: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014H0070&from=EN

([3]) Par exemple, la directive 2011/92/UE concernant l'évaluation des incidences de certains projets publics et privés sur l'environnement (JO L 26/1 du 28.1.2012) et la directive 2001/42/CE relative à l'évaluation des incidences de certains plans et programmes sur l'environnement (JO L 197/30 du 21.7.2001); la directive 2006/21/CE concernant la gestion des déchets de l'industrie extractive (JO L 102 du 11.4.2006, p. 15); la directive 2003/35/CE prévoyant la participation du public lors de l'élaboration de certains plans et programmes relatifs à l'environnement (JO L 156 du 25/6/2003).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004357/14
to the Commission
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Gas blackmail by Obama

These are difficult times for the European Union and it is now questioning, with the Ukrainian crisis, its energy dependence on Russia, which supplies 30% of our natural gas consumption.

But Obama has the solution! He gave it on 26 March: 'The United States is blessed with some additional energy sources that have been developed … and we've … authorised the export of as much natural gas each day as Europe uses each day. But it's going into the open market.' In other words, Obama will give us all the gas we need so we can dispense with supplies from Russia; but we will, naturally, pay top price for it.

Why would Europeans want to buy gas supplies from the US rather than Russia?

Moreover, still according to Obama, the big transatlantic market will facilitate gas exports. It will in fact enable US companies to obtain automatically export licences from the US Department of Energy and thereby flood the EU market with shale gas. President Barroso's sole response to this blackmail was: 'We are believers in free trade'.

Does the Commission really intend to continue negotiations on the transatlantic agreement against this background of blackmail over energy?

For the US President does plan to encourage the development of shale gas in Europe. In regard to this, the President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso, emphasised that being able to obtain US shale gas would be 'a blessing'.

Will the Commission listen to the people of Europe who are, on the contrary, opposed to the development of shale gas in Europe, as elsewhere?

Lastly, Obama took the liberty of commenting on European energy policy in the context of the Ukrainian crisis which: 'pointed to the need for Europe to look at how it can further diversify its energy sources'.

Will the Commission let the US dictate its energy policy?

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

The EU believes in a global, open, well-functioning market, with energy supplies from a wide range of sources so that there is no dependence on one single supplier or group of suppliers.

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

While the EU will not become self-sufficient in natural gas, domestic sources of natural gas, including shale gas, could under certain conditions contribute to the European Union's security of supply and competitiveness ([1]). As a complement to the existing EU environmental *acquis*, the Commission adopted a recommendation aimed at supporting Member States ([2]) in managing and mitigating environmental impacts and risks from high-volume hydraulic fracturing if a Member State decides to enable shale gas operations. The EU legislation ([3]) requires public participation prior to making decisions for certain projects or programmes.

The Commission will continue to discuss energy policy issues with its external partners, including with the US in the context of the EU-US Energy Council, to our mutual benefit.

([1]) See Commission Communication on the exploration and production of hydrocarbons (such as shale gas) using high volume hydraulic fracturing in the EU. COM(2014)23 final: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0023R(01).

([2]) Commission Recommendation on minimum principles for the exploration and production of hydrocarbons (such as shale gas) using high-volume hydraulic fracturing (2014/70/EU), 22.1.2014: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014H0070.

([3]) E.g. Directive 2011/92/EU, OJ L 26/1, 28.1.2012 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment and Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, OJ L 197/30, 21.7.2001; Directive 2006/21/EC on the management of extractive waste, OJ L 102, 11.4.2006, p. 15; Directive 2003/35/EC providing for public participation in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment, OJ L 156, 25.6.2003.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004363/14
alla Commissione
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Situazione esodati in Italia

A seguito della riforma previdenziale introdotta in Italia dal governo Monti nel dicembre 2011, comunemente nota come «riforma Fornero», si è creata una situazione di estrema difficoltà per decine di migliaia di persone, i cosiddetti «esodati», ovvero lavoratori vicini al raggiungimento dei requisiti per avere la pensione, costretti a lasciare il mondo del lavoro a seguito di licenziamenti che prevedevano l'accompagnamento alla pensione stessa. Una volta esaurito il rapporto di lavoro, la modifica repentina dei requisiti per ottenere le auspicate prestazioni previdenziali con l'aumento dell'età pensionabile ha però lasciato questi lavoratori senza reddito e ancora lontani dalla soglia per ottenere l'assegno previdenziale pensionistico.

Può la Commissione indicare quale sia ad oggi il numero di persone che si trovano in questa situazione in Italia?

Quali misure ha intrapreso, o intende intraprendere, per tutelare la dignità di questi lavoratori sancita anche dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione agli articoli 15 e 34, nonché a norma dell'articolo 153 del TFUE?

Ritiene l'utilizzo del Fondo sociale europeo uno strumento idoneo per risolvere questa situazione drammatica?

Risposta di László Andor a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

1. Secondo le raccomandazioni del Consiglio sul programma nazionale di riforme 2013 dell'Italia, il paese dovrebbe assicurare l'efficacia dei trasferimenti sociali, in particolare mediante prestazioni maggiormente mirate.

Anche se sta monitorando l'impatto della riforma pensionistica in Italia, la Commissione non ha informazioni circa il numero di persone che si trovano nella situazione descritta dall'onorevole parlamentare.

2. La Commissione ritiene estremamente importante garantire la dignità dei lavoratori pensionati. Non essendo applicabile al caso in questione la Carta dei diritti fondamentali, spetta agli Stati membri garantire il rispetto dei loro obblighi in materia di diritti fondamentali ([1]).

Come la Commissione ha sottolineato nel Libro bianco sulle pensioni ([2]), il prolungamento della vita lavorativa è essenziale per sostenere trattamenti pensionistici adeguati nonostante l'invecchiamento della popolazione. Allo stesso tempo, l'innalzamento dell'età pensionabile dovrebbe essere sostenuto da provvedimenti che consentano ai lavoratori di restare sul mercato del lavoro o, se ciò non è possibile, che garantiscano loro un reddito sicuro adeguato. Tali considerazioni politiche, tuttavia, non pregiudicano la responsabilità degli Stati membri per quanto concerne i loro sistemi pensionistici, come stabilito nei trattati.

3. L'FSE ([3]) sostiene una serie di interventi connessi all'invecchiamento attivo e alle persone anziane. Il regolamento FSE per il periodo 2014-2020 ([4]) include le priorità di investimento per l'assistenza sociale e l'accesso all'apprendimento permanente. Tuttavia, in linea con il principio della gestione condivisa, la selezione degli investimenti da finanziare mediante l'FSE è di competenza degli Stati membri, sulla base dell'accordo di partenariato e dei programmi operativi convenuti con la Commissione. L'accordo di partenariato è stato presentato dall'Italia alla Commissione in data 22 aprile. I programmi operativi dovranno essere presentati entro il 21 luglio.

([1]) Conformemente all'articolo 51 della Carta dei diritti fondamentali dell'Unione europea le disposizioni della medesima si applicano agli Stati membri esclusivamente nell'attuazione del diritto dell'Unione. Nelle materie che esulando dall'ambito di applicazione del diritto dell'Unione spetta agli Stati membri far rispettare gli obblighi ad essi incombenti in materia di diritti fondamentali previsti sia da accordi internazionali che dal loro diritto interno.

([2]) «Un'agenda dedicata a pensioni adeguate, sicure e sostenibili», COM(2012) 55 final.

([3]) Fondo sociale europeo.

([4]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1304/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 17 dicembre 2013, relativo al Fondo sociale europeo.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004363/14
to the Commission
Claudio Morganti (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Situation of pension reform victims in Italy

The pension reform implemented in Italy by the Monti Government in December 2011, commonly known as the 'Fornero reform' has led to extreme difficulties for tens of thousands of retired workers, or 'esodati', as they are called in Italian, who, at the time of being made redundant, were close to qualifying for a pension and accepted severance packages intended to cover them until they were eligible to draw a pension proper. After these early retirees had stopped working, the pension qualifying requirements suddenly changed when the retirement age was raised; the retirees have consequently been left without income and been pushed below the threshold to be attained in order to draw a pension.

Can the Commission say how many people in Italy are now in this situation?

What steps has it taken, or will it take, to safeguard the dignity of these retired workers, which derives not least from Articles 15 and 34 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Article 153 of the TFEU?

Does it think that the European Social Fund could help to relieve their plight?

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

1. The Council recommendations on Italy's 2013 National Reform Programme stated that Italy should ensure effectiveness of social transfers, notably through better targeting of benefits.

Even though the Commission is monitoring the impact of the pension reform in Italy, it does not have information about the number of people who are in the situation referred to by the Honourable Member.

2. The Commission considers safeguarding the dignity of retired workers to be very important. As the Charter of Fundamental Rights does not apply to the present case, it is for Member States to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights are respected ([1]).

As the Commission pointed out in the White Paper on Pensions ([2]), longer working lives are vital to sustain adequate pensions against the background of ageing populations. At the same time, pensionable age increases should be underpinned by measures enabling workers to stay on the labour market or, if this is not possible, provide them with adequate income security. These policy considerations do not however affect the responsibility of Member States for their pension systems, as stipulated in the Treaties.

3. The ESF ([3]) supports a number of interventions related to active ageing and older people. The ESF regulation for 2014-2020 ([4]) includes investment priorities on social care and access to lifelong learning. However, in line with the shared management principle, the selection of investments to be financed by the ESF is the responsibility of the Member States, based on the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programmes agreed with the Commission. The former was submitted by Italy to the Commission on 22 April. The latter will need to be submitted by 21 July at the latest.

([1]) According to Art. 51 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the provisions of the Charter are addressed to the Member States only when they are implementing Union law. In matters falling outside the scope of EC law, it is for Member States to ensure that their obligations regarding fundamental rights — as resulting from international agreements and from their internal legislation — are respected.

([2]) 'An agenda for adequate, safe and sustainable pensions', COM(2012) 55 final.

([3]) The European Social Fund.

([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17.12.2013 on the European Social Fund.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004364/14
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ripicche dei reggitori dell'Unione europea per l'esito della democratica consultazione svizzera

Gli elettori svizzeri, con voto popolare e modificando la loro costituzione, hanno posto le basi per una rinegoziazione dell'accordo con l'Unione europea sulla libera circolazione delle persone, senza peraltro procedere alla non applicazione dei suoi contenuti o all'attivazione della denuncia di cui al paragrafo 3 dell'articolo 25 dell'accordo stesso.

Può dire la Commissione per quale motivo, da parte dell'Unione, si è deciso di interrompere o sospendere immediatamente le trattative già avviate con la Confederazione una volta conosciuto l'esito della consultazione popolare, che non ha effetti immediati?

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

Pur rispettando pienamente la tradizione di democrazia diretta della Svizzera, la Commissione europea non può ignorare la discriminazione nei confronti di uno degli Stati membri dell'Unione, i cui cittadini rischiano di non poter più beneficiare della libera circolazione verso questo paese. Per questo motivo, le direttive del Consiglio per i negoziati sull'associazione e sulla partecipazione della Svizzera a Orizzonte 2020 e Erasmus+ collegano esplicitamente questi accordi alla firma del protocollo che estende l'accordo UE-Svizzera sulla libera circolazione delle persone alla Croazia. La Commissione europea ha pertanto sospeso i negoziati relativi a tali accordi fino a quando la Svizzera non avrà firmato il protocollo.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004364/14
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Fit of pique by EU ruling class over outcome of democratic consultation in Switzerland

Swiss voters, following a referendum and a change in their constitution, have laid the foundations for a renegotiation of the agreement with the EU on the free movement of persons, without, however, going so far as to refuse to implement it or to issue a notification pursuant to Article 25(3) of the agreement.

Can the Commission explain why the Union decided to immediately suspend or terminate the negotiations already under way with the Swiss federal government when the outcome of the referendum, which has no immediate effects, became known?

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

The European Commission fully respects the Swiss tradition of direct democracy. It can however, not overlook the discrimination against one of its Member States whose citizens risk losing the perspective of enjoying the benefit of free movement to Switzerland. For this reason, the Council's negotiating directives for Swiss association and participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ clearly link these related agreements to the signature of the protocol extending the EU-Swiss agreement on the free movement of persons to Croatia. The European Commission has consequently put negotiations of these agreements on hold until Switzerland signs the Protocol.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004365/14
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(8 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Tarjeta única europea de discapacidad

España ha llevado a cabo una iniciativa para fomentar la cultura de las personas con discapacidad, basada en una tarjeta que les permite la entrada gratuita en muchos puntos de interés cultural (museos, castillos, etc…).

1. ¿Cree la Comisión que deberían fomentarse más iniciativas como ésta? ¿Qué opina la Comisión Europea de la iniciativa española expuesta?

2. Si existiera una tarjeta así se podría aprovechar para ofrecer ventajas a las personas con discapacidad en varios países. ¿Tiene prevista la Comisión la creación de una tarjeta única para las personas con discapacidad?

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

El reconocimiento de la condición de discapacitado, así como la asignación de los subsidios correspondientes y su naturaleza, son competencias de las autoridades nacionales, regionales o locales de los Estados miembros. En estos ámbitos, la Comisión no puede intervenir en lo relativo al contenido de la legislación, normas y prácticas nacionales.

A efectos del reconocimiento transfronterizo de la condición de discapacitado con vistas a la obtención de beneficios en determinados ámbitos como el turismo, el ocio, la cultura y el transporte, la Comisión está preparando una iniciativa para una tarjeta de discapacitado de la UE, con reconocimiento mutuo, tal como se anunció en el Informe de 2013 sobre la Ciudadanía de la UE ([1]). En este contexto, la Comisión se pondrá en contacto con las autoridades españolas para saber más sobre su régimen.

Para más información, la Comisión remite a Su Señoría a su respuesta a la pregunta escrita E-011810/2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013eucitizenshipreport_en.pdf (véase página 23).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004365/14
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: European disability card

Spain has brought in a scheme to improve disabled people's access to culture. Under the scheme, disabled people are given a card giving them free entry to many places of cultural interest (museums, castles, etc.).

1. Does the Commission believe that more initiatives like this one should be brought in? What does the Commission think of the Spanish initiative mentioned above?

2. A card like this could be beneficial to people with disabilities in different countries. Is the Commission intending to bring in a single European card for people with disabilities?

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

Recognition of disability status and the allocation of related benefits and their nature are matters of competence of national, regional or local authorities in the Member States. In these areas the Commission cannot intervene in the content of national legislation, rules and practices.

For the purpose of cross border recognition of the disability status procuring benefits in certain areas such as tourism, leisure, culture and transport, the Commission is preparing an initiative for a mutually recognised EU disability card as announced in the EU Citizenship report 2013 ([1]). In this context, the Commission will contact the Spanish authorities to learn more about its scheme.

For more details, the Commission would refer the Honourable Member also to its answer to Written Question P-011810/2013.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/citizen/files/2013eucitizenshipreport_en.pdf (see page 23).

(České znění)

Otázka k písemnému zodpovězení E-004366/14
Komisi
Hynek Fajmon (ECR)
(8. dubna 2014)

Předmět: Soulad privatizace české společnosti OKD a.s. s evropským právem

Dle informací z českých médií (Mladá Fronta Dnes) z minulého a tohoto týdne byla privatizace státního podniku české společnosti OKD a.s. v letech 2004-2005 provedena velmi pochybným a netransparentním způsobem. Privatizací se zabývala i Policie ČR a Státní zastupitelství ČR a v roce 2005 se k privatizaci vyjadřovala i Evropská komise. Z posledních zpráv v tisku vyplývá, že společnost byla prodána za nápadně nevýhodných podmínek pro stát, tedy Českou republiku. V kupní ceně nebyly údajně zohledněny ceny dceřiných firem, jelikož nebyly vůbec oceněny soudním znalcem. Výsledná cena privatizace podílu státu v OKD a.s. je tedy nízká a neodpovídá tržnímu ocenění.

Žádám proto Komisi o odpovědi na následující otázky:

1. Proběhla privatizace OKD a.s. v letech 2004-2005 v souladu s evropským právem?

2. Vyšetřovala Komise tento privatizační případ? A s jakým výsledkem?

3. Není privatizace OKD a.s. za netržní cenu nedovolenou veřejnou podporou s dopadem na celý evropský trh?

Odpověď pana Almunii jménem Komise
(17. června 2014)

Pokud jde o státní podporu při privatizaci, došla Komise formálním rozhodnutím ze dne 13. července 2011 (věc č. SA.25076 (2011/NN)) k závěru, že prodej 45,88 % akcií OKD společnosti Karbon Invest v roce 2004 nepředstavoval státní podporu ve smyslu čl. 107 odst. 1 SFEU. Konkrétně Komise zjistila, že v rámci této privatizace stát postupoval stejně jako soukromý prodávající v tržní ekonomice. Analýza několika faktorů vedla k závěru, že prodejní cena nebyla nižší než tržní hodnota, a touto transakcí tedy nedošlo ke zvýhodnění kupujícího v podobě ušlého státního zisku z prodeje. Nebyla tudíž splněna jedna z kumulativních podmínek existence státní podpory podle čl. 107 odst. 1 SFEU, tj. existence státem financovaného zvýhodnění podniku.

V roce 2013 obdržela Komise stížnost, v níž byla informována o probíhajícím trestním řízení zahrnujícím odborné znalecké posudky, které byly jedním ze tří ukazatelů, jimiž Komise podložila své rozhodnutí ze dne 13. července 2011. Komise by ráda zdůraznila, že odborné posudky představovaly pouze jeden z několika faktorů, které brala při svém rozhodnutí v úvahu. Pokud však konečným výsledkem tohoto trestního řízení bude závěr, že odborné posudky byly nespolehlivé a vykazovaly závažné nedostatky, které mohly mít rozhodující vliv na posouzení Komise v jejím rozhodnutí ze dne 13. července 2011, pak Komise zváží přezkoumání věci.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004366/14
to the Commission
Hynek Fajmon (ECR)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Compliance of the privatisation of Czech company OKD a.s. with EC law

According to information published last week and this week in the Czech media (*Mladá Fronta Dnes*), the privatisation of the Czech state-owned company OKD a.s. in 2004 and 2005 was carried out in a very questionable and non-transparent manner. The Czech police and public prosecutor's office have investigated the privatisation, and the Commission gave an opinion on the matter in 2005. The latest media reports show that the terms of the company's sale were extremely unfavourable for the state, and thus for the Czech Republic. The price paid reportedly did not include the prices of subsidiary companies, as these had not been evaluated by a certified auditor. The price ultimately paid for the state's share in OKD a.s. was therefore too low and did not reflect its market value.

1. Was the privatisation of OKD a.s. in 2004 and 2005 carried out in accordance with EC law?

2. Has the Commission investigated this case of privatisation? If so, what conclusions did it reach?

3. Is the privatisation of OKD a.s. for a non-market price not a case of unauthorised state support that has an impact on the entire European market?

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

As regards the state aid aspects of the privatisation, by formal decision of 13 July 2011 (case SA.25076 (2011/NN)), the Commission concluded that the sale of 45,88% of OKD's shares to Karbon Invest in 2004 did not constitute state aid within the meaning of Article 107 (1) TFEU. In particular, the Commission found that in the context of this privatisation the State's behaviour was consistent with that of a private vendor in a market economy. Since the analysis of several factors led to the conclusion that the sale price was not below market value, the transaction did not provide any advantage to the buyer in the form of foregone State income from the sale. Consequently, one of the cumulative conditions of Article 107 (1) TFEU for the existence of state aid, i.e. the existence of a State-financed advantage for an undertaking, was not met.

The Commission received a new complaint in 2013 informing it of ongoing criminal proceedings involving the expert valuation opinions which are one of the three indicators on which the Commission's decision of 13 July 2011 was based. The Commission wishes to underline that the expert opinions were one among several factors taken into account in its decision. Nevertheless, if the final outcome of these criminal proceedings were to lead to the conclusion that the expert opinions were unreliable and presented serious deficiencies liable to have a decisive impact on the assessment made by the Commission in its decision of 13 July 2011, the Commission would consider re-examining the case.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004367/14
to the Commission
Fiona Hall (ALDE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Resettlement of indigenous populations in the Lower Omo Region, Ethiopia

For the last few years a major project has been underway in Ethiopia to construct the Gibe III dam, the contract for which has been awarded to a European (Italian) company. While offering opportunities to generate significant amounts of carbon-free energy, it is also estimated that this project could result in the resettlement of over 1.5 million people.

According to the Ethiopian constitution, and international law, local populations have the right to 'full consultation' regarding projects that affect them and their livelihoods. However, testimonials gathered by researchers at Survival International indicate that the indigenous populations in the Lower Omo area have not been consulted about the mass resettlement they are facing, and allegations have also been made of violence used against them. The Ethiopian Government strongly denies these claims.

The US Congress recently introduced a provision to ensure that US funds cannot be used to support forced resettlements in the Lower Omo area.

Does the Commission provide any funds to authorities active in the Lower Omo area that could be used — directly or indirectly — to support resettlement?

If so, how is the Commission reacting to these potentially very serious allegations of forced resettlement without consultation?

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

The HR/VP and the Commission are aware that, although the economic benefits of the Gibe III dam in the Omo river are potentially considerable, its construction does raise a series of concerns, notably regarding its social and environmental impacts.

While the Ethiopian authorities have provided detailed information, further clarifications are needed on irrigation schemes and on alleged human rights violations committed in the process of clearing the thousands of hectares to be irrigated. In this current context, Gibe III project and related irrigation schemes are not financed by the EU, nor by any other donor.

Nevertheless, within the framework of the Development Assistance Group (DAG), regular joint monitoring missions have been held by donors to review the Government's resettlement initiatives and to discuss its findings and recommendations with the authorities, both at Federal and local level. To date, these missions have not been able to substantiate allegations of systematic and widespread human rights abuse.

The EU has regular political dialogue with the Ethiopian authorities, and is an active member of the DAG. In this context, the EU raises its concerns with the Ethiopian Government on relevant topics. The EU has have notably been actively involved in dialogue with the authorities on resettlement since 2010, including on improving implementation and payment of compensation, following international good practice guidelines on resettlement, and establishing grievance redress mechanisms.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004368/14
an die Kommission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(8. April 2014)

Betrifft: Zwangsumsiedlung wegen Gibe-III-Staudamm in Äthiopien

Meldungen zufolge sollen tausende indigener Gemeinschaften in Äthiopiens unterem Omo-Tal der kommerziellen Landwirtschaft und dem Gibe-III-Staudamm weichen und werden deshalb gewaltsam vertrieben. Durch das Projekt ist die Lebensgrundlage von bis zu 400 000 Angehörigen indigener Gemeinschaften in Äthiopien und Kenia bedroht. Die EU leistet als Mitglied des Ausschusses für Entwicklungshilfe (DAC) der OECD ihren Beitrag zum PBS-Programm (Protection of Basic Services, Schutz von Basisdienstleistungen), an dem mehrere Geber beteiligt sind. Die Planung und Durchführung des Programms der äthiopischen Regierung zur Umsiedlung der indigenen Bevölkerung aus dem unteren Omo-Tal wird unter anderem auch aus PBS-Mitteln finanziert. Angeblich findet die Zwangsumsiedlung statt, um der betroffenen Bevölkerung den Zugang zu medizinischer Versorgung und Bildung zu ermöglichen, wobei die entsprechenden Einrichtungen bisher aber noch nicht entstanden sind. In den betreffenden Gebieten entstehen sowohl staatliche als auch private Plantagen — im Besitz äthiopischer Auswanderer in Indien, Italien, Malaysia und den USA — vor allem zum Anbau von Ölpalmen, Zuckerrohr, Getreide und Baumwolle. Tausende am Omo-Fluss beheimatete Menschen — Bauern und Hirten — werden dadurch um ihre Lebensgrundlage gebracht. 1 200 Angehörige der Bodi, die ursprünglich im Gebiet eines Stausees hinter dem Damm angesiedelt waren, haben ihre Heimat und ihre Lebensgrundlage bereits verloren, als ihre Farmen und Getreidespeicher geflutet wurden. Die Farmen, Getreidespeicher und Bienenstöcke der Mursi und Kwegu sind ebenfalls zerstört worden. Meldungen zufolge sollen über diese Zerstörungen hinaus weitere Rechtsverletzungen, auch Misshandlungen, Vergewaltigungen und Tötungen, stattgefunden haben. Die äthiopische Regierung hat in keinem Fall Entschädigungen gezahlt.

1. Ist der Kommission bekannt, das PBS-Mittel für das Umsiedlungsprogramm verwendet wurden?

2. In welchem Umfang und aus welchen Mitteln und Haushaltszeilen trägt die Union zum PBS-Programm bei? Seit wann werden die Beiträge schon gezahlt?

3. Hat die Kommission das PBS-Programm schon einmal einer Bewertung unterzogen? Wenn ja, wann war das, und was hat die Bewertung ergeben?

4. Weiß die Kommission von dem fortwährenden Landraub und dem Umstand, dass den dort beheimateten Menschen dadurch die Lebensgrundlage entzogen wird? Wird die Kommission sich dafür einsetzen, dass Entschädigungen gezahlt werden?

5. Was hat die Kommission bisher unternommen, oder was gedenkt sie zu unternehmen, um den Zwangsvertreibungen und anderen Verletzungen der Menschenrechte im unteren Omo-Tal nachzugehen?

6. Mit welchen Maßnahmen gedenkt die Kommission weitere Verletzungen der Menschenrechte zu verhindern?

7. Wird die Kommission ihre Beitragszahlungen zum PBS-Programm aufgrund der genannten Menschenrechtsverletzungen aussetzen?

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

Das Programm „Förderung grundlegender Dienstleistungen“ (PBS) dient zur Unterstützung des Ausbaus und der qualitativen Verbesserung dezentraler Dienstleistungen in den Bereichen Grundschulbildung, medizinische Grundversorgung, Landwirtschaft, Wasser- und Sanitärversorgung und Landstraßen in ganz Äthiopien. Seit 2006 hat die EU 311 Mio. EUR zu diesem von mehreren Gebern geförderten Programm beigetragen. Eine Reihe von Studien, darunter eine 2012 von der EU finanzierte Überprüfung, sind zu dem Schluss gekommen, dass das Programm einen relevanten und wirksamen Beitrag zur beschleunigten Verwirklichung verschiedener Millenniumsentwicklungsziele leistet. Darüber hinaus spielt das Programm eine wichtige Rolle bei der Verbesserung der Verwaltung öffentlicher Mittel. Die Unterstützung der EU für dieses Projekt soll in den kommenden Jahren fortgesetzt werden.

Das Umsiedlungsprogramm der Regierung wird weder von der EU noch von anderen Gebern finanziert und steht in keinem unmittelbaren Zusammenhang mit dem PBS-Programm. Allerdings hat der Inspection Panel der Weltbank vor kurzem die Risiken untersucht, die mit der gleichzeitigen Durchführung der beiden Programme in der Region Gambelle verbunden sind. Der Bericht soll demnächst vorgelegt werden.

Im Rahmen der Arbeitsgruppe Entwicklungshilfe (DEG) finden regelmäßige gemeinsame Monitoringmissionen statt, um die Durchführung des Umsiedlungsplans in den betreffenden Regionen Äthiopiens zu überprüfen. Bisher gab es keine Anhaltspunkte für systematische und weit verbreitete Menschenrechtsverletzungen. Dies gilt auch für die Region Gambelle, in der bislang drei DAG-Mission durchgeführt wurden, zuletzt im Oktober 2013.

Seit 2010 führt die EU einen aktiven Dialog mit den äthiopischen Behörden zum Thema Umsiedlung. Im Rahmen dieses Dialogs wurde verschiedene Fragen angesprochen, darunter Verbesserung der Durchführung und Entschädigung im Einklang mit den internationalen Leitlinien und bewährten Methoden für die Umsiedlung ([1]) sowie Einrichtung von Beschwerde- und Rechtsbehelfsverfahren.

([1]) Wie zum Beispiel in: ADB, Handbook on Resettlement: A Guide to Good Practice, 1998; World Bank, Involuntary Resettlement Sourcebook, 2004; und CFS/FAO, Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Lands, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security, 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004368/14
to the Commission
Sabine Lösing (GUE/NGL)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Forced resettlement for the Gibe III hydroelectric dam in Ethiopia

It has been reported that thousands of indigenous people in Ethiopia's Lower Omo Valley are being forcibly removed from their land to make way for commercial agriculture and the Gibe III hydroelectric dam. The project will jeopardise the livelihood of up to 400 000 indigenous people in Ethiopia and Kenya. As a member of the Development Assistance Group, the EU contributes to the Protection of Basic Services (PBS) multi-donor programme. PBS funds are being used to plan and implement the Ethiopian Government's resettlement programme, which aims to resettle all indigenous people from the Lower Omo Valley in permanent villages. The ongoing forced resettlement is being carried out supposedly to provide health and education services, which have yet to be made available. State-run and private plantations, owned by Ethiopian diaspora in India, Italy, Malaysia and the USA are being established in these areas to grow primarily oil palms, sugarcane, grain and cotton. Thousands of agropastoralists and inhabitants along the Omo river will no longer be able to sustain themselves. 1 200 Bodi people living in the area of a reservoir created behind a diversion dam have lost their homes and livelihoods as floodwaters destroyed their farms and grain stores. The farms, grain stores and beehives of Mursi and Kwegu families have also been destroyed. This destruction has been accompanied by allegations of other abuses, including killings, beatings and rape. The Ethiopian Government has not paid any compensation.

1. Is the Commission aware that PBS funds are being used for the resettlement programme?

2. How much and what funds and budget lines are being used to contribute to the PBS programme? For how long have such contributions been made?

3. Has the Commission conducted any assessment of the PBS programme? If so, when was the assessment carried out and what were the findings?

4. Is the Commission aware of the ongoing issue of land grabbing and that livelihoods are being jeopardised as a result? Will the Commission provide support for any compensation payments?

5. What measures has the Commission taken, or does intend to take, to investigate forced evictions and other human rights abuses in the Lower Omo region?

6. What measures will the Commission take to avoid future human rights violations?

7. Will the Commission suspend its contributions to the PBS owing to these human rights abuses?

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

The Promoting Basic Services (PBS) programme supports the expansion and quality improvement of decentralised service delivery in primary education, basic health, agriculture, water supply & sanitation, and rural roads throughout Ethiopia. Since 2006, the EU has contributed EUR 311 million to this multi-donor programme. A series of studies, including the 2012 EU-sponsored review, have underlined PBS' relevance and effectiveness in accelerating progress towards various Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, PBS plays an important role in improving the governance of public funds. In the next years, continued EU support to PBS is foreseen.

The Government's villagisation programme is not financed by the EU, or by any other donor, and there is no direct link with the PBS programme. Nevertheless, the World Bank's Inspection Panel has recently investigated the risks stemming from the concurrent implementation of both programmes in Gambella region. Its report is due to be published any time soon.

Within the framework of the Development Assistance Group (DAG), regular joint monitoring missions have been held to review the villagisation program in Ethiopia's emerging regions. To date, these missions have not been able to substantiate allegations of systematic and widespread human rights abuse, including in the Gambella region, which was visited three times by a DAG mission, the last time in October 2013.

The EU has been actively involved in dialogue with the authorities on resettlement since 2010. In this dialogue various issues were raised, including improving implementation and payment of compensation, following international good practice guidelines on resettlement ([1]), as well as establishing grievance redress mechanisms.

([1]) As for instance captured in: ADB, Handbook on Resettlement: A Guide to Good Practice, 1998; World Bank, Involuntary Resettlement Sourcebook, 2004; and CFS/FAO, Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Lands, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security, 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004369/14
to the Commission
Jean Lambert (Verts/ALE) and Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Canned hunting and lion trophy imports

'Canned hunting' is the practice of shooting captive-bred lions in enclosed spaces for sport. Parts of lion carcasses are then retained as 'trophies' and, in many cases, brought back to Member States by their owners.

Would the Commission consider introducing legislation to ban the import of such 'trophies' into the EU? Such a ban would create a disincentive for the continuation of this abhorrent practice and is consistent with Parliament's resolution of 15 January 2014 on wildlife crime (2013/2747(RSP)), which called for a possible revision of the EU's legal provisions governing the import of hunting trophies into Member States.

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

The African lion is covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 ([1]) on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein. The Commission considers that this regime is not sufficient to address concerns over the trade in lion hunting trophies. As a result, the Commission has initiated a revision of EU rules through amendments to Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 ([2]) on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein which would go beyond CITES requirements for import of hunting trophies of a number of species into the EU, including lions. On that basis, and in cases where there are concerns about the sustainability of lion hunting in certain exporting countries, those new rules would give the possibility to the Commission to suspend imports of lion hunting trophies into the EU.

([1]) OJ L 61, 3.3.1997.
([2]) OJ L 166, 19.6.2006.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004370/14
alla Commissione
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(8 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Eventuale accertamento sull'uso di fondi pubblici per il servizio ferroviario in Italia

Le ferrovie italiane ricevono dallo Stato fondi per fornire un pubblico servizio. Tuttavia, nel loro bilancio non è reperibile in maniera specifica quanto attiene al settore delle linee ad alta velocità, per le quali non dovrebbe essere consentito dalla normativa dell'Unione l'uso di aiuti di Stato. Tale mancanza di trasparenza non consente quindi di verificare se si configuri o meno un uso indebito dei fondi pubblici.

Ravvisa la Commissione l'opportunità di un accertamento in merito?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(22 maggio 2014)

Come rileva l'onorevole deputato, uno degli scopi principali della direttiva 2012/34/UE ([1]) e del regolamento (CE) n. 1370/2007 ([2]) è garantire la trasparenza nell'uso dei fondi statali per la fornitura di servizi pubblici di trasporto ferroviario.

Un sistema contabile trasparente è l'unico modo per identificare come viene speso il denaro pubblico e se viene usato a scopi diversi da quelli previsti. La Commissione sta quindi controllando l'applicazione della suddetta normativa del settore ferroviario in una serie di Stati membri, compresa l'Italia.

A tale riguardo la Commissione ha inviato all'Italia due lettere di costituzione in mora, una il 25 gennaio 2013 e l'altra il 21 novembre 2013. Attualmente la Commissione sta esaminando le risposte delle autorità italiane e, in esito a questo esame, prenderà le misure necessarie per assicurare la piena conformità della normativa italiana con le pertinenti disposizioni dell'UE.

([1]) Direttiva 2012/34/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 21 novembre 2012, che istituisce uno spazio ferroviario europeo unico (GU L 343 del 14.12.2012, pag. 32).

([2]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1370/2007 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 23 ottobre 2007, relativo ai servizi pubblici di trasporto di passeggeri su strada e per ferrovia e che abroga i regolamenti (CEE) n. 1191/69 e (CEE) n. 1107/70 del Consiglio (GU L 315 del 3.12.2007, pag. 1).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004370/14
to the Commission
Francesco Enrico Speroni (EFD)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Possible enquiry into the use of public funds for the Italian railway service

The Italian railways receive State funding to provide a public service. However, their financial statements do not specifically show how much relates to the high speed sector, for which the use of State funds is not permitted by EU legislation. This lack of transparency therefore prevents any determination of whether or not a situation of improper use of public funds exists.

Does the Commission consider that an enquiry would be appropriate?

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

As pointed out by the Honourable Member, one of the main purposes of Directive 2012/34/EU ([1]) and Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 ([2]) is to ensure transparency in the use of public funds for the provision of public transport by rail.

Since keeping transparent accounts is the only way to identify how public money is spent and whether it is used for other purposes then the ones foreseen, the Commission is currently monitoring the application of the abovementioned legislation in the rail sector within a number of Member States, including Italy.

In this respect, the Commission sent Italy a letter of formal notice on 25 January 2013 and an additional letter of formal notice on 21 November 2013. The Commission is currently assessing the Italian replies and will take, if needed in view of the conclusions of this assessment, the necessary steps to ensure the full compliance of the Italian legislation with the relevant EC law.

([1]) Directive 2012/34/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 November 2012 establishing a single European railway area (recast), OJ L 343, 14.12.2012, p. 32-77.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 1370/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on public passenger transport services by rail and by road and repealing Council Regulations (EEC) Nos 1191/69 and 1107/70, OJ L 315, 3.12.2007, p. 1-13.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004371/14
to the Council
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Cardiac arrest

What action has the Council taken, or is it considering taking, in response to Parliament's written declaration of 14 June 2012 calling for the establishment of a European cardiac arrest awareness week?

Reply
(16 June 2014)

The Council has not discussed the EP's written declaration of 14 June 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004372/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Work-related musculoskeletal disorders

Further to its answer of 17 December 2012 to Written Question E-009621/2012, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's consideration as to whether existing EU legislation is sufficient to address key challenges concerning work-related musculoskeletal disorders or whether additional action is required in order to reduce the prevalence of such disorders?

What action has the Commission taken or is it considering taking in response to Parliament's resolution of 4 July 2013 on the preparation of the Commission's Work Programme 2014, which, *inter alia*, called on the Commission to present a proposal for a directive on work-related musculoskeletal disorders?

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

In the Commission Communication on REFIT (COM(2013) 685 final), the Commission has indicated that it does not intend to put forward any regulatory initiative in this area during the present mandate.

In the framework of the ongoing comprehensive review of the 24 EU health and safety Directives, which the Commission is carrying out in terms of their relevance, of research and of new scientific knowledge in the various fields relating to occupational safety and health, the need to improve the existing regulatory framework, including in the area of ergonomics, will be evaluated with a view to reinforcing — where appropriate — workers' protection in the EU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004373/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Volunteer-sending faith-based development agency

Could the Commission indicate which, if any, EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest to a faith-based development organisation that is interested in sending volunteers on development work assignments, mainly to sub-Saharan Africa, south-east Asia and South America, and is also active in seeking to raise awareness of development groups within its structures? Could it also indicate when the next calls for proposals under these programmes will be made?

Answer given by Ms Georgieva on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

There are two main programmes funded by the EU that support volunteering deployment: the Erasmus+ programme containing the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and the EU Aid Volunteers initiative (EUAV).

EVS provides opportunities for citizens from 17 to 30 years of age to volunteer mostly in Europe but also worldwide. The number of the volunteering possibilities will gradually increase from around 10 000 in 2014 to 20 000 in 2020. Information on EVS is available in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide at: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf. Applicants can submit their grant requests at three annual deadlines; for 2014 the third deadline is on 1 October, for projects starting between 1 January and 30 September 2015.

The EU Aid Volunteers initiative has been adopted on 3 April 2014 (Regulation 375/2014) ([1]). It will provide from 2015 to 2020 opportunities for some 4 000 European volunteers to be deployed in humanitarian operations across the globe. The Commission is currently developing European standards for humanitarian volunteer management and a certification scheme. Once these are adopted, interested sending and hosting organisations will be able to express their interest for certification. A call for expression of interest is expected to be published towards the end of 2014. After successful certification based on the European standards, sending organisations may apply for funding to deploy volunteers in humanitarian aid operations. The first calls for proposals for deploying volunteers are expected in the second half of 2015. More information on the different steps will be published on http://ec.europa.eu/echo/euaidvolunteers/index_en.htm.

([1]) OJ L 122 of 24.4.2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004374/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Ireland's Building Control Act

What is the current situation with regard to the complaints the Commission has received concerning alleged breaches of Ireland's Building Control Act 2007 and the Building Control Regulations 2013, of EC law on competition, freedom of establishment and free movement of workers, as well as of other EU legislation, including the Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) and Directive 2013/55/EU amending it?

What action will the Commission take if it comes to the view that these regulations are in breach of EC law?

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

The Commission continues to explore the issues raised by a number of complainants in relation to amendments of the Irish Building Control Act 2007. This is a complex case which, as the Honourable Member lists in her question, poses a number of issues for investigation. The Commission takes the complainants' cases seriously and will keep the complainants duly informed about progress. Should the Commission conclude that a breach of EC law has occurred, appropriate action will be taken.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004375/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Creative Europe and media literacy

When does the Commission expect to issue calls for proposals under the cross-sectoral strand of the Creative Europe programme (Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013), particularly in relation to media literacy (Article 15(e))?

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

The cross-sectoral strand of Creative Europe comprises different actions. It includes a Guarantee Facility to improve access to finance for cultural and creative industries; it supports measures for transnational policy cooperation; it funds the Creative Europe Desks and the membership of the European Audiovisual Observatory; and it supports studies, evaluations and conferences.

As is the case in other MFF programmes, the budget profile of Creative Europe starts modestly and increases over time. In accordance with the comitology procedure it has therefore been decided that in 2014 the cross-sectoral strand will only fund essential actions such as, *inter alia*, the Creative Europe Desks, in order to allow for an adequate level of grants in the Culture and MEDIA Sub-programmes. In 2015 the Commission is planning to launch a first call for proposals with a view to supporting cross-sectoral innovation. Capacity building actions for financial intermediaries in the context of the Guarantee Facility are also foreseen in 2015; the launch of the Facility is then planned for 2016. All cross-sectoral measures, such as support for innovation, studies, and conferences will also be open to projects in the field of media literacy.

Under the MEDIA Sub-programme a call on audience development was published in December 2013 which includes an action to support cooperation between European film-literacy initiatives. A renewal of this call is foreseen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004376/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Entitlement to holiday pay

Further to its answer of 20 January 2003 to Written Question E-003529/2002, could the Commission indicate whether, in the intervening years, the *acquis communautaire* and the Commission's position in relation to accrued entitlement to holiday pay have changed, and if so, could it outline both positions as they now stand?

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

Both EU and Belgian legislation have been amended as regards minimum paid annual leave since the Commission's answer ([1]) in 2003.

The right to paid annual leave is now enshrined in Article 31(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which Article 6(1) TEU recognises as having the same legal value as the Treaties ([2]). Article 7 of the Working Time Directive ([3]) may be regarded as a concrete expression of that 'particularly important principle of European Union social law from which there can be no derogations' ([4]). While Article 7(1) of the directive allows the Member States to set conditions for the exercise of that right, the Court has held that that option must be interpreted restrictively and does not permit any conditions that make it effectively impossible for a worker to exercise his right in practice ([5]).

The Court has ruled that 'the positive effect of paid annual leave for the safety and health of the worker is deployed fully if it is taken in the year prescribed for that purpose' ([6]). It follows from the case-law that while it may be permissible to postpone annual leave to later where the worker is unable to take leave during the leave year for reasons beyond his control ([7]), this does not justify imposing a 12-month delay where the worker wishes to exercise his right during the leave year.

In October 2008 the Commission asked Belgium to amend its legislation on the exercise of the right to annual leave and reiterated that request by a reasoned opinion in November 2011. In June 2012 Belgium notified the Commission of new legislation ([8]) that brought the situation into line with EC law by allowing workers in the initial year of employment to take their accrued leave from the end of the third month of employment.

([1]) Written Question E-003529/2002.
([2]) Joined Cases C-229/11 and C-230/11 Alexander Heimann and Konstantin Toltschin v Kaiser GmbH [2012] ECR I-0000, paragraph 22.
([3]) Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.
([4]) Joined Cases C-350/06 and C-520/06 Gerhard Schultz-Hoff v Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund and Stringer and Others v Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs [2009] ECR I-179, paragraph 54; Case C-337/10 Georg Neidel v Stadt Frankfurt am Main [2012] ECR I-0000, paragraph 28; Case C-214/10 KHS AG v Winfried Schulte [2011] ECR I-11757, paragraph 37.
([5]) Case C-173/99 The Queen v Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, ex parte Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematographic and Theatre Union (BECTU) [2001] ECR I-4881, paragraphs 43 and 53; Joined Cases C-350/06 and C-520/06 Schultz-Hoff, op cit, paragraphs 28, 43, 46 and 55; Case C-277/08 Francisco Vicente Pereda v Madrid Movilidad SA [2009] ECR I-8405, paragraph 19.
([6]) See in particular Case C-124/05 Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging v Staat der Nederlanden [2006] ECR I-3423, paragraph 30, and Joined Cases C-350/06 and C-520/06 Schultz-Hoff, op cit, paragraph 30.
([7]) Joined Cases C-350/06 and C-520/06 Schultz-Hoff, op cit, Case C-486/08 Zentralbetriebsrat der Landeskrankenhäuser Tirols v Land Tirol [2010] ECR I-03527; Case C-214/10 KHS, op cit.
([8]) Arrêté royal portant exécution de l'Article 17bis des lois relatives aux vacances annuelles des travailleurs salariés, coordonnées le 28 juin 1971, adopted on 19.6.2012 and applicable retroactively from 1.4.2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004377/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Early numeracy programme

Could the Commission indicate which EU funding programmes and other EU initiatives would be of relevance and interest to a project based in Dublin's Docklands aimed at improving numeracy outcomes for children aged up to six, by bringing together parents, early years practitioners, primary school teachers, home visitors and public health nurses, and which could be replicated in other Member States? Could it indicate when the next calls for proposals under these programmes will be announced?

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

According to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems, including early childhood education and care (ECEC) fall under the exclusive competence of Member States. The Commission supports MS in their efforts to achieve the policy goals agreed at European level.

In this context, the Erasmus+ programmes provides opportunities for developing high quality ECEC and it is certainly possible to develop transnational projects around the theme of early numeracy. In particular, Key Action 2 (Strategic Partnerships) promotes innovation, and the exchange of experience and know-how across countries between different types of organisations involved in the topic of the partnership.

The detailed Erasmus+ rules can be found in the Programme Guide:
http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

Erasmus+ National Agencies in the participating countries ([1]) can also provide further details on the application process.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/national_agencies_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004378/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Community 'first responders' scheme

Could the Commission indicate which EU funding programmes would be of interest as regards the proposed establishment of a community 'first responders' scheme in Dublin city.

What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, in response to Parliament's Written Declaration of 14 June 2012 calling for the establishment of a European cardiac arrest awareness week?

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

The Commission is not aware of a specific EU funding programme to support the establishment of a community 'first responders' scheme in Dublin city.

With regard to Parliament's Written Declaration of 14 June 2012, as reported by the Commission to the Parliament after the adoption of the Declaration, the Commission does not intend 'to establish a European cardiac arrest awareness week aimed at improving the awareness and education of the general public, physicians and healthcare professionals'. Actions in this area need to be developed and implemented by Member States, as this touches upon the organisation and delivery of healthcare under national responsibility and there is a need to ensure that specific national requirements are taken into account.

The implementation of specific activities to improve the response to cardiac arrests is also a matter of Member State competence.

To support Member States' action, the Commission is addressing the key risk factors of cardiac arrest in particular tobacco consumption, through legislative action and awareness raising.

In addition, the Commission addresses obesity, lack of physical activity and alcohol-related harm through work with Member States and stakeholders to implement the strategies on nutrition, overweight, and obesity-related health issues ([1]) and on alcohol-related harm ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/strategy_en.htm
([2]) http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/public_health/health_determinants_lifestyle/c11564b_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004379/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Coastal erosion

Further to its answer of 13 March 2013 to my Written Question E-000568/2013 on coastal erosion in Dublin, could the Commission indicate whether, in the context of the negotiations with the Irish authorities on the 2014-2020 Structural and Investment Funds, the issue of tackling coastal erosion has been considered for inclusion among the list of eligible activities? If so, what is the current situation with regard to consideration of this issue?

What is the current situation with regard to projects being funded by the EU under the topic 'Coasts at threat in Europe'?

In reference to the aforementioned answer, what is the current situation with regard to the initiative on maritime spatial planning and integrated coastal management, which is intended to address coastal erosion, amongst other threats to coasts, through coastal management strategies?

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

On 17 April 2014, the European Parliament endorsed a directive on Maritime Spatial Planning, which requires that land-sea interactions should be taken into account during the preparation of maritime spatial plans. Once adopted by Ministers, Member States must transpose the directive into their national legislation by 2016 and draw up national maritime spatial plans by 2021. They are free to tailor the content of the resulting documents to their specific environmental, economic and social priorities, along with national sectorial policy objectives and legal traditions, but must respect the minimum requirements of the directive.

The regulatory framework governing the 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes was agreed on 17 December 2013. The investment priorities specified in Article 5(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 ([1]) include 'promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention by supporting investment for adaptation to climate change, including eco-system based approaches; promoting investment to address specific risks ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems.' In consequence, the regulatory framework provides some scope for the type of investment suggested by the Honourable Member.

The Partnership Agreement for Ireland and the two expected 2014-2020 ERDF regional programmes remain under discussion.

Under the 7th EU Research Framework Programme, the topic 'Coasts at threat in Europe' provided for three projects recently selected for EU funding with results expected within the next two years. Two projects, Pearl ([2]) and Risc-Kit ([3]), focus on climate-related hazards for coastal communities. The third, Astarte ([4]), aims at fostering tsunami resilience in Europe.

([1]) Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17.12.2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ,OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.
([2]) Pearl Preparing for extreme and rare events in coastal regions; www.pearl-fp7.eu
([3]) Risc-Kit Resilience-Increasing Strategies for Coasts; www.risckit.eu
([4]) Astarte Assessment, Strategy and Risk Reduction for Tsunamis in Europe; www.astarte-project.eu/
The University College Dublin is part of the Astarte consortium.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004380/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Allergens in finished textile products

Further to its answer of 3 March 2014 to Written Question P-001011/2014, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's exploration of methodologies to test for allergens in finished textile products? Is the Commission giving consideration to coming forward with an initiative on this issue?

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

The Textile Regulation (EU) 1007/2011 does not set specific requirements regarding the presence or the absence of allergenic substances in finished textile products.

As indicated in the report to the European Parliament and the Council of 25 September 2013 ([1]), the Commission is aware of the importance of providing consumers with accurate, reliable and comparable information on dangerous chemical substances, in particular allergenic, that may be found in finished textile products. The Commission is therefore currently assessing the opportunity for further work in this area, in particular regarding the development and validation of standardised test methodologies at Union level.

A follow-up initiative currently under consideration is a mandate to the relevant European Standardisation Organisations, as already mentioned in the Annual Standardisation Work Programme for 2015. Harmonised standard methods to test such dangerous chemical substances, in particular those which are allergens for consumers, will facilitate demonstrating conformity compliance, market surveillance and enforcement.

Improving the knowledge of the presence of dangerous chemical substances in textile products will contribute to the setting of a non-toxic environment, in accordance with the 7th Environment Action Programme ([2]). In particular, it should allow identifying the need for further actions at EU level, for example further restrictions on the presence of hazardous substances in textiles via the REACH Regulation.

([1]) Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council regarding possible new labelling requirements of textile products and on a study on allergenic substances in textile products, COM(2013) 656 final of 25.9.2013.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/environment/newprg/index.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004381/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Creation of a sensory garden

Could the Commission indicate which, if any, EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest regarding the creation of a sensory garden, which would be accessible and enjoyable to both disabled and non-disabled visitors in Dublin, and could it also indicate when the next call for proposals under these programmes will be launched?

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

The 2007-2013 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes in Ireland typically focus on niche investment opportunities in the areas of research and technological development and small business support through the country-wide network of City/County Enterprise Boards.

During the 2007-2013 period , the two ERDF 2007-2013 programmes for (1) Border, Midland and Western region and (2) Southern and Eastern region have invested in a limited number of sustainable urban development projects. No further 2007-2013 funding is, however, available under the urban development strand of investment activity.

Ways of encouraging urban development under the prospective 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment funding streams will be considered during on-going negotiations with the relevant national and regional authorities in Ireland.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004382/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Car insurance and car hire in the EU

I have had a number of complaints about car hire companies in other Member States insisting that customers hiring their cars purchase a car hire 'excess policy' despite the fact that the customers already have an excess policy on their car insurance policy in their own Member State. Could the Commission indicate whether it is aware of this practice and if it has taken or is considering taking any initiatives to address this problem?

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

The Commission is aware of this matter which is not at present regulated at EU level. Given the differences between relevant provisions of civil law, the scope of motor insurance policies varies between Member States. In general, motor insurance policies cover the civil responsibility resulting from the use of a specific vehicle. Thus, a person renting a car cannot as a general rule, rely on the insurance policy of his own vehicle since the object covered by the policy is not the same.

The Commission is planning to consult stakeholders on the functioning of the Motor Insurance Directive 2009/103/EC ([1]). In that context, stakeholders are invited to submit evidence about practical and legal problems encountered in the application of that directive.

([1]) Directive 2009/103/EC of 16.9.2009 relating to insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of motor vehicles, and the enforcement of the obligation to insure against such liability.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004383/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: Addressing mental health as a priority of youth policy

Further to the conclusions of the Lithuanian Presidency conference 'Mental health: challenges and possibilities', held in Vilnius on 10 and 11 October 2013, what action is the Commission taking or considering taking on foot of recommendation 11(c), which invited the Commission and the Member States to continue to 'address mental health as a priority of youth policy, taking account of the importance of mental health aspects in promoting the transition of young people from school into work — for instance by facilitating awareness about this among schools, social actors, public employment agencies and social partners, and by encouraging coordinated approaches between them and by integrating action on mental health and well-being into a possible European Year of Youth if confirmed'?

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

The Commission launched a Joint Action with the Member States on Mental Health and Well-being (2013-2016) under the EU-Health Programme. This joint action is intended to identify good practices and develop recommendations for example on mental health and schools, and on mental health in all policies.

In 2013, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions published a study 'Active inclusion of young people with disabilities or health problems'. This study examined the implementation of active inclusion policy at national level in 11 EU Member States, considered the needs of young people with mental health problems, underlined the need for coordinated approaches and compiled 44 cases of good practice.

In October 2012, the Commission services in charge of health and consumers and of education and culture organised a joint workshop on the role of mental health and social and emotional learning in promoting educational attainment and preventing early school leaving ([1]).

In addition, Erasmus+ provides opportunities for development of innovative approaches (for example through strategic partnership) dealing with mental health issues. Furthermore, the EU Youth Strategy ([2]), under its 'health and well-being' chapter, calls for encouraging healthy lifestyles for young people and establishing means to support collaboration between schools, youth workers, and sporting organisations. In respect of subsidiarity, this primarily targets activities in Member States.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/health/mental_health/events/ev_20121009_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004384/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: EU funding to support victims of domestic violence

Could the Commission indicate which EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest to an NGO that seeks to support women, children and young people who are affected by domestic violence, and indicate when the next calls for proposals under these programmes will be announced?

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

The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1381/2013 of 17 December 2013 for the period 2014 to 2020 ([1]) has 9 specific objectives, one of which is about preventing and combating all forms of violence against children, young people and women, as well as violence against other groups at risk, in particular groups at risk of violence in close relationships, and to protect victims of such violence.

The Annual Work Programme for 2014 has been adopted on 24 April 2014. It provides for various targeted calls for proposals, of which several concern the abovementioned specific objective. The first call was launched end of April and is about operating grants to European networks (cf. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/grants/index_en.htm); the other calls related to action grants will be issued in the third and fourth quarter of 2014. The Annual Work Programme can be consulted on the DG Justice website under http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index_en.htm

([1]) OJ L 354, 28.12.2013 p. 62.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004385/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(8 April 2014)

Subject: EU support for teaching English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

Could the Commission indicate which EU programmes under the 2014-2020 period would be of interest and relevance for organisations in Ireland that provide and support teaching of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and indicate when the next call for proposals under these programmes will be launched?

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

The new programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport, Erasmus+ ([1]), supports language learning and linguistic diversity in Europe, mainly through mobility actions for learners, teachers, educators and young volunteers. Under Erasmus+, language teaching within a Member State can receive funding if it is an initiative launched within the framework of a so-called Strategic Partnership between, for example, education institutions and local or regional authorities. However, in order to be eligible for funding, such partnerships will require partners from at least three different Member States.

The 2014 call for proposals has recently been closed and the call for 2015 will be published during the last quarter of 2014.

Under certain conditions, and subject to the priorities set out in the Partnership Agreement and Operational Programme between Ireland and the European Union ([2]), English language courses might also receive funding through the European Social Fund (ESF).

The Partnership Agreements and Operational programmes are currently being negotiated between the Commission and the Member States for the ESF 2014-2020 programming period. Once adopted, the Member States will be responsible for the implementation of the programmes and the selection of the projects according to the principle of shared management.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm
([2]) http://www.per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/Partnership-Agreement-Ireland-220414.pdf

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung P-004386/14
an die Kommission
Knut Fleckenstein (S&D)
(9. April 2014)

Betrifft: Maritime Verkehrspolitik/Binnenwasserstraßen

Der Seeverkehr ist für die Wirtschaft und die Handelsbeziehungen der Europäischen Union von elementarer Bedeutung. Wichtige Voraussetzungen für die Gewährleistung der Anbindung an internationale Handelsströme sind leistungsfähige Wasserstraßen und die Zugänglichkeit der Seehäfen. Erklärtes Ziel der EU ist zudem die Verlagerung von Warenverkehren von der Straße auf die umweltfreundlicheren Schienen- und Wasserwege. Wasserwege müssen wie andere Verkehrsinfrastrukturen entsprechend unterhalten (z. B. Uferbefestigungen, Ausbaggerungen, etc.) und gesichert werden (z. B. Hochwasserschutz).

Der Juristische Dienst der Europäischen Kommission hat dem EuGH eine Stellungnahme zur Auslegung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie (WRRL) für das laufende Vorabentscheidungsverfahren (EuGH C-461/13) vorgelegt. Die Auslegung des Juristischen Dienstes und die Entscheidung des EuGH sind für die Zukunft des Seeverkehrs und der Binnenschifffahrt von essentieller Bedeutung. Es besteht die Sorge, dass bei der derzeit getroffenen Auslegung zukünftig kaum noch eine Unterhaltung der Wasserstraßen möglich sein wird, da alle Projekte auch bei lediglich geringfügiger Verschlechterung des Wasserzustands gegebenenfalls verboten werden müssten. Dies würde zahllose Infrastrukturvorhaben in allen Mitgliedstaaten betreffen bzw. vereiteln.

Kann die Kommission darlegen, mit welchen Generaldirektionen sich der Juristische Dienst für das Verfassen der Stellungnahme abgestimmt hat? Kann die Kommission ferner die Einschätzung der GD MOVE und der GD ENTR bezüglich der folgenden Fragen darlegen?

1. Kann die Art der Definition des ökologischen Zustands in der WRRL als „die Qualität von Struktur und Funktionsfähigkeit aquatischer, in Verbindung mit Oberflächengewässern stehender Ökosysteme gemäß der Einstufung nach Anhang V“ nicht dahin gehend interpretiert werden, dass eine Verschlechterung eines solchen Zustands nach Artikel 4 Absatz 1 ebenfalls gemäß Anhang V beurteilt werden muss?

2. Kann die WRRL dahin gehend ausgelegt werden, dass es sich bei dem Verschlechterungsverbot um eine Zielvorgabe für die Bewirtschaftungsplanung der Gewässer handelt und dass dieses nicht zwangsweise einen verbindlichen Versagungsgrund für einzelne Vorhaben darstellt?

Sollten die GD MOVE und die GD ENTR die Auslegung des Juristischen Dienstes teilen, wird die Kommission gebeten konkret darzulegen, wie sie zukünftig die Wasserstraßen der EU instand halten und den neuen Herausforderungen (z. B. Größe der Containerschiffe) im Seeverkehr gerecht werden will.

Antwort von Herrn Potočnik im Namen der Kommission
(28. Mai 2014)

Die Kommission möchte zu dem vom Herrn Abgeordneten angesprochenen Sachverhalt keine Stellung nehmen, solange das Verfahren noch beim Gerichtshof anhängig ist.

Die Kommission bestätigt, dass nach der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie die Verschlechterung des Zustands unter Berücksichtigung von Anhang V der Richtlinie beurteilt werden muss.

Das Verbot der Verschlechterung des Gewässerzustands ist ein Umweltziel der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie und insofern für die Mitgliedstaaten verbindlich. Einzelne Vorhaben, die den Bedingungen von Artikel 4 Absatz 7 dieser Richtlinie entsprechen, können jedoch genehmigt werden, selbst wenn sie zu einer Verschlechterung des Zustands des betreffenden Gewässerkörpers führen. Diese Bestimmung kann dazu beitragen, die Erfordernisse der Schifffahrt und Umweltziele gegeneinander abzuwägen.

Deshalb ist die Kommission ist der Auffassung, dass die Umsetzung der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie mit dem Ausbau der nachhaltigen Schifffahrt und der Instandhaltung der Wasserstraßen in der EU, die für die Förderung der Nutzung umweltfreundlicherer Verkehrsarten unverzichtbar sind, vereinbar ist. Insofern müssen die Mitgliedstaaten die Anforderungen der Erreichung einer guten Befahrbarkeit gemäß der TEN-V-Verordnung mit denen des guten Gewässerzustands und des Verschlechterungsverbots gemäß der Wasserrahmenrichtlinie miteinander in Einklang bringen.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004386/14
to the Commission
Knut Fleckenstein (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Maritime transport policy/inland waterways

Maritime transport is crucial for the economy and for the EU's trade relations. Efficient waterways and the accessibility of sea ports are important preconditions for safeguarding connections to international trade flows. Moreover, one of the stated aims of the EU is to shift freight traffic from the roads to the railways and waterways, which are more environmentally-friendly. Like other transport infrastructures, waterways also need to be maintained (e.g. bank reinforcement, dredging, etc.) and made secure (e.g. flood protection).

The Commission's Legal Service has submitted an opinion to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) on the interpretation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) for the ongoing preliminary ruling (ECJ C-461/13). The Legal Service's interpretation and the ECJ's decision are vital for the future of maritime transport and inland waterway transport. There is a concern that the interpretation will mean that there will be little future maintenance of the waterways, as all projects would have to be prohibited if there were even a minor deterioration of the water status. This would affect or thwart numerous infrastructure projects in all the Member States.

Will the Commission state with which Directorate-General the Legal Service reached agreement regarding the drafting of the opinion? Will the Commission further explain the assessment by GD MOVE and GD ENTR with regard to the following questions?

1. Can the way that the WFD defines ecological status as 'the quality of the structure and functioning of aquatic ecosystems associated with surface waters, classified in accordance with Annex V' not be interpreted in such a way that the deterioration of such a status pursuant to Article 4(1) must also be evaluated in accordance with Annex V?

2. Can the WFD be interpreted in such a way that the prohibition of deterioration would represent a goal for the management planning of waters and not necessarily a binding ground for prohibiting individual projects?

If GD MOVE and GD ENTR agree with the interpretation of the Legal Service, I call on the Commission to state exactly how it intends to maintain the EU's waterways in future and face the new challenges (e.g. the size of container ships) in maritime transport.

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

The Commission will refrain from commenting on the case mentioned by the Honourable Member as the procedure is pending before the Court of Justice.

The Commission confirms that the deterioration of status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) must be assessed taking into account Annex V thereof.

The prohibition of deterioration of status of water bodies is an environmental objective of the WFD and therefore is binding for the Member States. However, individual projects which fulfil the conditions of Article 4.7 can be authorised, even if they result in a deterioration of the affected water body. This provision can help to combine navigation needs and environmental objectives.

The Commission therefore considers that the implementation of the WFD can be combined with the development of sustainable maritime transport and the maintenance of the EU's waterways that are essential in order to develop the use of more environmentally friendly modes of transport. In this respect, it is necessary for Member States to reconcile the requirements of achieving good navigation status under the TEN-T Regulation with those related to good water status and non-deterioration under the WFD.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004388/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Implementación en el Estado español de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI sobre la lucha contra la banalización de los totalitarismos y la propagación del odio

El pasado 27 de enero de 2014, la Comisión hizo público un informe sobre el estado de implementación de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI en los distintos Estados de la UE.

En él se destaca qué deficiencias tiene cada uno de los Estados en las distintas vertientes de la citada decisión marco.

El Estado español no cumple los estándares europeos en relación con el discurso de odio contra otros grupos por motivos de raza, religión, etnicidad u otros, cuando se trata de casos individuales. Deja fuera de la legislación a los ciudadanos particulares y por lo tanto a cualquier caso de *hate speech* realizado *online*.

Tampoco cumple el Estado español los estándares europeos sobre condonación, negación o trivialización de crímenes contra la humanidad y genocidio, ya que sólo la condonación está penada por la ley. Eso en parte explica por qué algunos partidos políticos trivializan públicamente el nazismo sin ninguna consecuencia judicial.

Por otro lado, el Estado español es uno de los pocos que parece no haber presentado casos particulares para el estudio de la Comisión respecto a esta problemática, a pesar de que han existido diversos casos de trivialización del nazismo, así como de *hate speech* contra distintos colectivos.

A la luz de lo anterior, ¿ha iniciado ya el diálogo bilateral con el Gobierno español para solventar estas deficiencias? ¿Qué plazo de tiempo piensa dar la Comisión para que el Estado español cumpla la Decisión 2008/913/JAI?

¿Cree que la banalización y las comparaciones con el nazismo y el franquismo de colectivos políticos democráticos calificarían como posibles casos particulares? ¿Ha recibido respuesta la Comisión sobre por qué el Estado español no ha declarado ningún caso en 2013?

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

La Comisión está organizando diálogos con todos los Estados miembros, incluida España, relativos a la aplicación de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004388/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Implementation in Spain of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating trivialisation of totalitarianism and propagation of hatred

The Commission published a report on 27 January 2014 on the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA in the different EU Member States.

In the report the Commission highlights each Member State's shortcomings as regards the different aspects of the aforesaid framework decision.

Spain does not meet EU standards on hate speech directed against other groups and motivated by race, religion, ethnicity, etc. when it comes to individual cases. It has not included individuals in the law and nor, therefore, cases of hate speech occurring online.

Nor does Spain meet EU standards on condoning, denying or trivialising crimes against humanity and genocide, as it is only condoning these that is punishable under the law. This explains in part why some political parties trivialise publically Nazism without suffering any legal consequences.

Spain is, moreover, one of the few countries that has not, it would seem, forwarded details of individual cases for the Commission's study on this issue, in spite of various cases of trivialisation of Nazism, and of hate speech directed at distinct groups, having occurred.

In light of the above, has bilateral dialogue begun yet with the Spanish Government to resolve these shortcomings? How long does the Commission plan to give Spain to comply with Decision 2008/913/JHA?

Does it believe that trivialisation and comparisons with Nazism and the Franco period by democratic political groups would qualify as possible specific cases? Has the Commission received an answer as to why Spain has not reported any cases in 2013?

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

The Commission is currently preparing dialogues with all the Member States, including Spain, as regards the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004389/14
a la Comisión
Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE)
(9 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Falta de seguridad jurídica en Ecuador para las empresas europeas

¿Está al corriente la Comisión de la falta de seguridad jurídica que, para las empresas europeas, representa el marco jurídico ecuatoriano regulador de la promoción y el desarrollo de las energías renovables y, en particular, de la energía solar fotovoltaica?

¿Conoce la Comisión el caso de la empresa española Solarig S.A, que, con una inversión superior a los 100 millones de dólares estadounidenses destinados a la instalación de dos plantas solares fotovoltaicas en ese país, con una potencia superior a los 40 MW, ha sido desprovista de las correspondientes autorizaciones administrativas, una vez iniciadas y en plena realización de las obras de instalación, mediante decisiones estrictamente arbitrarias, discrecionales y unilaterales por parte del ente regulador de la energía de dicho Estado (Consejo Nacional de Electrificación (Conelec))?

En un momento en que los servicios de la Comisión están trabajando con los equipos negociadores de este país andino en la definición de un Acuerdo Comercial Unión Europea-Ecuador, ¿qué medidas considera la Comisión apropiadas para garantizar la seguridad jurídica de las inversiones de las empresas europeas en ese país con miras a proteger adecuadamente los intereses de éstas?

Respuesta del Sr. De Gucht en nombre de la Comisión
(22 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión ha sido informada de la situación de Solarig SA. El acuerdo comercial que la UE negocia actualmente con Ecuador incluirá la no discriminación y los compromisos de acceso al mercado de inversiones, pero no incluirá disposiciones sobre protección de las inversiones. No obstante, mediante la conclusión de dicho acuerdo comercial, se pretende garantizar un entorno jurídico más estable y previsible en Ecuador. Durante las conversaciones en curso, la Comisión ha hecho hincapié en que las medidas que perjudican a las inversiones extranjeras y al comercio, incluidas las que afectan a los operadores de la UE, deben abordarse de forma adecuada con el fin de reforzar la relación comercial que conjuntamente se está buscando.

Si Solarig SA considera que sus derechos han sido violados podría actuar en virtud de lo dispuesto en el acuerdo bilateral existente entre Ecuador y España sobre protección de las inversiones.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004389/14
to the Commission
Alejo Vidal-Quadras (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Lack of legal security for European undertakings in Ecuador

Is the Commission aware of the lack of legal security for European undertakings resulting from Ecuadorean legislation regulating the promotion and development of renewable energies, in particular photovoltaic solar energy?

Is the Commission aware of the case of the Spanish undertaking Solarig SA, which was planning to invest more than USD 100 million in installing two new photovoltaic solar plants in Ecuador, with a generating capacity of over 40 MW, only for the corresponding authorisations to be withdrawn after the work on installing the plants had already begun and the project was well under way, following purely arbitrary unilateral decisions taken at the discretion of Ecuador's energy regulator (the National Electricity Council — Conelec)?

Given that the Commission services are currently working with Ecuador's negotiating teams on drawing up a European Union-Ecuador Trade Agreement, what measures does the Commission consider appropriate in order to guarantee legal security for investments made by European undertakings in the country and ensure that their interests are adequately protected?

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

The Commission has been made aware of the situation of Solarig SA. The trade agreement that the EU is currently negotiating with Ecuador will include non-discrimination and market access commitments on investments, but not investment protection provisions. Nevertheless, ensuring a more stable and predictable legal environment in Ecuador is an objective that we aim to attain through the conclusion of the trade agreement. In ongoing talks, the Commission has emphasised that measures that are detrimental to foreign investment and trade, including EU operators, need to be addressed satisfactorily in order to strengthen the trade relationship that is jointly being sought.

If the Solarig SA considers its rights have been violated, it could take action under the existing bilateral investment protection treaty between Ecuador and Spain.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004390/14
à la Commission (Vice-Présidente/Haute Représentante)
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 avril 2014)

Objet: VP/HR — Attaque du village arménien de Kessab en Syrie

Le 21 mars dernier, le village de Kessab, situé dans le nord de la Syrie près de la frontière turque, a été pris d'assaut par des islamistes radicaux qui ont été identifiés comme des membres du groupe Jabhat al-Nosra, récemment rebaptisé Al-Qaïda au Levant.

Cette incursion violente a fait 80 victimes civiles et a provoqué l'exode de populations arméniennes. En effet, 670 familles arméniennes et la majorité de la population de Kessab ont été évacuées vers des zones plus sûres à Al-Bassit et à Lattaquié.

À la suite à ces événements tragiques, le président de la Fédération euro-arménienne pour la justice et la démocratie (ANC Europe), Kaspar Karampetian, a envoyé une lettre au président du Conseil européen, Herman Van Rompuy, au président de la Commission européenne, José Manuel Barroso, et au président du Parlement européen, Martin Schulz, les invitant à condamner ces événements au nom de la communauté internationale.

1. À la veille des commémorations du centenaire du génocide arménien, la Haute représentante de l'Union pour les affaires étrangères et la politique de sécurité, Catherine Ashton, envisage-t-elle de condamner l'attaque du village de Kessab et d'œuvrer, à l'échelon européen, pour la protection de la population d'origine arménienne de Syrie?

2. L'Union européenne coopère-t-elle de manière approfondie avec la Syrie et la Turquie pour faire la lumière sur l'attaque du village arménien de Kessab en Syrie?

Le 15 janvier 2014, la Commission a présenté un plan de riposte à la radicalisation et à la montée des extrémismes violents dans les pays membres de l'Union, qui s'inscrit dans le prolongement de la stratégie de lutte contre la radicalisation et le recrutement, qui avait été lancée en 2005.

3. En vertu de ce plan, comment l'Union européenne compte-t-elle lutter contre la menace que représente Al-Qaïda au Levant?

Réponse donnée par la Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante Ashton au nom de la Commission
(11 juin 2014)

La Vice-présidente/Haute Représentante est très préoccupée par les attaques contre le village de Kessab et plusieurs autres endroits où des civils innocents ont été pris pour cible. Elle a toujours soutenu la politique cohérente de l'UE, exprimée dans de nombreuses conclusions du Conseil «Affaires étrangères» concernant la Syrie, qui condamne toute attaque visant la population civile syrienne. Plus récemment, l'UE a rappelé sa préoccupation croissante à l'égard de l'aggravation du sort de l'ensemble des groupes vulnérables et des minorités ethniques et religieuses en Syrie.

L'UE et la Turquie restent en contact régulier pour toutes les questions concernant l'évolution de la situation en Syrie.

À plusieurs reprises, l'UE a attiré l'attention sur le danger qu'Al-Qaïda et ses organisations affiliées représentent pour la stabilité du Proche-Orient. L'UE coopère avec l'ensemble des parties prenantes dans la région afin de limiter l'influence de ces groupes.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004390/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Attack on the Armenian village of Kessab in Syria

On 21 March 2014, the village of Kessab, which is in the North of Syria close to the Turkish border, came under attack from radical Islamists identified as members of the al-Nusra Front, which has recently changed its name to al-Qaeda in the Levant.

This violent incursion claimed 80 civilian victims and led to the exodus of the Armenian population. 670 Armenian families and the majority of Kessab's inhabitants were evacuated to the safer areas of Ras al-Bassit and Latakia.

Following these tragic events, the President of the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy (ANC Europe), Kaspar Karampetian, sent a letter to the President of the Council, Herman Van Rompuy, the President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and the President of Parliament, Martin Schulz, calling on them to condemn these events in the name of the international community.

1. As we approach the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, does the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy plan to condemn the attack on the village of Kessab and to take steps at the European level to protect Syria's Armenian population?

2. Is the EU engaging in close cooperation with Syria and Turkey in order to shed light on the attack on the Armenian village of Kessab in Syria?

On 15 January 2014, the Commission presented a plan on combating radicalisation and the rise of violent extremists in the EU Member States, which marks a continuation of the strategy to combat radicalisation and recruitment that was launched in 2005.

3. In view of this plan, how does the European Union intend to combat the danger posed by al Qaeda in the Levant?

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

The High Representative/Vice-President is very concerned with reported attacks on the village of Kessab and numerous other locations where innocent civilians are targeted. The High Representative/Vice-President has always supported the consistent EU policy, as expressed in numerous foreign affairs council conclusions on Syria, condemning any attacks on the civilian population in Syria. Most recently, the EU has reiterated its increasing concern with the worsening plight of all vulnerable groups and ethnic and religious minorities in Syria.

The EU and Turkey remain in regular contact on all issues concerning the developing situation in Syria.

The EU has repeatedly pointed to the danger of al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda affiliates to the stability of the Middle East. The EU is working with all stakeholders in the region to limit the influence of these groups.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004391/14
à la Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 avril 2014)

Objet: Santé des abeilles et promotion des ruches écologiques

Par opposition aux ruches à cadres (par exemple de type Dadant), les ruches écologiques telles que les ruches de type Warré, sont conçues en tenant compte du mode de vie naturel de l'abeille (ventilation, température, humidité). La pratique des apiculteurs les utilisant est également plus adaptée au rythme biologique des pollinisateurs (les ruches n'étant ouvertes qu'une à deux fois dans la saison). Les apiculteurs convertis à ces méthodes, en Europe mais aussi au Canada ou en Turquie, arguent que les abeilles sont en meilleure santé et que le miel produit est de meilleure qualité.

1. Les performances des ruches écologiques ont-elles déjà fait l'objet d'une évaluation environnementale et sanitaire de la part des services de la Commission et de l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments (EFSA)?

2. La Commission envisage-t-elle de mettre en place des aides financières spécifiques pour la mise en place de ruches écologiques, notamment dans le cadre du verdissement de la PAC, et d'inciter les États membres à intégrer ces pratiques dans leurs programmes nationaux pour l'apiculture soutenus par la politique commune des marchés de produits agricoles (articles 55 à 57 du règlement (UE) nº 1308/2013)?

3. La diffusion, la formation et la mise en œuvre de ces pratiques pourraient-elles être financées dans le cadre du Fonds européen pour l'agriculture et le développement rural (Feader), à travers les mesures sur les transferts de connaissances, le développement des exploitations agricoles ou l'agriculture biologique? D'autres mesures du Feader pourraient-elles être utilisées pour financer la formation des apiculteurs à ces méthodes écologiques?

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

Ni la Commission européenne ni l'Autorité européenne de sécurité des aliments n'ont mesuré l'impact de l'utilisation de ruches respectueuses de l'environnement sur l'environnement et sur la santé des abeilles.

Conformément aux articles 55 à 57 du règlement (UE) nº 1308/2013 instaurant une organisation commune des marchés des produits agricoles ([1]), les États membres peuvent élaborer des programmes nationaux pour le secteur de l'apiculture. Ces programmes sont développés en coopération avec les organisations représentatives de la filière apicole. Si une demande émane de la filière apicole requérant l'utilisation de ruches respectueuses de l'environnement, un État membre dispose de la possibilité de fournir un soutien financier et une formation concernant l'utilisation de ces ruches en tant que mesure d'assistance technique aux apiculteurs et aux organisations apicoles.

Les articles 14 et 15 du règlement (UE) nº 1305/2013 relatif au soutien du développement rural ([2]) proposent à un État membre la possibilité de soutenir le transfert des connaissances et des actions d'information ainsi que la possibilité de fournir des services de conseil et de gestion agricole. Ces mesures peuvent se rapporter aux aspects environnementaux et pourraient soutenir la formation des apiculteurs, conventionnels ou biologiques, à l'utilisation de méthodes respectueuses de l'environnement, à condition que l'État membre estime que cette formation est pertinente dans le cadre de son programme de développement rural et que le poste de dépense mentionné dans une demande de paiement en vue de l'obtention d'un remboursement par l'un des instruments de l'UE ne bénéficie pas du soutien d'un autre Fonds ou instrument de l'Union, ni du soutien du même Fonds au titre d'un autre programme. Des pratiques agricoles respectueuses de l'environnement, engagées volontairement et qui dépasseraient les prescriptions obligatoires peuvent également faire l'objet d'un soutien en tant que mesure agroenvironnementale et climatique.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1308&rid=1
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1305&rid=1

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004391/14
to the Commission
Gaston Franco (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Bee health and promoting eco-friendly beehives

Unlike frame beehives, e.g. the Dadant-type hive, eco-friendly beehives such as the Warré-type hive are designed with bees' natural lifestyle in mind (ventilation, temperature and humidity). The practices of the beekeepers who use them are also better adapted to the biological rhythm of pollinators, since the hives are only opened once or twice each season. Beekeepers, who have converted to these techniques in Europe, as well as in Canada and Turkey, argue that their bees are healthier and that they produce higher-quality honey.

1. Has the performance of eco-friendly hives been the subject of an environmental and health assessment carried out by the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)?

2. Is the Commission considering putting specific financial support in place to establish eco-friendly hives, including in the context of the 'greening' of the CAP? Does it intend to encourage the Member States to incorporate such practices into their national apiculture programmes, which are supported by the common policy on markets in agricultural products (Articles 55 to 57 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013)?

3. Could the propagation and implementation of these practices — as well as training in applying them — through the exchange of knowledge, the development of farms and organic farming be eligible for funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)? Could other EAFRD measures be used to pay for training beekeepers in these eco-friendly methods?

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

Neither the European Commission nor the European Food Safety Authority has assessed the impact of the use of eco-friendly beehives on the environment and bee health.

In accordance with Articles 55 to 57 of Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products ([1]), Member States may draw up national programmes for the apiculture sector. These programmes shall be developed in cooperation with representative organisations in beekeeping. If there is a demand from the beekeeping sector to use eco-friendly beehives, a Member States has the option to provide financial support for and training on the use such hives as a measure of technical assistance to beekeepers and beekeepers' organisations.

Articles 14 and 15 Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 on support for rural development ([2]) give the option to a Member State to support knowledge transfer and information actions as well as the option to provide advisory services and farm management services. These measures may relate to environmental issues and could support training for conventional or organic beekeepers to use eco-friendly methods provided the Member State identifies such training as relevant in its rural development programme and that the expenditure item included in a request for payment for reimbursement by one Union instrument does not receive support from another fund or Union instrument or support from the same fund under another programme. Environmentally friendly farming practices, voluntarily undertaken which go beyond the mandatory requirements can also be supported as an agri-environment-climate measure.

([1]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1308&rid=1
([2]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1305&rid=1

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004392/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Comune di Roma Capitale: progetto di riqualificazione della Tangenziale Est

Un recente progetto di riqualificazione denominato «Agricoltura urbana in Tangenziale — Coltiviamo la città» prevedrebbe la trasformazione della Tangenziale Est di Roma in una lingua verde che attraversa la città con parchi, orti, piste ciclabili e stazioni di bike sharing, oltre alla possibile costruzione di un mercato rionale e di un centro conferenze con copertura di fotovoltaico. Tale progetto dovrebbe interessare una striscia lunga 1700 metri dalla zona denominata Batteria Nomentana alla Stazione Tiburtina.

Il progetto è stato accolto e approvato dalla Commissione Politiche Comunitarie di Roma Capitale, con uno stanziamento di 9 milioni di euro per realizzarlo in due anni.

Tuttavia, essendo noti i problemi riscontrati nella gestione del bilancio dal Comune di Roma, non è chiaro se siano disponibili risorse sufficienti per la realizzazione di tale opera.

Allo stesso tempo, un altro progetto, relativo alla stessa area, prevede l'abbattimento della struttura esistente ed una riqualificazione ben più sostenibile di tutta l'area.

Tutto ciò premesso, può la Commissione far sapere:

1. se sono previsti finanziamenti europei per la riqualificazione dell'area urbana della Tangenziale Est della città di Roma;

2. qual è il quadro generale dei finanziamenti europei disponibili per la città di Roma relativamente alle infrastrutture e alle opere di riqualificazione urbanistica?

Risposta di Johannes Hahn a nome della Commissione
(13 giugno 2014)

Il progetto descritto potrebbe beneficiare di un cofinanziamento da parte del Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR). A norma dell'articolo 8 del regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 ([1]), nel periodo 2007-2013 il FESR può cofinanziare strategie di sviluppo urbano sostenibile per affrontare i problemi economici, ambientali e sociali delle zone urbane, che possono includere il recupero dell'ambiente fisico. I fondi per lo sviluppo urbano sostenibile assegnati alla città di Roma nel quadro del programma 2007-2013 per la regione Lazio riguardano la zona di Porta Portese. In linea col principio di gestione concorrente applicato all'amministrazione della politica di coesione, la selezione dei progetti e la loro attuazione competono alle autorità nazionali. La Commissione invita pertanto l'onorevole deputata a contattare direttamente l'autorità di gestione del programma:

Direzione Programmazione Economica e Partecipazione
Via Cristoforo Colombo, 212
I-00147 Roma
Telefono: + 39 (06) 51685212
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

Per quanto riguarda il periodo 2014-2020, l'articolo 7 del regolamento (UE) n. 1301/2013 ([2]) stabilisce che almeno il 5 % delle risorse del FESR assegnate a livello nazionale venga destinato ad azioni integrate per lo sviluppo urbano sostenibile I principi per la selezione delle aree urbane e la ripartizione indicativa per le azioni previste devono essere stabiliti dagli Stati membri nei loro accordi di partenariato. L'accordo di partenariato italiano indica che le strategie di sviluppo urbano sostenibile saranno sostenute tramite un programma nazionale che si concentrerà su 14 aree metropolitane e tramite programmi regionali. Non è ancora disponibile alcuna informazione sul finanziamento specifico per la città di Roma.

([1]) Regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 5 luglio 2006, relativo al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e recante abrogazione del regolamento (CE) n. 1783/1999 (GU L 210 del 31.7.2006).

([2]) Regolamento (UE) n. 1301/2013 del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 17 dicembre 2013, relativo al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale e a disposizioni specifiche concernenti l'obiettivo «Investimenti a favore della crescita e dell'occupazione» e che abroga il regolamento (CE) n. 1080/2006 (GU L 347 del 20.12.2013).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004392/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: City of Rome: redevelopment plan for the Tangenziale Est (Eastern Orbital Road)

A recent redevelopment plan, entitled 'Agricoltura urbana in Tangenziale — Coltiviamo la città' (Urban Agriculture along the Orbital Road — Let's cultivate the city), seeks to transform the Tangenziale Est (Eastern Orbital Road) in Rome into a green belt across the city, with parks, gardens, cycle lanes and bike-sharing stations; part of the plan is also, possibly, to establish a street market and a conference centre with a photovoltaic roof. The plan would create a 1 700 metre-long green belt from the area known as Batteria Nomentana to Tiburtina Railway Station.

The plan has already been accepted and approved by the City of Rome's Committee on Community Policies and EUR 9 million have been earmarked, with a view to completing the work in two years.

However, given the well-known problems in the management of the City of Rome's municipal budget, it is unclear whether sufficient funding would be available for this work.

At the same time, there is another plan, concerning the same area, which would involve the demolition of the existing structure and a much more sustainable redevelopment of the entire area.

1. Can the Commission say whether any EU funding is available for the redevelopment of the Tangenziale Est urban area in the City of Rome?

2. Can it provide an overview of the available EU funding for the City of Rome with regard to infrastructure and urban redevelopment?

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

The project described could be eligible for co-financing by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). According to Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ([1]), in the 2007-2013 period, the ERDF can co-finance sustainable urban development strategies to address economic, environmental and social problems affecting urban areas which may include the rehabilitation of the physical environment. Funds for sustainable urban development allocated for the city of Rome under the 2007-2013 programme for region Lazio focus on the Porta Portese area. In line with the shared management principle used for the administration of cohesion policy, project selection and implementation is the responsibility of the national authorities. The Commission therefore suggests that the Honourable Member contact directly the managing authority of the programme:

Direzione Programmazione Economica e Partecipazione
Via Cristoforo Colombo, 212
I-00147 Roma
Tel.: +39 (0)651685212
adgcomplazio@regione.lazio.it

With respect to the 2014-2020 period, Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 ([2]), provides that at least 5% of the ERDF national resources need to be dedicated to integrated actions for sustainable urban development. The principles for the selection of the urban areas and an indicative allocation for the actions envisaged need to be established by the Member States in their Partnership Agreements. The Italian Partnership Agreement indicates that sustainable urban development strategies will be supported through a national programme focusing on 14 metropolitan areas and through regional programmes. No information is available yet on the specific funding available for the city of Rome.

([1]) Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5.7.2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999, OJ L 210, 31.7.2006.

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17.12.2013 on the European Regional Development Fund and on specific provisions concerning the Investment for growth and jobs goal and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 ,OJ L 347, 20.12.2013.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004393/14
alla Commissione
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Domini .wine e .vin in vendita

L'Icann, l'autorità americana che dal 1998 si occupa dell'assegnazione dei domini, ha stabilito di liberalizzare i domini di primo livello (TLD, top-level domains) .wine e .vin.

I due TLD in questione saranno ceduti al miglior offerente, senza alcuna tutela delle indicazioni geografiche e dei relativi marchi.

Dato lo sviluppo dell'e-commerce su scala globale, questa decisione potrebbe incidere gravemente sui fatturati delle aziende vitivinicole europee, italiane e francesi in particolare, e contemporaneamente sviare il consumatore.

Il rischio è concreto: potrà accadere che Prosecco, Barbera, Morellino (solo per citare alcuni vini) con estensione .wine rappresentino aziende che non producono il vino originale.

Considerando che ormai una buona fetta del fatturato dell'industria vitivinicola si sviluppa on-line e che il sito internet rappresenta il biglietto da visita di un'azienda o di un consorzio, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. quale strategia intende adottare per tutelare il comparto vitivinicolo europeo?

2. Quali misure si possono attuare per la tutela del consumatore?

Risposta data da Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(5 giugno 2014)

La Commissione rinvia l'onorevole parlamentare alla risposta data alle interrogazioni scritte P-4314/2014 e E-4349/2014.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004393/14
to the Commission
Elisabetta Gardini (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: The .wine and .vin domains for sale

ICANN, the American organisation that has handled the allocation of domain names since 1998, has decided to liberalise the Top-Level Domains (TLD) .wine and .vin.

The two TLDs in question will be sold to the highest bidder, with no safeguards concerning geographical indication and the relative brands.

Considering the development of e-commerce on a global scale, this decision could have a serious impact on the turnover of European wine-producing businesses, particularly those from France and Italy, while simultaneously misleading consumers.

There is a genuine risk that Prosecco, Barbera and Morellino wines (to name but a few) with the extension .wine could be used by companies which do not produce the original wine.

1. Considering that a large part of the turnover of the wine-producing industry comes from on-line sales and that websites represent the business card of companies or consortia, which strategy does the Commission intend to adopt in order to safeguard the European wine-producing industry?

2. Which measures can it implement to protect consumers?

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

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to written questions P-4314/2014 and E-4349/2014.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004394/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Andamento delle elezioni in Afghanistan

Le operazioni di voto in Afghanistan sono ufficialmente concluse, registrando la partecipazione di circa 7 milioni di elettori sui 12 milioni aventi diritto, un dato molto più alto del previsto (58 % contro il 31,4 % delle elezioni del 2009). Dato ancora più importante è che il 36 % dei partecipanti sono donne. Alcuni media hanno riportato alcuni incidenti, come per esempio nella provincia meridionale di Zabul, dove due agenti di polizia sono stati uccisi, o a Kabul, dove alcuni ordigni di ridotta potenza sono esplosi vicino ad alcuni seggi.

Domani inizieranno le operazioni di conteggio, che però potrebbero durare diverse settimane e che potrebbe portare alla diffusione dei primi dati preliminari verso la fine del mese, mentre bisognerà attendere metà maggio per i dati definitivi e il 28 maggio per l'eventuale ballottaggio. Questa operazione rischia di essere particolarmente delicata, dal momento che potrebbero verificarsi tentativi di brogli o nuovi attentati.

Può la Commissione comunicare a tal proposito i dati seguenti:

1. Dispone essa di ulteriori informazioni in merito ad attacchi o tentativi di attacchi e intimidazione presso i seggi elettorali?

2. È stata invitata dalle autorità locali a fornire supporto alle forze di sicurezza durante le operazioni di spoglio?

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

Durante il primo turno delle elezioni presidenziali e le elezioni dei consigli provinciali si sono verificati meno episodi di violenza di quanto si potesse temere. A onore delle autorità afghane, e in particolare delle forze di sicurezza, va riconosciuto che nel complesso gli elettori hanno potuto esercitare i propri diritti democratici in un contesto sicuro, con un'affluenza femminile superiore a quella delle elezioni precedenti. Si stima tuttavia che siano morte più di 100 persone, tra cui 15 membri delle forze di sicurezza. La violenza continuerà a minacciare il processo elettorale, in particolare il secondo turno delle elezioni presidenziali previsto per l'inizio di giugno.

Su invito del governo afghano, l'UE ha inviato una squadra di osservazione elettorale composta da 16 esperti e guidata da Thijs Berman, membro del Parlamento europeo. La squadra si concentra unicamente sugli aspetti tecnici e non ha voce in capitolo per quanto riguarda le questioni di sicurezza. L'UE non ha ricevuto richieste di assistenza dalle forze di sicurezza.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004394/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Conduct of the elections in Afghanistan

The elections in Afghanistan are officially over, with turnout of approximately 7 million voters out of 12 million people entitled to vote, a much higher number than expected (58% compared with 31.4% in the 2009 elections). An even more important figure is that 36% of voters were women. Certain media have reported incidents, such as in the southern province of Zabul, where two police officers were killed, or in Kabul, where some small devices exploded near certain polling stations.

Counting will begin tomorrow, but this could take several weeks and the first results may not be released until the end of the month, while the final data may not be available until mid-May and the second round, if needed, would be held on 28 May. This process will be particularly delicate, since there could be attempts at electoral fraud or new attacks.

1. Does the Commission have any more information about attacks or attempted attacks and intimidation at polling stations?

2. Have the local authorities invited it to provide support to the security forces during the counting of the votes?

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

The first round of the presidential elections and the provincial council elections were less affected by violence than had been feared. Credit should go to the Afghan authorities, in particular the security forces, who were generally able to provide a secure environment for voters, including larger numbers of women than in previous elections, to exercise their democratic rights. Nevertheless, it is estimated that more than 100 people died, including 15 members of the security forces. Violence will remain a threat to the electoral process, in particular the second round of presidential elections scheduled for early June.

The EU has deployed an Electoral Assessment Team of 16 international experts to observe the elections, headed by Thijs Berman MEP, following an invitation from the Afghan authorities. They are focused exclusively on the technical process and have no input on security issues. The EU has not received any requests for assistance from the security forces.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004396/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Epurazione politica in Corea del nord

Un noto quotidiano sudcoreano ha riportato che il governo centrale di Pyongyang ha ordinato lo smantellamento del dipartimento del Partito dei lavoratori, guidato fino a poco tempo fa dallo zio del leader nordcoreano, il quale è stato fatto giustiziare insieme a parte della propria famiglia. Il quotidiano riporta che undici funzionari sarebbero stati giustiziati o imprigionati, tra cui anche il viceministro della Pubblica sicurezza che, sempre secondo la stessa fonte, sarebbe stato arso vivo con un lanciafiamme.

Il Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante dispone di dati che avvalorino la veridicità di queste notizie? Come intende reagire a questi fatti, qualora dovessero risultare corrispondenti a realtà?

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

L'AR/VP non è in grado di confermare o di smentire quanto riferito dai media in merito all'esecuzione o all'incarcerazione di undici funzionari nella Repubblica popolare democratica di Corea (RPDC) a cui si riferiscono gli onorevoli deputati, né le risulta che sia stato deciso di sciogliere il Partito dei lavoratori della Corea.

L'UE rimane seriamente preoccupata per le violazioni gravi, diffuse e sistematiche dei diritti umani nella RPDC e i suoi rappresentanti colgono tutte le occasioni per sollevare la questione con le autorità del paese. Inoltre, l'UE discute sistematicamente del problema sia a livello bilaterale, con i suoi partner nella regione, che a livello multilaterale, specialmente in sede di ONU.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004396/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Political purges in North Korea

A well-known South Korean daily newspaper has reported that the central government in Pyongyang has ordered the breaking up of the Workers' Party, led until recently by the uncle of the North Korean leader, who was recently executed along with some members of his family. The paper reports that eleven civil servants have been executed or imprisoned, including the Deputy Minister for Public Security who, according to the source, was burnt alive with a flamethrower.

Does the Vice-President/High Representative have any information to assess the accuracy of this report? How does she intend to react if these events turn out to be true?

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

The HR/VP is not in a position to confirm or deny the media reports concerning the execution or imprisonment of eleven civil servants in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) as referred to by the Honourable Members. The HR/VP is not aware of any decision to break up the Workers' Party of Korea.

The EU remains very concerned about the grave, widespread and systematic violations of human rights in the DPRK. These concerns are expressed at every occasion by EU representatives meeting with DPRK authorities. The EU also consistently raises this issue bilaterally with its partners in the region and multilaterally, especially in the United Nations.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004397/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Infiltrazioni di Al-Qaeda in Nigeria

Il gruppo armato Boko Haram ha compiuto in Nigeria una nuova sortita contro la popolazione civile nello stato di Yobe, uccidendo almeno 17 persone, tra cui anche dei musulmani. In genere Boko Haram tende a colpire la popolazione di origine cristiana e il fatto che ora anche alcuni fedeli islamici siano rimasti vittime potrebbe far pensare a una ulteriore radicalizzazione del movimento, probabilmente legata all'infiltrazione al suo interno di cellule di Al-Qaeda, che mirano ad aprire un nuovo fronte della *jihad* globale in Nigeria. Tra l'altro, alcuni metodi d'azione di Boko Haram, come il rapimento di una famiglia francese, stanno mutando e diventano sempre più somiglianti a quelli tipici del gruppo terroristico.

In merito a questa situazione, la Commissione può chiarire se è a conoscenza di effettive infiltrazioni di Al-Qaeda nel gruppo armato nigeriano? Può chiarire se ha ricevuto richieste di sostegno da parte delle autorità governative nigeriane per affrontare e neutralizzare Boko Haram?

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

Le ripetute violenze in diverse parti della Nigeria, che destano grande preoccupazione, colpiscono sia cristiani che musulmani.

Sebbene vi siano forti indizi di un collegamento tra Boko Haram e altri gruppi terroristici islamici come AQIM (Al Qaeda nel Maghreb) nell'Africa occidentale, non è possibile valutare con esattezza il grado di infiltrazione di Al Qaeda nel gruppo Boko Haram.

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

A luglio 2013 è stato adottato un pacchetto specifico antiterrorismo nell'ambito dello strumento per la stabilità (IfS), le cui attività contribuiscono alla sicurezza e alla riforma della giustizia penale.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004397/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Al-Qaeda in Nigeria

The armed group Boko Haram has committed another attack against the civilian population in the state of Yobe in Nigeria, killing at least 17 people, including Muslims. In general, Boko Haram usually targets the Christian population and the fact that now some of the victims are Muslim could indicate an even greater radicalisation of the movement, probably linked to the infiltration of Al-Qaeda cells seeking to open a new Nigerian front for their global jihad. Among other things, certain Boko Haram modus operandi, such as the kidnapping of a French family, are changing and becoming increasingly similar to typical methods employed by the terrorist group.

In light of this situation, can the Commission reveal whether it is aware of actual Al-Qaeda infiltration into the Nigerian armed group? Can it reveal whether it has received requests for assistance from the Nigerian authorities to combat and neutralise Boko Haram?

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

The continued violence in various parts of Nigeria is of great concern. It targets both Christians and Muslims.

There seems to be strong indication of certain links between Boko Haram and other Islamist terrorist groups in the West African region such as AQIM (Al Qaeda in the Maghreb). It is not possible however to estimate precisely the actual Al Qaeda infiltration of Boko Haram.

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

In July 2013 a specific counter-terrorism package has been adopted under the Instrument for Stability (IfS). Its activities contribute to security and the reform of the criminal justice.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004399/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Rapimento di due preti italiani e una suora canadese in Camerun

Due sacerdoti di Vicenza e una suora canadese sono stati rapiti da uomini armati, il 5 aprile scorso, nella diocesi di Maroua, nel nord del Camerun, a pochi chilometri dal confine con la Nigeria. Secondo le prime ricostruzioni, due gruppi di uomini armati a bordo di auto hanno fatto irruzione intorno alle due di notte nelle case dei sacerdoti e delle suore e, dopo aver scatenato il panico, hanno portato via i tre religiosi.

Si teme che i rapitori appartengano al gruppo islamista Boko Haram, anche se non ci sono ancora rivendicazioni ufficiali. Appena la notizia del rapimento si è diffusa, tutte le forze di sicurezza sono state mobilitate nella zona, per cui, qualora i rapitori fossero davvero Boko Haram, questi non avrebbero avuto il tempo di lasciare il Camerun per rientrare in Nigeria.

In merito a questo rapimento, può il Vice-presidente/Alto Rappresentante riferire:

1. se ha già preso contatto con le autorità italiane per supportarle nella felice risoluzione del caso;

2. quale tipo di assistenza intende fornire;

3. se dispone di ulteriori informazioni che possano aiutare a chiarire la dinamica e i responsabili della vicenda e verificare le condizioni in cui versano i tre ostaggi?

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

Le autorità italiane non hanno chiesto l'intervento dell'AR/VP in questo caso. Va ricordato che il rilascio di persone sequestrate è una questione che deve essere trattata da servizi nazionali specializzati e con la massima cautela.

Le questioni riguardanti la sicurezza dei cittadini UE in Camerun vedono impegnate le missioni degli Stati membri in uno stretto coordinamento, con frequenti scambi formali e informali di informazioni e indicazioni ai viaggiatori coordinate.

L'UE è determinata a avvalersi degli strumenti a sua disposizione per contribuire a migliorare la sicurezza nella regione. Il recente sequestro sottolinea ancora una volta l'estrema insicurezza della regione, alimentata in particolare alla presenza della setta islamica Boko Haram. La marginalizzazione della regione contribuisce all'insicurezza e al terrorismo. In tal senso la cooperazione allo sviluppo dell'Unione con il Camerun (11° FES) mira principalmente a sostenere lo sviluppo economico e sociale del paese.

Le questioni problematiche vengono affrontate dall'UE anche nel quadro del dialogo politico con le autorità camerunesi e i problemi di sicurezza sono stati al centro dell'ultima riunione del 6 dicembre 2013 con il ministro degli Affari esteri. L'UE incoraggia il Camerun, la Nigeria e i paesi limitrofi a collaborare strettamente per affrontare meglio i problemi di sicurezza nella regione del Sahel, in particolare le minacce rappresentate dalle azioni della setta Boko Haram nelle province settentrionali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004399/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Kidnapping of two Italian priests and a Canadian nun in Cameroon

Two priests from Vicenza and a Canadian nun were kidnapped by gunmen on 5 April, in the parish of Maroua, in northern Cameroon, a few kilometres from the Nigerian border. According to initial reports, two carloads of armed men broke into the houses of the priests and nun at around two o'clock in the morning, causing terror and abducting the three religious figures.

It is feared that the kidnappers may be members of the Islamist group Boko Haram, although nobody has yet claimed official responsibility. As soon as news of the kidnapping spread, all the security forces in the area were mobilised, so if the kidnappers were really Boko Haram members, they would not have had the time to flea Cameroon and return to Nigeria.

1. With regard to this kidnapping, has the Vice-President/High Representative already made contact with the Italian authorities to help them resolve this case successfully?

2. What type of assistance does she intend to provide?

3. Does she have any further information which could help to clarify what happened and those responsible for this act and verify the condition of the three hostages?

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

The HR/VP has not been requested by the Italian authorities to intervene on this case. It should be recalled that the issue of release of kidnapped persons is a matter which needs to be handled extremely carefully and carried out by specialized national services.

The EU Member States' Missions in Cameroon are closely liaising on issues relating to the security of EU citizens in the country through frequent, formal and informal, exchanges of information and coordination of travel advisories.

The EU is determined to use the instruments that it has at its disposal to contribute to the improvement of the security situation in that region. The recent abduction has once again highlighted the extreme insecurity in that part of the country linked in particular to the presence of the Islamist sect, Boko Haram. The marginalization of the region contributes to the increase of insecurity and development of terrorism. In this context, the first priority of the EU development cooperation with Cameroon (11th EDF NIP) is supporting economic and social development.

The EU is also using the political dialogue with the authorities of Cameroon to raise the issues of concern as security-related topics have been raised during the last session of the dialogue held on 16 December 2013 with the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The EU encourages Cameroon, Nigeria and the neighbouring countries to cooperate closely in order to better meet security-related challenges in the Sahel area, and in particular Boko Haram's threats in the Northern provinces.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004400/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ruolo delle aree desertiche nell'assorbimento dell'anidride carbonica presente nell'atmosfera

I risultati di un recente studio scientifico danno segnali positivi in tema di lotta al surriscaldamento globale. Pare, infatti, che le zone aride e desertiche siano in grado di assorbire importanti quantità di anidride carbonica dall'atmosfera, comportandosi cioè come una sorta di «spugna». Questi sono i dati rilevati alla fine di un esperimento, durato dieci anni, condotto da ricercatori americani, e svoltosi nella parte settentrionale del deserto del Mojave, in Nevada.

L'esperimento è consistito nel delimitare nove aree ottagonali del diametro di 23 metri ciascuna, in modo da poter osservare la reazione dell'ecosistema arido a diverse concentrazioni atmosferiche di anidride carbonica: tre aree sono state esposte a una concentrazione pari a 550 parti per milione, livello di CO_2 che probabilmente si raggiungerà nel 2050; altre tre aree sono state esposte a una concentrazione di 380 parti per milione, livello di CO_2 attualmente presente in atmosfera; le ultime tre, infine, sono state usate come controllo. Sulle nove aree è stata poi soffiata una quantità di CO_2 marcata chimicamente, in modo da poter individuare il carbonio Assorbito dal suolo e dalle piante fino alla profondità di un metro. Secondo i dati raccolti, gli ecosistemi aridi assorbono il carbonio atmosferico soprattutto a livello della «rizosfera», la zona vicina alle radici delle piante che è intensamente popolata da microrganismi. In futuro, l'aumento dei livelli di CO_2 nell'atmosfera potrà indurre un aumento dell'assorbimento da parte dei deserti tanto da coprire il 4-8 % delle emissioni attuali.

In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dell'esperimento descritto e del risultato dello stesso;

2. ritiene che i dati raccolti possano essere letti positivamente e presi in considerazione nella definizione delle future strategie di lotta al cambiamento climatico?

Risposta di Connie Hedegaard a nome della Commissione
(4 giugno 2014)

La Commissione è a conoscenza dell'esperimento dei ricercatori americani nel deserto del Mojave, nel Nevada, riguardante la capacità delle zone desertiche di assorbire biossido di carbonio. Tali risultanze sono di grande utilità in quanto è estremamente difficile effettuare misurazioni e capire cosa accade nel suolo in generale e nella rizosfera in particolare. È importante ottenere maggiori informazioni e approfondire la comprensione del ciclo del carbonio. In tal modo si riuscirà anche a prevedere più efficacemente come si modificherà il clima globale in futuro. Secondo osservazioni di altri scienziati, i dati raccolti sono convincenti, ma non è ancora chiaro come interpretare tali informazioni, pertanto è necessario continuare a lavorare. Ad esempio, le stime del contributo globale delle terre aride al ciclo globale del carbonio, nel quadro dei futuri livelli di CO_2, sono soltanto ipotetiche e non sono state veramente oggetto dello studio.

Tuttavia, è evidente che la cattura del carbonio degli ecosistemi nelle zone aride non arresterà i cambiamenti climatici. Secondo l'ultima relazione dell'IPCC, i cambiamenti climatici influenzeranno i processi del ciclo del carbonio in modo tale da accentuare l'incremento di CO_2 nell'atmosfera. Le emissioni cumulative di CO_2, dalla fine del 21° secolo in poi, determinano in gran parte il riscaldamento medio globale della superficie. La maggioranza degli aspetti inerenti ai cambiamenti climatici durerà per secoli, anche se si arrestano le emissioni di CO_2.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004400/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: The role of desert areas in the absorption of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

The results of a recent scientific study are a positive sign in the fight against global warming. Indeed, it appears that arid and desert areas are able to absorb large quantities of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, acting as a sort of 'sponge'. Such were the findings of an experiment, conducted over 10 years by American researchers in the northern part of the Mojave Desert, in Nevada.

The experiment consisted in marking off nine octagonal plots, 23 metres in diameter, in order to observe the reaction of arid ecosystems to various atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide: threes areas were exposed to a concentration of 550 parts per million, the level of CO_2 we expect to reach by 2050; three other areas were exposed to a concentration of 380 parts per million, the level of CO_2 currently present in the atmosphere; the final three were used as a control. A quantity of chemically marked CO_2 was then blown over the nine areas, in order to calculate the carbon absorbed by the soil and plants up to a depth of one metre. According to the findings of the experiment, arid ecosystems absorb atmospheric carbon in particular at the 'rhizosphere', the area close to the roots of the plants which is rich with micro-organisms. In the future, greater levels of CO2 in the atmosphere may lead to an increase in absorption by deserts, enough to cover 4-8% of current emissions.

1. Is the Commission aware of this experiment and its findings?

2. Does it believe that the data collected can be viewed positively and taken into consideration when drawing up future strategies for the fight against climate change?

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

The Commission is aware of the experiment of the American researchers in the Mojave Desert in Nevada on the role of desert areas in the absorption of carbon dioxide. These findings are very useful given how difficult it is to measure and to understand what's going on in the soil in general and in the rhizosphere in particular. It is important to gain more information and better understanding of the carbon cycle. This will also help us to better understand how the global climate will change in the future. According to comments from other scientists, the data collected are convincing, but interpretation of this information is not yet clear, so more work is still needed. For example, estimates of a global contribution of drylands to the global carbon cycle under future CO_2 levels are just hypothetical and were not really addressed in the study.

However, it is evident that carbon sequestration of ecosystems in arid areas will not stop climate change. According to the latest IPCC report, climate change will affect carbon cycle processes in a way that will exacerbate the increase of CO_2 in the atmosphere. Cumulative emissions of CO_2 largely determine global mean surface warming by the late 21st century and beyond. Most aspects of climate change will persist for many centuries even if emissions of CO_2 are stopped.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004401/14
to the Council
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Off-label medicines

What action has the Council taken or is it considering taking in response to Parliament's resolution of 22 October 2013 on patient safety ([1]), most notably to paragraph 13 thereof, which calls on the Member States to ensure that medical professionals and patients are informed when a medicine is used off-label?

Reply
(28 May 2014)

The Council has not discussed the issue.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0435.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004402/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Off-label medicines

What action has the Commission taken or is it considering taking in response to Parliament's resolution of 22 October 2013 on patient safety ([1]), most notably to paragraph 13 thereof, which calls on the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to draw-up a list of off-label medicines which are used in spite of there being an approved alternative, and paragraph 53, which calls on the EMA to develop guidelines on the off-label use of medicines, on the basis of medical need and taking account of patient protection?

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

The Honourable Member is referred to the follow up to the European Parliament resolution on the report from the Commission to the Council on the basis of Member States' reports on the implementation of the Council Recommendation (2009/C 151/01) on patient safety, including the prevention and control of healthcare- associated infections, adopted by the Commission on 29 January 2014 ([2]) and transmitted to the European Parliament on 7 March 2014. In this context the Commission pointed out that although EU legislation regulates marketing authorisations of medicinal products, it does not specifically regulate the off-label use of medicinal products. As not all Member States have the same approved medicinal products on their market (national marketing authorisation through decentralised procedures) and some Member States have developed recommendations and guidelines regarding off-label use, the Commission plans to commission a study in 2014 in order to better understand the implications of the issue of off-label use of medicinal products and the possible actions of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in an overall context and within the remit of its competences. In view of this, the call for action by the European Medicines Agency would at this stage be premature.

([1]) Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0435.
([2]) SP(2014) 62.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004403/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Sudden infant death syndrome

Could the Commission indicate whether it has conducted or commissioned research on the issue of sudden infant death syndrome, which, if any, EU programmes and initiatives would be of interest and relevance to a not-for-profit NGO that is concerned with this syndrome, and when the next call for proposals under these programmes will be launched?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(28 May 2014)

Through the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities ([1]) (FP7, 2007-2013), the Commission is devoting EUR 1,075 million to support the Babycaresleep ([2]) project aimed at developing a non-invasive baby sleep monitoring and intelligent control system for the prevention of unexpected death.

Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([3]), will offer opportunities to support research in this field through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge ([4]). This challenge's 2014-2015 calls for proposals on 'Personalising health and care' were published on 11 December 2013 (deadlines for submission 11 March 2014 and 14 October 2015, respectively).

These calls aim to create opportunities for real breakthrough research and radical innovation, by supporting the translation of findings into the clinic and other health and care settings to improve health outcomes, reduce health inequalities and to promote active and healthy ageing.

EU research funding is granted on the basis of competitive calls for proposals, following an independent peer-review evaluation. More detailed information can be found through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([5]).

Under the previous Health Programmes, no specific action on sudden infant death syndrome was co-funded. The new Health Programme (2014-2020) ([6]) will be implemented through annual work programmes.

Calls of the annual work programme for 2014 will be launched shortly by the Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency ([7]).

Financial contributions can be awarded on a competitive basis also to non-governmental bodies active in the relevant areas of the work programme.

([1]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([2]) http://escinstitute.com/babycaresleep/
([3]) COM(2011) 809, 30.11.2011.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) OJ L 86, 21.3.2014.
([7]) http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004404/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Ethics Institute

Could the Commission indicate which, if any, EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest in relation to the creation of an Ethics Institute at Member State level, and when the next calls for proposals will be launched under these programmes?

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

In general, expenditure programmes supported by the EU budget do not offer direct funding for the creation of specific institutes at Member State level. Since the question does not provide details on the nature or scope of the funding sought, the Commission suggests that potential applicants investigate the possibilities under the calls for proposals for the various programmes that are published on the Europa website: http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_en.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004405/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Employment and Social Innovation programme

Has the Commission considered, or will it consider, continuing actions of the kind previously supported under the Progress programme to promote a highly skilled workforce through the implementation of EU sector councils on skills and jobs, and to promote the sharing of information and practices concerning the anticipation and management of change under the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) work programme? If so, when should calls for proposals for these actions be expected?

Will the Commission also give consideration to issuing a schedule or calendar of forthcoming calls for proposals under the EaSI programme in order to give interested parties a greater opportunity to plan their applications?

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

The EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2014-2020 will continue to address pressing policy issues such as skilled workforce and anticipation of new skills for new jobs. In 2014 the support for sectoral skills councils is foreseen in the EaSI work programme. The details of the activities foreseen in 2014 and the indicative calendar can be consulted under the EaSI website section on the work programme ([1]).

The interested parties could also consult the previous and on-going calls for proposals online ([2]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?advSearchKey=EaSIannualworkprogramme&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en&policyArea=&type=0&country=0&year=0

([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=629&langId=en

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004406/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: EU-wide project on mediation, dispute resolution and improving access to justice

Could the Commission indicate which, if any, EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest to a not-for-profit organisation that is interested in running an EU-wide programme on mediation, dispute resolution and improving access to justice?

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

The Justice Programme established by Regulation (EU) No 1382/2013 of 17 December 2013 for the period 2014 to 2020 ([1]) has four specific objectives, one of which is to facilitate effective access to justice for all, another to facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters. The Programme could thus cover actions on mediation and dispute resolution.

The Annual Work Programme for 2014 has been adopted on 24 April 2014. It provides for various targeted calls for proposals, but mediation and dispute resolution are not priorities for 2014, as they have been extensively funded for the past years. The Annual Work Programme can be consulted on the DG Justice website:
http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants1/programmes-2014-2020/rec/index_en.htm

([1]) OJ L 354, 28.12.2013 p. 73.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004407/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Media literacy

Further to its answer of 29 August 2013 to Written Question E-008122/2013, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's announcement that it would promote a debate on the role of media literacy in education through a new expert group composed of representatives of the ministers of education of all Member States, with regard to its evaluation of the feasibility of a plan for assessing media literacy in Europe, in cooperation with national and regional authorities, and with regard to its proposal to integrate, as from 2014, a media and film literacy dimension into the Creative Europe Programme?

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

The media literacy landscape is still very uneven across Europe. At national level, the inclusion of media literacy in the curricula is an open and ongoing process, leading to an increased recognition of the importance of media literacy in a number of educational contexts. Either as a self-standing subject or as integrated in other subjects, the inclusion of media literacy is now on the educational agenda in a number of Member States. This issue was debated in a meeting of the 'Media Literacy Expert Group' organised by the Commission in February 2014. As to the assessment of media literacy levels, a limited number of Member States are carrying out pilot projects with the assistance of the Commission. Finally, a first Call for Proposals under the new Creative Europe programme on film literacy was published at the end of 2013 and is currently being evaluated.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004408/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Jewel of the Sea property development in Calabria, Italy

Could the Commission indicate what, if any, EU funding has been awarded in connection with the Jewel of the Sea property development in Calabria, Italy?

Further to its answer of 30 May 2012 to Written Questions P-003744/2012 and E-003963/2012, what was the outcome of the Commission's request for information to the managing authority of the Calabria region concerning alleged irregularities in the 2000-2006 regional programme (under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)), most notably with regard to measure 1.10(b)? Is the Commission aware of similar allegations of irregularities in the 2007-2013 regional programme (also under the ERDF) for Calabria?

What remedies are available under EC law to protect and compensate purchasers of property who have become the innocent victims of criminal activity in relation to the construction and sale of property in Calabria, and elsewhere across the EU? Will the Commission give consideration to coming forward with a legislative instrument to address this problem?

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

According to information provided by the managing authority of the 2007-2013 Calabria programme co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the 'Jewel of the Sea property development' project has not been co-funded by the ERDF.

With respect to written questions P-003744/2012 and E-003963/2012 ([1]), the Commission received information on the irregularities related to measure 1.10(b) of the 2000-2006 ERDF Calabria programme. The Guardia di Finanza, which is carrying out an investigation into the irregularities concerned, has decided to block the accounts of the beneficiaries under investigation for an amount equal to the suspected irregular amounts. These amounts will be recovered should the authors of the irregularities be convicted. The Commission is not aware of similar allegation of irregularities for the current period.

Measures to protect and compensate victims of criminal activity are matters of criminal law and fall under the competence of national authorities.

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004409/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Development of sea-related industries

Could the Commission indicate which, if any, EU funding programmes and initiatives would be of interest in relation to the development of sea-related industries, such as drift seaweed harvesting, seaweed composting (including vermicomposting), aquaculture and fish farming?

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

In the 2014-2020 period, research and development related to sea-related industries can be undertaken with support from the Horizon 2020 programme. Applied research and productive investments in aquaculture and fish farming will be eligible for support under certain conditions within the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. This funding will be implemented under shared management and Member States will have to indicate in their Operational Programmes which measures under these areas they wish to support.

In the last funding period, aquaculture and fish-farming was already eligible under the European Fisheries Fund (EFF 2007-2013). In particular, projects related to seaweed harvesting and processing have been undertaken using funding under Axis 4 of the EFF. One example is a project in Denmark ([1]), specifically in the Bornholm and Small Islands, to develop ice cream products based on seaweed. This has proved particularly successful and these products are now exported towards Eastern Asia.

([1]) https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/sites/default/files/documents/GP_009-DK13-14-EN_SeaweedProduction.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004410/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Lifelong learning and media literacy

Has the Commission considered, or will it consider, reviewing and coming up with proposals to revise the 2006 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC), specifically with the intention of making media literacy a key competence?

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

The High Level Group on Literacy that was established in February 2011 and concluded its work in September 2012 ([1]) defined different levels of literacy skills: baseline literacy, functional literacy and multiple literacy. The latter included the ability to critically evaluate texts, which is part of media literacy.

The Emedus (European Media Literacy Education Study) Project, which is currently being carried out with the support of the former 'Lifelong Learning Programme' will feed the debate by providing: a comparative analysis of the inclusion of media education in national curricula across the EU; an identification of suitable instruments to measure media education skills and levels in schools; policy recommendations to sustain educational policies at national and European level.

The key competences defined in the 'Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning' are still relevant today, although details of each competence are naturally changing over time. Some elements of 'media literacy' are related to the key competences 'digital competence' and 'learning to learn'. The Commission is actively working on these issues but it does not plan to revise the key competences framework at this stage.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/doc/literacy-report_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004411/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Transfer of prisoners

Which Member States have yet to fully implement Council Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, which envisages the transfer of prisoners between EU Member States? What action has the Commission taken to encourage Member States to implement this framework Decision in full? What action can the Commission take after 1 December 2014 in order to enforce the implementation of this framework Decision?

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

The implementation report published by the Commission on 5 February 2014 ([1]) notes that 18 EU Member States have transposed Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA on the Transfer of Prisoners ([2]). In its report, the Commission urges all Member States to take swift measures to implement EC laws fully ([3]).

The Commission cannot launch infringement proceedings for non-implementation of this framework Decision until December 2014, the end of the transitional period as provided in Article 10(1) of Protocol 36 on transitional provisions annexed to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

However, the Commission has been closely monitoring the implementation of Framework Decision by Member States. To this effect, and to speed up the implementation process, the Commission organised three workshops in 2010, two experts' meetings with Member States in 2012 and one in November 2013.

The Commission has also funded projects and supported NGOs that aim to support Member States in the implementation of Framework Decision and to raise awareness of among legal practitioners. This practice will be continued within the new Justice programme ([4]) for the period 2014 to 2020.

([1]) COM(2014) 57 final.
([2]) Framework Decision 2008/909/JHA of 27.11.2008 on the application of the principle of mutual recognition to judgments in criminal matters imposing custodial sentences or measures involving deprivation of liberty for the purpose of their enforcement in the European Union, OJ 5.12.2008, L 327/27.
([3]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/newsroom/criminal/news/140205_en.htm
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 1382/2013 of 17.12.2013.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004412/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Section 37.1 of the Irish Employment Equality Act and Directive 2000/78/EC

Further to its statement (IP/08/703) of 6 May 2008 announcing the closure of its infringement procedure on the transposition by the last Irish Government of the employment equality directive (Directive 2000/78/EC), has the Commission examined whether Section 37.1 of the Irish Employment Equality Act, which enables a school to claim that hiring a gay teacher could undermine its religious ethos, is fully compliant with Directive 2000/78/EC and other EC law? What action will the Commission take if it considers that this act does not comply with EC law?

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

As noted by the Honourable Member, on 6 May 2008 the Commission announced the closure of infringement proceedings against Ireland which concerned non-conformity of Irish transposing legislation with Directive 2000/78/EC on Employment Equality. One issue that was considered in detail at that time was the compatibility of Article 4(2) of the directive and Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Acts.

Section 37(1) of the Employment Equality Acts provides that a religious, education or medical institution which is under the direction or control of a body established for religious purposes may give more favourable treatment, on religious grounds, to an employee or prospective employee where it is 'reasonable' to do so in order to maintain the religious ethos of the institution and that it may take action which is 'reasonably necessary' to prevent an employee or a prospective employee from undermining the religious ethos of the institution. If a school claimed, in response to a claim of discrimination by a gay teacher, that hiring him or her could undermine its religious ethos, the court in Ireland would have to apply the test of whether this was 'reasonably necessary' in the circumstances. The Commission is of the view that the implementation of the directive in Ireland provides for the necessary balancing of rights on a case by case basis. The Commission has not received any complaints concerning individual cases of discrimination which would indicate that this is not the case. It would be for the national court in any particular given case to decide what was 'reasonable' or what was 'reasonably necessary'.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004413/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Research into Parkinson's disease under Horizon 2020

Further to the Commission's answer of 25 June 2013 to Written Question E-005255/2013, what are the opportunities for research into Parkinson's disease under the 'Health, demographic change and well-being' societal challenge sub-section of the agreed Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)? Can the Commission now give an indication of the specific issues that will be addressed through such research?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(22 May 2014)

Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([1]), may provide opportunities to support research on Parkinson's disease through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge.

The call for proposals on personalising health and care of the societal challenge for the years 2014-2015 was published on 11 December 2013 (deadlines for submission 11 March 2014 and 14 October 2015, respectively).

This call aims to create opportunities for real breakthrough research and radical innovation, by supporting the translation of findings into the clinic and other health and care settings to improve health outcomes, reduce health inequalities and promote active and healthy ageing.

For instance, topics such as 'Understanding health, ageing and disease: determinants, risk factors and pathways', 'New therapies for chronic non-communicable diseases' or 'Promoting mental wellbeing in the ageing population' might be relevant for research into Parkinson's disease.

Proposals submitted in response to the 2014 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' call are currently undergoing peer-review evaluations. The Commission cannot, at this stage, provide information on the specific issues that will be addressed through such research. The first projects are expected to start towards the end of year 2014.

EU research funding is granted on the basis of competitive calls for proposals, following an independent peer-review evaluation. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([2]).

([1]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final, 30.11.2011.
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004414/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Pension entitlements of EU citizens

I have received correspondence from an Irish citizen aged 68 who worked in Ireland for 5 ½ years until 1970. She then moved to Sweden upon marrying a Swedish citizen and worked there for some time before moving in 1977 to Germany, where she has worked since her husband died in 2004.

Could the Commission outline her pension entitlements under EC law, most notably Regulation (EU) No 465/2012 on the coordination of social security systems?

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

1. According to EC law which regulates the coordination of social security systems ([1]), all Member States in which a citizen has been insured will have to pay a retirement pension when he/she reaches national retirement age. For example, if a citizen has worked in three Member States, he/she should receive three separate old-age pensions when he/she reaches national retirement age. These pensions will be calculated according to the insurance record in each Member State. The amount received from each of the Member States depends on the duration of coverage in each state.

2. Therefore, this Irish citizen should be entitled to Irish, German and Swedish pensions. These pensions should be paid according to the EU rules described above, in proportion to the time spent in each country, after the person reaches pensionable age.

([1]) Regulation (EC) n. 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and Regulation (EC) 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004415/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Combating racism, xenophobia and hate crimes

Further to its answer of 30 January 2014 to Written Question P-014031/2013 on combating hate crime and discrimination, and its report of 27 January 2014 on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (COM(2014)0027), which concluded that a number of Member States have not transposed fully and/or correctly all the provisions of the framework decision, what is the current situation with regard to the Commission's bilateral dialogues with the Irish authorities with the aim of ensuring the full and correct transposition of the framework decision? What are the principal elements of the framework decision that the Commission believes have not been fully or correctly transposed into Irish law?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member to its recent report on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law ([1]) which discusses the transposition situation in Member States, including Ireland, in relation to the articles of the framework Decision.

As a follow-up to the report, the Commission is currently preparing the bilateral dialogues with the Member States, including Ireland, on the transposition of the framework Decision.

([1]) COM(2014) 27 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004416/14
to the Commission
Emer Costello (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Aarhus Convention

What action has the Commission taken, or is it considering taking, on the basis of paragraph 62 of the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on a general Union environment action programme to 2020, which states that 'Union citizens will have effective access to justice in environmental matters and effective legal protection, in line with the Aarhus Convention and developments brought about by the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and recent case law of the Court of Justice', and paragraph 65(a), which states that by 2020, the public will have 'access to clear information showing how Union environment law is being implemented consistent with the Aarhus Convention'?

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

In accordance with the seventh Environment Action Programme of the Union ([1]), the Commission is currently conducting an impact assessment in order to identify the best way forward to ensure an effective system of access to justice in all Member States. The Commission is also considering ways to ensure that the public has access to clear information on the implementation of the Union environmental law. For instance, the Commission is exploring how to improve online information in the Member States on the implementation of the Union's legislation on urban waste water ([2]) and is undertaking a study on how well Member States' online information covers the implementation of the EU legislation on the conservation of natural habitats ([3]) and wild birds ([4]). It is also carrying out an evaluation of the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community ([5]), including in relation to providing online information.

([1]) Decision No 1386/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 'Living well, within the limits of our planet' (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013).
([2]) Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste water, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991, p. 40.
([3]) Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.
([4]) Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, OJ L 20, 26.1.2010.
([5]) Directive 2007/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2007 establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community, OJ L 108, 25.4.2007.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004417/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Ix-xiri online (2)

Wara t-tweġiba tal-Kummissjoni għall-mistoqsija E-012836/2013 dwar ix-xiri online:

1. Il-Kummissjoni tikkunsidraha bħala prijorità li tiżgura li jkun hemm suq intern effikaċi fir-rigward tax-xiri online?

2. Il-Kummissjoni x'għamlet tul din l-aħħar sena biex trażżan il-prattika attwali ta' bejjiegħa fuq l-internet li qed tifframmenta s-suq intern f'għadd ta' swieq reġjonali/nazzjonali u xi drabi effettivament teskludi ċittadini minn Stati Membri/reġjuni speċifiċi milli jużaw is-servizzi tagħhom?

3. Il-Kummissjoni taqbel li tali prattiċi huma abbużivi u jmorru kontra l-ġurisprudenzastabbilita tal-UE?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Barnier f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(12 ta' Ġunju 2014)

1. Il-Kummissjoni tikkonsidra li t-tlestija tas-suq uniku diġitali, u li tara li dan ikun qed jiffunzjona b'mod effettiv, bħala waħda mill-ogħla prijoritajiet tagħha. Kemm l-Aġenda Diġitali għall-Ewropa ([1]) kif ukoll u il-Komunikazzjoni dwar il-kummerċ elettroniku ([2]) stabbilew sensiela ta' azzjonijiet li jikkontribwixxu għal dan l-għan.

2. Is-servizzi tal-Kummissjoni qegħdin kontinwament jippruvaw jipprovdu assistenza lill-Istati Membri, iċ-ċittadini u n-negozji sabiex jiffaċilitaw il-fiduċja fl-ambjent onlajn, jiżguraw il-funzjonament tajjeb tas-suq uniku diġitali u jaraw li dan ma jiġix frammentat.

Issaħħew ukoll l-isforzi għar-rigward tas-sensibilizzazzjoni tan-negozji u l-konsumaturi fejn jidħlu d-drittijiet u l-obbligi tagħhom skont il-liġi tal-UE, speċjalment fil-kuntest tal-Artikolu 20(2) tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi. Dan ix-xogħol isir direttament mill-Kummissjoni kif ukoll f'kooperazzjoni maċ-Ċentri Ewropej tal-Konsumaturi u korpi oħra nominati biex jgħinu lill-konsumaturi li jiffaċċjaw diskriminazzjoni meta jkunu qed jixtru servizzi fl-UE.

Għal dan il-għan, is-servizzi tal-Kummissjoni dalwaqt se jippubblikaw fuq il-websajt tad-DĠ MARKT gwida prattika għall-konsumaturi intitolata "*Ix-xiri ta' servizzi kullimkien fl-UE*".

Barra minn hekk, bħala parti mill-assistenza li tagħti lill-Istati Membri, il-Kummissjoni qed tippjana li toħroġ gwida dwar l-applikazzjoni tad-Direttiva dwar id-drittijiet tal-konsumatur.

3. L-Artikolu 20 tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi b'mod ċar tipprojbixxi diskriminazzjoni kontra r-riċevituri ta' servizzi abbażi tan-nazzjonalità jew il-pajjiż tar-residenza tagħhom.

Din id-dispożizzjoni ġiet implimentata mill-Istati Membri kollha. Huwa f'idejn l-awtoritajiet nazzjonali kompetenti li jiżguraw il-konformità ma' din ir-regola, b'mod partikolari rigward id-derogi msemmija fil-Premessa 95 tad-Direttiva dwar is-Servizzi u spjegata aktar fid-Dokument ta' Ħidma tal-Persunal tal-Kummissjoni. ([3])

([1]) COM(2010) 245 finali.
([2]) COM(2011) 942 finali.
([3]) SWD(2012) 146 finali.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004417/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Online shopping (2)

Following the Commission's answer to Question E-012836/2013 on online shopping:

1. Does the Commission consider it a priority to ensure that there is an effective internal market with regard to online sales?

2. What has the Commission done during the past year to curb the current practice of online sellers fragmenting the internal market into a number of regional/national markets and at times effectively excluding citizens from specific Member States/regions from being able to use their services?

3. Does the Commission concur that such practices are abusive and in breach of established EU case law?

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

1. The Commission considers the completion of the Digital Single Market and its effective functioning as one of its top priorities. Both the Digital Agenda for Europe ([1]) and the E-commerce Communication ([2]) laid down a set of actions that seek to contribute to this objective.

2. The Commission Services are continuously trying to provide assistance to Member States, citizens and business in order to facilitate trust in the online environment, ensure a sound functioning of the Digital Single Market and to prevent its fragmentation.

Efforts have also been strengthened as regards the raising of awareness of businesses and consumers of their rights and obligations under EC law, notably in the context of Article 20(2) of the Services Directive. This work is done directly by the Commission as well as in cooperation with the European Consumer Centres and other bodies designated to help consumers facing discrimination when buying services in the EU.

To this end, the Commission Services will shortly publish on the website of DG MARKT a practical guide for consumers entitled 'Buying services everywhere in the EU'.

Furthermore, as part of providing assistance to Member States, the Commission plans to issue Guidance on the application of the Consumer Rights Directive.

3. Article 20 of the Services Directive clearly prohibits discrimination against service recipients on the basis of their nationality or country of residence.

This provision has been implemented by all Member States. It is for the competent national authorities to ensure compliance with this rule, in particular with regard to the derogations mentioned in Recital 95 of the Services Directive and explained further in the Commission Staff Working Document. ([3])

([1]) COM(2010) 245 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 942 final.
([3]) SWD(2012) 146 final.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004418/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Id-diviżjoni diġitali fl-UE-28

Studju ppubblikat mill-Kummissjoni f'Ottubru 2013, li jiffoka fuq id-distakk diġitali bejn l-irġiel u n-nisa fl-Istati Membri, jissuġġerixxi li jekk aktar nisa jiġu attirati għal karriera diġitali u aktar nisa jiġu mħajra għal impjiegi diġitali dan ikun ta' benefiċċju għall-industrija diġitali, għan-nisa nfushom u għall-ekonomija tal-Ewropa b'mod ġenerali.

Skont l-istudju, minn 1 000 mara b'lawrja ta' baċċillier jew lawrja tal-ewwel oħra, 29 biss għandhom diploma fl-ICT, meta mqabbla mal-95 raġel, u erba' nisa biss minn 1 000 eventwalment jaħdmu fis-settur tal-ICT. L-istudju juri wkoll li aktar nisa milli rġiel jitilqu mis-settur f'nofs il-karriera, u li n-nisa mhumiex rappreżentati biżżejjed fil-karigi amministrattivi u kariga deċiżjonali.

L-istudju jissuġġerixxi li jekk it-tendenza kellha tkun bil-kontra u n-nisa kellhom impjiegi diġitali b'mod frekwenti daqs l-irġiel, il-PDG Ewropew jista' jingħata spinta ta' bejn wieħed u ieħor EUR 9 biljun (1.3 darbiet daqs il-PDG ta' Malta).

1. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi data dwar in-numru ta' nisa u rġiel li għandhom lawrja u huma impjegati fis-settur tal-ICT f'kull Stat Membru?

2. Il-Kummissjoni tista' tipprovdi data dwar in-numru ta' rġiel u nisa li huma meqjusa li għandhom nuqqas ta' għarfien fl-IT, jew li m'għandhomx kompjuter, fl-Istati Membri?

3. Il-Kummissjoni x'qed tagħmel biex tħajjar aktar nisa jiffukaw l-istudji tagħhom fuq l-ICT u eventwalment jagħżlu karriera fl-industrija diġitali?

4. Liema strateġiji għal tul ta' żmien twil u qasir qed jiġu żviluppati mill-Kummissjoni biextindirizza l-problema tad-distakk diġitali fl-UE-28?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sinjura Kroes f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(2 ta' Ġunju 2014)

Fl-UE, fl-2010 kien hemm madwar 115,000 gradwat ġdid fix-xjenza tal-kompjuter li 16.5 % minnhom kienu nisa. Is-sehem ta' gradwati nisa jvarja bejn iktar minn 40 % fil-Greċja u l-Bulgarija u taħt l-10 % fil-Belġju, is-Slovenja u l-Pajjiżi l-Baxxi. B'mod ġenerali, is-sehem ta' nisa li ggradwaw fix-xjenza tal-kompjuter naqas, eż. il-Belġju — 46 %, ir-Renju Unit — 32 %, l-Isvezja — 30 %. Żdied biss f'disa' Stati Membri (MT, CY, EL, EE, DE, HU, AT, CZ u SI). In-nisa huma ferm anqas rappreżentati f'impjiegi fl-ICT mill-irġiel; madankollu s-sehem tagħhom qed jikber. L-ogħla għadd ta' nisa huwa fil-Finlandja u fl-Ungerija: b'madwar 20 % f'kull wieħed minnhom. Fl-UE, madwar 20 % tal-popolazzjoni tista' titqies "fqira fl-IT", jiġifieri li qatt ma użat l-internet (2013) — 18 % rġiel u 23 % nisa. Hawn aktar statistika annessa.

L-Aġenda Diġitali għall-Ewropa hija l-istrateġija li tiżgura li ċ-ċittadini Ewropej jieħdu l-aħjar li jistgħu mit-teknoloġiji diġitali. Wieħed mill-pilastri tagħha jiffoka fuq il-litteriżmu diġitali, il-ħiliet u l-inklużjoni bl-idea li tiġi indirizzata l-qasma diġitali.

Biex tkompli fuq il-Pakkett ta' Impjiegi tal-2012 ([1]), li identifika s-settur tal-ICT bħala wieħed fertili fejn tidħol il-ġenerazzjoni tax-xogħol, il-Kummissjoni varat il-Gran Koalizzjoni għall-Impjiegi Diġitali, sħubija ta' bosta partijiet interessati li tgħin biex tressaq aktar nies lejn it-taħriġ u l-impjiegi fl-ICT. Fost l-oħrajn jinkludi impenji li jiffukaw fuq in-nisa.

Il-kampanja "e-Skills for Jobs" hija reazzjoni għad-domanda dejjem tikber għal professjonisti mħarrġa fl-IT. Fl-2014, l-industrija, il-korpi tal-edukazzjoni u l-awtoritajiet pubbliċi se jkunu qegħdin iwasslu programm varjat ta' attivitajiet. Se jinfurmaw lill-istudenti, lin-nies qiegħda u lill-haddiema dwar l-opportunitajiet li jippreżentaw l-edukazzjoni u l-impjiegi fl-IT. Aktar dettalji fl-Annessi.

([1]) COM (2012) 173 final tat-18 ta' April 2012.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004418/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Digital divide in the EU-28

A study published by the Commission in October 2013, focusing on the digital divide between men and women in the Member States, suggests that getting more girls interested in a digital career and getting more women into digital jobs would benefit the digital industry, women themselves and Europe's economy as a whole.

According to the study, out of 1 000 women with a Bachelor's or other first degree, only 29 hold a degree in ICT, compared with 95 men, and only 4 in 1 000 women will eventually work in the ICT sector. The study also shows that more women than men leave the sector mid-career, and that women are under-represented in managerial and decision-making positions.

The study suggests that if the trend were reversed and women held digital jobs as frequently as men, the European GDP could be boosted annually by around EUR 9 billion (1.3 times Malta's GDP).

1. Can the Commission provide data on the number of women and men who have a degree and are employed in the ICT sector in each Member State?

2. Can the Commission provide data on the number of men and women who are considered 'IT poor', or who do not own a computer, across the Member States?

3. What is the Commission doing to encourage more women to focus their studies on ICT and eventually choose a career in the digital industry?

4. What long-term and short-term strategies are being developed by the Commission to address the digital divide problem across the EU-28?

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

In the EU in 2010 there were around 115, 000 new computer science graduates, 16.5% of them were female. The share of female graduates varies from above 40% in Greece and Bulgaria to below 10% in Belgium, Slovenia and the Netherlands. In general, the share of female computer science graduates has fallen, e.g. Belgium -46%, UK -32%, Sweden -30%. Only in nine Member States (MT, CY, EL, EE, DE, HU, AT, CZ and SI) has it risen. Women are significantly less represented in ICT jobs than men; however their share is increasing. The highest numbers of women are in Finland and Hungary, each at around 20%. In the EU, around 20% of the population can be considered 'IT poor' i.e. never having used the Internet (2013) — 18% men and 23% women. Further statistics are annexed.

The Digital Agenda for Europe is the strategy which ensures that Europe's citizens get the most out of digital technologies. One of its pillars focuses on digital literacy, skills and inclusion to tackle the digital divide.

As a follow-up to the 2012 Employment Package ([1]), which identified the ICT sector as one of the job-rich sectors, the Commission launched the Grand Coalition for digital jobs , a multistakeholder partnership which helps get more people into ICT training and jobs. Among others it contains pledges focusing on women.

The 'e-Skills for Jobs' campaign is a response to the growing demand for IT-skilled professionals. In 2014 the industry, education bodies and public authorities will deliver a diverse programme of activities. It will inform students, unemployed people and the workforce about the opportunities that IT education and jobs present. More details in the annexes.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final of 18.4.2012.

(Verżjoni Maltija)

Mistoqsija għal tweġiba bil-miktub E-004419/14
lill-Kummissjoni
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 ta' April 2014)

Suġġett: Il-ħidma soċjali fl-UE-28

Fir-rapport tagħha tal-14 ta' Marzu 2014, intitolat "Is-Settur tal-Ħidma Soċjali: il-Kundizzjonijiet tax-Xogħol u l-Kwalità tal-Impjieg", il-Fondazzjoni Ewropea għat-Titjib tal-Kondizzjonijiet tal-Ħajja u tax-Xogħol, tindika li fl-2010 kien hemm 4 838 800 ħaddiem Ewropew impjegat fis-settur tal-ħidma soċjali, li jirrappreżentaw 2.2 % tal-forza tax-xogħol sħiħa tal-UE-28. L-impjiegi fis-settur żdiedu b'5.9 % bejn l-2008 u l-2010 u reġgħu żdiedu b'2.6 % bejn l-2010 u l-2012.

Skont ir-rapport, "is-settur għandu preżenza femminili dominanti, b'83 % tal-ħaddiema nisa. Is-settur għandu l-istess proporzjon ta' ħaddiema żgħażagħ (15-24 sena) bħal dak tal-UE-28 (9 %), u proporzjoni kemxejn ogħla ta' ħaddiema akbar fl-età (50 sena u aktar) mill-UE-28 inġenerali: 30 % meta mqabbel ma' 27 %. L-impjieg indipendenti huwa anqas komuni fil-qasam tal-ħidma soċjali milli f'setturi oħra: 1 % biss tal-ħaddiema jaħdmu għal rashom b' impjegati u 7 % jaħdmu għal rashom mingħajr impjegati, meta mqabbel mal-4 % u l-11 % rispettivament fl-UE-28. Il-kuntratti b'terminu fiss u l-iskemi ta' apprendistat huma kemxejn aktar prevalenti fil-qasam tal-ħidma soċjali milli fl-UE-28 inġenerali, filwaqt li l-kuntratti għal perjodu indeterminat huma anqas prevalenti".

1. Fid-dawl tal-importanza tas-settur, x'inhi tagħmel il-Kummissjoni biex tħeġġeġ lil aktar nies jibnu karriera fil-qasam tal-ħidma soċjali?

2. Fid-dawl tal-konklużjonijiet tar-rapport dwar il-fatt li f'dan is-settur hemm preżenzafemminili dominanti, xi strateġija qed tiġi implimentata sabiex l-irġiel jitħeġġu jagħżlukarriera fil-qasam tal-ħidma soċjali?

Tweġiba mogħtija mis-Sur Andor f'isem il-Kummissjoni
(4 ta' Ġunju 2014)

L-"impjiegi bojod", li jinkludu l-impjieg fis-setturi tas-saħħa u tas-servizzi soċjali, huma fost dawk is-setturi li joffru potenzjal kbir għall-ħolqien tal-impjiegi. Il-Kummissjoni Ewropea ilha snin twal titlob lill-Istati Membri li jiżviluppaw dawn l-impjiegi.

Abbażi ta' dan, il-pakkett dwar l-impjieg ta' April 2012 ([1]) ippropona pjan ta' azzjoni favur persunal tas-saħħa fl-Unjoni ([2]), kif ukoll dokument ta' ħidma dwar il-potenzjal għall-ħolqien tal-impjiegi fis-servizzi tal-kura personali ([3]) u ta' attivitajiet domestiċi (il-kura tat-tfal, tal-anzjani jew tal-persuni b'diżabbiltà, u kull ma għandu x'jaqsam mat-tindif u l-manutenzjoni tad-dar, eċċ.).

Barra minn hekk, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja attivitajiet li għandhom l-għan speċifiku li joffru servizzi ta' kura ta' kwalità, kif ġie ppreżentat fil-pakkett soċjali tal-2013 ([4]). Ir-rapport ippubblikat mill-Fondazzjoni ta' Dublin ([5]) jippreżenta l-aqwa prassi biex jinġibdu u jinżammu ħaddiema f'dan is-settur.

Fl-aħħar nett, dawn l-attivitajiet mhumiex għajr parti żgħira tas-servizzi ta' kura personali, li l-iżvilupp tagħhom jirrappreżenta strument importanti għal rikonċiljazzjoni aħjar bejn il-ħajja professjonali u l-ħajja fil-familja, kif ukoll mezz għall-ġlieda effikaċi kontra x-xogħol illegali.

L-Organizzazzjoni Internazzjonali tax-Xogħol (ILO) żviluppat ukoll dan is-suġġett permezz tal-konvenzjoni dwar ix-xogħol diċenti għall-ħaddiema domestiċi ([6]).

L-ugwaljanza tas-sessi hija prinċipju ġenerali fis-seħħ fil-politiki kollha tal-Unjoni Ewropea, u l-isforzi ta' desegmentazzjoni tas-suq tax-xogħol jikkontribwixxu lejha. B'mod partikulari, il-Kummissjoni tappoġġja l-azzjonijiet bil-għan li jippromwovu l-integrazzjoni tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi fil-Fond Soċjali Ewropew.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 finali.
([2]) SWD(2012) 93 finali.
([3]) SWD(2012) 95 finali.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=mt&newsId=1807&moreDocuments.=yes&tableName=news.
([5]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef05125.htm
([6]) http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_104701.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004419/14
to the Commission
Claudette Abela Baldacchino (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Social work in the EU-28

In its report of 14 March 2014 entitled 'Social Work Sector: Working Conditions and Job Quality', the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions points out that in 2010 there were 4 838 800 European workers employed in the social work sector, representing 2.2% of the entire workforce of the EU-28. Employment in the sector increased by 5.9% between 2008 and 2010 and increased by a further 2.6% between 2010 and 2012.

According to the report, 'the sector is female-dominated, with 83% of workers being women. The sector has the same proportion of younger workers (15-24 years) as the EU-28 (9%) and a slightly higher proportion of older workers (50 years and over) than the EU-28 as a whole: 30% compared with 27%. Self-employment is less common in social work than in other sectors: just 1% of workers are self-employed with employees and 7% are self-employed without employees, compared to 4% and 11% respectively in the EU-28. Fixed-term contracts and apprenticeship schemes are slightly more prevalent in social work than in the EU-28 as a whole, while indefinite contracts are less prevalent'.

1. Considering the importance of the sector, what is the Commission doing to encourage more people to build a career in social work?

2. Considering the report's finding that this sector is very much female-dominated, what strategy is being implemented to ensure that it encourages more men to choose a career in social work?

(Version française)

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

Les «emplois blancs», qui englobent l'emploi dans les secteurs de la santé et des services sociaux, se comptent parmi les secteurs qui présentent un potentiel de création d'emplois important. La Commission européenne appelle depuis de nombreuses années les États membres à développer ces emplois.

Sur cette base le paquet emploi d'avril 2012 ([1]) a proposé un plan d'action en faveur du personnel de santé dans l'Union ([2]) ainsi qu'un document de travail sur le potentiel de création d'emplois pour les services à la personne ([3]) pour des activités effectuées au sein du foyer (garde d'enfant ou services aux personnes âgées ou handicapées et aussi tout ce qui est lié au ménage, ou l'entretien, etc.)

De plus, la Commission soutient des activités visant notamment à offrir des services de soin de qualité comme présenté dans le paquet social de 2013 ([4]). Le rapport publié par la fondation de Dublin ([5]) présente les meilleures pratiques pour attirer et retenir les travailleurs de ce secteur.

Enfin, ces activités ne sont qu'une partie des services à la personne dont le développement constitue un instrument important pour une meilleure réconciliation entre la vie professionnelle et la vie familiale, ainsi qu'un moyen de lutte efficace contre le travail au noir.

Enfin, le Bureau International du Travail a également développé ce sujet avec la convention concernant le travail décent pour les travailleuses et travailleurs domestiques ([6]).

L'égalité des genres est un principe général d'application dans toutes les politiques de l'union européenne et les efforts de désegmentation du marché du travail y contribuent. En particulier, la Commission soutient les actions visant à promouvoir l'intégration de la dimension de genre et dans le Fond social européen.

([1]) COM(2012) 173 final.
([2]) SWD(2012) 93 final.
([3]) SWD(2012) 95 final.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1044&langId=en&newsId=1807&moreDocuments.=yes&tableName=news
([5]) http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef05125.htm
([6]) http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/.wcms_104701.pdf

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004420/14
a la Comisión
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(9 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Educación especial y Plan Bolonia

El Plan Bolonia suprimió las especialidades de Educación Especial en Magisterio y como consecuencia de ello no salen como titulados profesores de Educación Especial. La especialización es muy importante y por eso tendrían que organizarse grados y masters para formar especialistas.

¿Qué tiene previsto hacer la Comisión al respecto?

Respuesta de la Sra. Vassiliou en nombre de la Comisión
(30 de mayo de 2014)

El Proceso de Bolonia no ha suprimido ninguna oferta de educación superior. Los cuarenta y siete ministros responsables de la educación superior en el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES) acordaron el objetivo de Bolonia de introducir un sistema de tres ciclos en el EEES: grado, posgrado y doctorado. El 95 % de los programas que se ofrecen en el EEES siguen actualmente esta estructura de tres ciclos, mientras que el 5 % restante se refiere a materias como Derecho, Medicina o Magisterio, en las que las estructuras, culturas y circunstancias específicas nacionales influyen de manera importante.

En cada país, los ministerios o las instituciones de enseñanza superior autónomas deciden la oferta de materias, cursos y especializaciones. La enseñanza de profesores de educación especial varía en el EEES (lo mismo que ocurre en los estudios de magisterio en otros temas y especializaciones), ya que algunos países ofrecen grados y masters para formar especialistas, mientras que en otros la formación se realiza en las propias facultades o en centros especializados.

Puesto que, de conformidad con el artículo 165 del Tratado de Funcionamiento de la UE, el contenido y la organización de la educación es responsabilidad de los Estados miembros (y que, además, otros diecinueve países no miembros de la UE también participan en el Proceso de Bolonia), el papel de la Comisión es apoyar el intercambio de buenas prácticas, incluido en el ámbito de la educación especial. La Comisión apoya asimismo proyectos de cooperación a través del programa Erasmus+, que fomenta la participación de alumnos y personal con necesidades especiales y facilita un apoyo financiero específico a tal fin.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004420/14
to the Commission
Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Special education and the Bologna Process

The Bologna Process abolished specialist studies in special educational needs teaching. As a result no teachers are qualifying in this field any more. Specialisation is very important and therefore bachelor degree and master degree courses ought to be organised to train specialists.

What does the Commission plan in this regard?

Answer given by Ms Vassiliou on behalf of the Commission
(30 May 2014)

The Bologna Process has not abolished any kind of higher education provision. The 47 Ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) agreed the Bologna goal of introducing a three cycle system of Bachelor, Master and PhD. 95% of programmes offered in the EHEA are now offered in the three cycle structure. The remaining 5% of programmes concern subjects such as law, medicine and the teaching profession, where specific national structures, cultures and circumstances play a strong role.

Depending on the country, either Ministries or autonomous higher education institutions decide on what subjects, courses and specialisations are offered. Special needs teacher education varies across the EHEA (as is also the case for teacher education for other subjects and specialisations): some countries offer specialised Bachelors and Masters, others offer in-school training or training in specialised training institutions.

Since, according to Article 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, the content and organisation of education is the responsibility of Member States (and also taking account of the fact that 19 countries participate in the Bologna Process without being members of the EU), the role of the Commission is to support the exchange of good practices, including in the area of special needs education. The Commission also offers support to cooperation projects via the Erasmus+ programme which encourages the participation of learners and staff with special needs and provides specific financial support for that purpose.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004421/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: «Infrastrutture Lombarde» y cumplimiento de la legislación de la UE relativa a las ayudas estatales

Con la decisión CIPE del 18 de febrero de 2013 — Directiva sobre la aplicación de las medidas de compensación contempladas en el artículo 18 de la Ley 183/2011, publicada en la Gaceta Oficial, Serie General 206, de 3 de septiembre de 2013, se aprobó el documento técnico titulado Directrices para la aplicación de las medidas previstas en el artículo 18 de la Ley 183/2011. Esta decisión aclara los requisitos, criterios y procedimientos para la aplicación del artículo 18 de la Ley 183/2011.

Conforme a los artículos 107 y 108 del TFUE es indiscutible que las medidas incluidas en la decisión de que se trata sólo favorecen a determinadas empresas y a determinadas mercancías.

La declaración que figura en dichas Directrices, según la cual la concesión de las ayudas fiscales se lleva a cabo en cumplimiento de la legislación europea, en particular la relativa a las ayudas estatales en vigor en el momento de la concesión, incumple lo dispuesto en el artículo 107, apartado 1, del TFUE.

Además, la investigación judicial de Milán ha decapitado a la dirigencia de «Infrastrutture Lombarde Spa» con la detención de ocho personas por cargos de asociación ilícita, fraude contra la Región y falsedad y, según el auto del Juez de instrucción Andrea Ghinetti, se desprende sobre todo la plena conciencia de todas las partes acusadas de que estaban actuando en un contexto de ilegalidad generalizada, incluidas las autoridades de la Región Lombardía.

— ¿Puede decir la Comisión si las medidas contempladas en las disposiciones de la decisión de que se trata constituyen una ayuda estatal en el sentido del artículo 107 TFUE y, en caso afirmativo, si el Estado italiano ha puesto en marcha todos los requisitos establecidos en el artículo 108 del TFUE

— ¿Está la Comisión al corriente de las irregularidades puestas de manifiesto por la investigación de Milán, con especial referencia a los hechos que demostrarían el incumplimiento sistemático de las normas nacionales de contratación y de la legislación de la UE sobre la libre competencia?

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

En este momento y sin tener conocimiento de la aplicación de la Ley 183/2011 a un caso concreto, la Comisión no puede evaluar si la concesión de reducciones de impuestos según lo previsto en esta Ley se ajusta a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE. La Comisión observa que las directrices del CIPE para la aplicación del artículo 18 de la Ley 183/2011, al que se refiere su Señoría, incluyen el compromiso vinculante de ajustarse a las normas sobre ayudas estatales de la UE.

La Comisión no ha sido informada de los resultados de la investigación judicial de Milán.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004421/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: 'Infrastrutture Lombarde' and compliance with EU rules on state aid

By resolution dated 18 February 2013, Italy's Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning issued a directive implementing tax compensation measures under Article 18 of Law 183/2011. The resolution, published in the Official Gazette, general series 206, on 3 September 2013, approves a set of technical guidelines entitled 'Guidelines for the application of the measures under Article 18 of Law 183/2011' and sets forth the requirements, criteria and methods of implementation of that Article.

In the terms of Articles 107 and 108 of TFEU, there seems to be no doubt that the measures passed by this resolution favour some companies and forms of production, to the exclusion of others.

The guidelines mentioned above state that the fiscal aid is 'in accordance with the European rules, especially those on state aid, in force at the time of granting' but apparently evade the requirement of Article 107(1) of the TFEU.

Meanwhile a judicial investigation in Milan has removed from office the directors of Infrastrutture Lombarde SpA, leading to eight arrests on charges of criminal conspiracy, fraud at the expense of the Region and false declaration. The injunction issued by the Judge for Preliminary Inquiries, Andrea Ghinetti, notes that 'all the parties in this case were fully aware that they were acting in a context of widespread lawbreaking, including the leaders of the regional government in Lombardy.'

— Does the Commission consider that the measures contained in the above resolution are state aid in the terms of TFEU Article 107? If so, has the Italian Government fulfilled all the requirements of TFEU Article 108?

— Is the Commission aware of the recent irregularities revealed by the judicial investigation in Milan, especially of the facts proving systematic evasion of the national rules on contracting and the EU rules on freedom of competition?

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

At this stage and without having knowledge of the application of Law 183/2011 to a specific case, the Commission is not in a position to assess whether the provision of tax reductions as foreseen in that Law would comply with the EU State aid rules. The Commission notes that the CIPE guidelines for the application of Article 18 of Law 183/2011, to which the Honourable Member refers, include a binding commitment to follow the EU state aid rules.

The Commission has not been informed about the outcome of the judicial investigation in Milan.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004422/14
an die Kommission (Vizepräsidentin/Hohe Vertreterin)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9. April 2014)

Betrifft: VP/HR — Mögliche türkische Unterstützung des Giftgaseinsatzes in Syrien

In einem kürzlich erschienen Artikel des Pulitzer-Preis-Trägers Seymour M. Hersh verweist dieser auf bislang unveröffentlichte Dokumente, aus denen hervorgehen soll, dass eine amerikanische Intervention in Syrien im Jahre 2013 letztlich nur deswegen nicht durchgeführt wurde, weil der entscheidende Einsatz von Giftgas im Vorfeld nicht von Regierungstruppen Assads ausgegangen war. Vielmehr hätten sich radikal- islamische Rebellen mithilfe türkischer Unterstützer u. a. in den Besitz von Sarin gebracht.

1. Ist der Hohen Vertreterin der EU für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik bekannt, dass die Proben, welche vom Giftgasangriff des 21. August 2012 stammten, nicht dem syrischen Militär zuzuordnen waren, wie dies auch im Artikel von Seymour Hersh behauptet wird? Wenn nein, welchen Kenntnisstand hat die Hohe Vertreterin von der Herkunft des verwendeten Giftgases?

2. Sollte die Information, wonach das verwendete Giftgas aus der Türkei geliefert wurde bzw. die Türkei wesentliche Unterstützung leistete, wie es im Artikel von Seymour M. Harsh angegeben wurde, zutreffend sein — erscheint diese Information dann geeignet, die Lage (insbesondere im Hinblick auf eine materielle oder immaterielle Unterstützung der einen oder der anderen Kriegspartei durch Sanktionen, öffentliche Aufrufe, Stellungnahmen oder dergleichen) in Syrien durch die Hohe Vertreterin der EU zum Syrienkonflikt neu zu bewerten?

3. Liegen der Hohen Vertreterin der EU Informationen vor, wonach islamistische Kräfte in Syrien bei der Belieferung mit konventionellen Waffen durch britische und US- amerikanische Geheimdienste unterstützt wurden? Falls nein, sieht die Hohe Vertreterin der EU hier Aufklärungsbedarf?

4. Erscheint der Vorwurf, dass die Türkei Planungen dahin gehend unternommen habe, mithilfe mutmaßlich völkerrechtswidriger Militäroperationen ohne hoheitliche Kennzeichnung einen Grund für eine eigene Militärintervention in Syrien zu schaffen, geeignet, die Haltung der EU zum Integrationsprozess der Türkei zu beeinflussen, so sie sich als zutreffend herausstellen?

Antwort von Frau Ashton — Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin im Namen der Kommission
(25. Juni 2014)

Die Hohe Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin kommentiert keine spekulativen Presseberichte. Die EU erachtet die Erkenntnisse der UN-Untersuchungsmission unter Leitung von Herrn Ake Sellstrom als maßgeblich.

Der Hohen Vertreterin/Vizepräsidentin sind keine Waffenlieferungen des US-amerikanischen oder des britischen Geheimdienstes an die Rebellen bekannt.

Die Türkei und die EU arbeiten im Hinblick auf eine politische Lösung und die Verbesserung der humanitären Hilfe angesichts der Krise in Syrien eng zusammen.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004422/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Possible Turkish support for the use of poison gas in Syria

In a recently published article, the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Seymour M. Hersh refers to previously unpublished documents allegedly showing that an American intervention in Syria in 2013 did not go ahead only because the poison gas attack cited as the reason for intervening had not in fact been carried out by Assad's government troops. Instead, sarin had been acquired by radical Islamist rebels with the help of Turkish backers.

1. Is the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aware that the samples taken from the poison gas attack of 21 August 2012 could not be attributed to the Syrian army, as also reported in the article by Seymour Hersh? If not, what does the High Representative know about the origin of the poison gas used in the attack?

2. If it is confirmed that the poison gas used was supplied from Turkey or that Turkey provided significant support, as claimed in the article by Seymour M. Hersh, will this information lead the High Representative to re-assess the Syria conflict and the situation in Syria (particularly with a view to material or moral support for one or the other parties in the conflict through sanctions, public appeals, declarations, etc.)?

3. Does the High Representative have any information indicating that Islamist forces in Syria have received support from the British and US security services in acquiring supplies of conventional weapons? If not, does the High Representative consider clarification necessary?

4. If the claim that Turkey planned to create a reason for its own military intervention in Syria using alleged undercover military operations in contravention of international law is confirmed, will this affect the EU's attitude to Turkey's integration process?

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

The HR/VP does not comment on speculative press reports. The EU considers the findings of the UN investigation mission led by Mr Ake Sellstrom as authoritative.

The HR/VP is not aware of any transfers of arms to the rebels made by the US or the UK security services.

Turkey and the EU cooperate well on finding a political solution and improving the humanitarian response to the crisis in Syria.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004423/14
to the Commission
Chris Davies (ALDE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Import of illegally harvested timber

What assessment has the Commission made of the effect of the various measures now enacted, such as FLEGT, on reducing the import into the EU of illegally harvested timber?

Is the Commission able to estimate what proportion of timber imports now comes from sustainable sources, and does this represent an improvement on the previous situation?

Does the Commission envisage the need for the EU to adopt additional measures to curtail the use of illegally harvested timber?

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

Quantifying imports of illegal timber into the EU is difficult since by their very nature such activities are hidden and estimates depend on the assumptions made. A 2010 report published by the UK think tank Chatham House ([1]) concludes that measures taken by the EU and other players, including producer countries, to combat illegal logging appear to be having positive results. The report points in particular to improvements in countries that have concluded or are currently negotiating Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreements with the EU.

According to a study published by the European Timber Trade Federation ([2]) the percentage of timber imports subject to some form of verification/certification of legality or sustainability rose from 16% in 2007 to 27% in 2011. It can be expected that this percentage will now be higher, partly in response to the entry into application of the EU Timber Regulation ([3]) in March 2013.

The Commission will consider whether additional measures are necessary when it reviews implementation of the FLEGT Action Plan ([4]) and of the EU Timber Regulation in 2015.

([1]) See http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/109398
([2]) See http://www.ettf.info/sites/default/files/ettf_2011-statistics_eu-totals.pdf
([3]) Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council Of 20.10.2010 laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market. OJ L 295 12.11.2010.
([4]) COM(2003) 251.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-004424/14
upućeno Komisiji (potpredsjednici/Visokoj predstavnici)
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(9. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: VP/HR — Izvoz mladog krumpira iz Županije Zapadnohercegovačke i Hercegovačkoneretvanske u Europsku uniju

Ulaskom Hrvatske u EU poljoprivredni proizvođači s područja Zapadnohercegovačke te dijela Hercegovačko-neretvanske županije u Bosni i Hercegovini dovedeni su u nepovoljan položaj. Oni su veći dio svoje proizvodnje mladog krumpira izvozili u Hrvatsku sukladno s odredbama CEFTA-e, što je s danom pristupanja Hrvatske Europskoj uniji postalo nemoguće.

Da bi se mladi krumpir s navedenih područja mogao uvoziti u EU, morao je biti izvršen monitoring u trajanju od tri godine (2011., 2012. i 2013.), a izvršile su ga nadležne institucije Bosne i Hercegovine.

Delegacija Ureda Europske unije za hranu i veterinarstvo (FVO) u Bosni i Hercegovini je u preliminarnim rezultatima revizije utvrdila da su zahtjevni standardi za izvoz mladog krumpira u zemlje EU-a ispunjeni te da je fitosanitarni sustav usklađen s europskim zakonodavstvom. Nadležni organi EU-a svoje su mišljenje dužni predstaviti Europskoj komisiji na redovitom sastanku 1. srpnja 2014. godine.

Budući da su urod i isporuka mladog krumpira vezani za početak mjeseca svibnja, želim pitati Visokog povjerenika za poljoprivredu i ruralni razvoj postoji li mogućnost da Ured Europske unije za hranu i veterinarstvo (FVO) predstavi Komisiji svoje mišljenje o uvozu mladog hercegovačkog krumpira u EU najkasnije do 30. travnja 2014. kako bi Komisija mogla odobriti njegov izvoz prije početka sezone prodaje?

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

U razdoblju od 25. ožujka do 3. travnja 2014. Ured za hranu i veterinarstvo Europske komisije provodio je reviziju u Bosni i Hercegovini radi procjene fitosanitarnog stanja i službenih kontrola krumpira u svrhu potencijalnog izvoza u Europsku uniju. Izvješće o reviziji dostavit će se relevantnim tijelima u Bosni i Hercegovini na očitovanje čim bude dovršeno. Službe Komisije tek će tada moći predočiti rezultate revizije Stalnom odboru za biljno zdravstvo čiji je sastanak predviđen u srpnju kada će mu moći prisustvovati relevantni stručnjaci država članica iz sektora proizvodnje krumpira.

Kako bi se uvoz krumpira iz Bosne i Hercegovine u Europsku uniju mogao dalje razmatrati, moraju postojati dovoljni dokazi u prilog zahtjevu Bosne i Hercegovine za priznavanje odsutnosti prstenaste truleži gomolja krumpira (ozbiljne karantenske bolesti krumpira u EU-u).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004424/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Ruža Tomašić (ECR)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — Export of new potatoes from the West Herzegovina and Herzegovina-Neretva cantons to the EU

Croatia's accession to the EU has put agricultural producers from the West Herzegovina and Herzegovina-Neretva cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina in an unfavourable position. They used to export the majority of their new potatoes to Croatia pursuant to the provisions of CEFTA, but Croatia's accession to the EU has made this impossible.

In order to facilitate the importation of new potatoes from the aforementioned regions, a three-year-long monitoring procedure had to be carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2011, 2012 and 2013) by the competent authorities.

A delegation from the EU's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Bosnia and Herzegovina concluded, in the preliminary results of its audit, that the requirements for exporting new potatoes to EU Member States had been satisfied and that the phytosanitary regime was in compliance with EC law. The EU's competent bodies will have to present their opinion to the Commission at their regular meeting on 1 July 2014.

Given that the harvest and delivery of new potatoes occur in early May, could the Commissioner for agriculture and rural development say if it would be possible for the EU's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) to present its opinion on the import into the EU of new potatoes from Herzegovina to the Commission by 30 April 2014 at the latest? This would allow the Commission to approve exports before the beginning of the selling season.

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

The European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office carried out an audit in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 25 March to 3 April 2014 in order to evaluate the plant health situation and the official controls of potatoes in view of potential export to the European Union. Once the report of this audit is finalised it will be made available to the relevant authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina for their comment. Only then will the Commission's services be in a position to present the outcome of this audit to the Standing Committee on Plant Health currently scheduled to take place in July when the relevant potato sector experts of the EU Member States will be in attendance.

Before export of potatoes from Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union can be further considered, there needs to be sufficient evidence in place to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's request for recognition of freedom from potato ring rot (a serious EU quarantine pest of potatoes).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004426/14
to the Commission
Glenis Willmott (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Reintegration of workers after ill health

Many people do not return to work after a long-term period of ill health, even if they are deemed fit to do so. In many cases, although people would like to return to work, they find that their job has not been kept open or their employer does not make adequate provision to enable them to stay in work. For example, it is estimated that one fifth of breast cancer patients do not return to work after treatment, even though they would like to and would be fit to do so.

I authored Parliament's resolution on the Community strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work. The resolution called on the Commission to collect more data on workers with chronic diseases, analyse their working conditions, and work towards requiring employers to make it possible for patients to remain in work during treatment and return to employment after treatment is finished.

Given that the EU has set an employment target of 75% of people aged 20 to 64 by 2020, can the Commission say what further research has been carried out into the involvement of people with chronic diseases in the labour market?

Does the Commission intend to come forward with proposals for a health and safety strategy for 2014 to 2020 and, if so, will this issue be addressed in the new strategy?

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

The results of the evaluation of the 2007-2012 EU Strategy on Health and Safety at Work ([1]) indicated that, considering the ageing of the workforce, specific actions relating to rehabilitating those with chronic ill-health should become an increasing priority. This was further reinforced by the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work, which considers chronic health problems as one of the priority issues for the future EU OSH policy framework. Based on the evaluation and stakeholder's feedback, the issue of reintegration of workers after ill health will be considered in the Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at work 2014-2020, which will be presented by the Commission in June.

In addition, a European Parliament pilot project on health and safety of older workers, delegated by the Commission for implementation to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, will specifically look at the issue of employability and return-to-work ([2]).

As regards research, the HEALTHatWORK project ([3]) funded under the Seventh Framework programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) investigated this issue.

Horizon 2020 ([4]) (2014-2020), in particular through the societal challenge 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' may provide further opportunities to support research in this area. Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained at the EC Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([5]).

Other projects received funding through the Health Programmes. More information is available on the website of the Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency ([6]).

([1]) SEC(2013) 202.
([2]) https://osha.europa.eu/en/priority_groups/ageingworkers/ep-osh-project
([3]) http://www.abdn.ac.uk/haw
([4]) COM(2011) 808 final, COM(2011) 811 final.
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/projects/database.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004427/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Charles Tannock (ECR)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — British Al Jazeera journalist prosecuted in Egypt

My London constituent, Ms Sue Turton, is an Al Jazeera journalist and one of two British citizens currently on trial in absentia in the Al Jazeera case being prosecuted in Egypt, following an interview with a member of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Al Jazeera's Egyptian staff are currently charged with setting up a terrorist cell to promote false news; the foreigners on the charge sheet, including Ms Turton, are charged with the lesser offence of aiding and abetting this terrorist cell.

Ms Turton was not in Egypt when the Muslim Brotherhood was proscribed as a terrorist organisation by the Egyptian authorities — she left on 5 November 2013.

If the accused journalists are guilty, then every other foreign correspondent who spoke to members of the Muslim Brotherhood after the ousting of Mohamed Morsi is also guilty.

Another person on the list, Rena Netjes, is a Dutch newspaper journalist who had one conversation with Mohamed Fahmy about the Sinai Peninsula. Ms Netjes does not work for Al Jazeera but is also charged with the same serious offence. The Egyptian constitution upholds press freedom and the right to freedom of expression. These charges are in violation of the constitution.

The British Foreign Secretary and the White House are among dozens of foreign leaders and diplomats to call for the trial to be stopped and the charges dropped immediately.

Details of the three Al Jazeera journalists who have now been held in prison for three months are as follows:

Australian Peter Greste is an experienced, award-winning journalist who had worked extensively for the BBC before he moved to Al Jazeera. He usually covered East Africa and had been reporting from Egypt for just three weeks when he was arrested. Mohamed Fahmy, a Canadian/Egyptian, is an experienced producer who had worked for many years at CNN and the *New York Times* before moving to Al Jazeera. Baher Mohamed is a young producer who had worked extensively for Japan's TV Asahi, both in Egypt and in Libya. As the most junior employee in the office, Baher did as he was asked by reporters, setting up interviews and checking facts.

Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of these criminal cases affecting EU citizens who have worked in Egypt, and has she made representations to the Egyptian authorities to drop these unfounded charges?

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

The HR/VP is well aware of these cases of international journalists under trial in Egypt.

The EU is following the human rights' situation in Egypt closely and with growing concern, including the situation of the media and journalists. The High Representative expressed her concern on the worrying human rights' situation in numerous statements, as well as in meetings with Egyptian counterparts, lastly during her visit to Egypt in mid-April.

The Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States deplore in their Council Conclusions of 10 February 2014 'the deteriorating climate for the press' and call 'upon the Egyptian interim authorities and state media to ensure safe working environment for all journalists and to end politicized arrests as well as intimidation of and incitement against domestic and foreign journalists'. The conclusions state further that 'freedoms of expression, assembly and peaceful arrest must be safeguarded'.

The EU, including by its Special Representative on Human Rights during his visit to Egypt in February, expressed its expectation vis-à-vis the interim authorities that the upcoming trials will be fair and due process will be respected, ensuring the defendant's rights to a fair and timely trial based on clear charges and proper and independent investigations, as well as the right of access and contact to lawyers and family members, in line with international standards.

Only the countries with consular responsibilities have been allowed to enter the court room upon prior permission from the authorities. Nevertheless, within the limits of their mandates, the HR/VP and in particular the EU Delegation on the ground in Cairo, are committed to provide all possible support to European citizens.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004428/14
alla Commissione
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Prevenzione della tubercolosi

La libera circolazione delle persone garantita all'interno dell'UE si sta accompagnando, e sta favorendo, una libera circolazione anche delle malattie, quali la tubercolosi, che, almeno nell'Europa occidentale — in misura minore nell'Europa dell'Est — si consideravano finora scarsamente preoccupanti in quanto diffuse ben al di sotto dei livelli di guardia.

I massicci flussi migratori, soprattutto dall'Europa orientale, dove la tubercolosi resta diffusa, hanno invece fatto sì che la malattia si sia propagata tra le fasce giovani della popolazione (15-24 anni), soprattutto in aree ad alta densità abitativa. Spesso contratta nel paese d'origine, la malattia matura nel paese ove si emigra in coincidenza con condizioni di vita disagiate.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. È a conoscenza di questa libera circolazione della malattia tra i paesi dell'UE? È in grado di quantificarne la diffusione e di censirla paese per paese?

2. Vi è una normativa europea applicabile ai flussi migratori, come sotto altro profilo è quella dettata dagli accordi di Schengen, in funzione della prevenzione sanitaria?

3. Non ritiene che sia il caso di sollecitare gli Stati membri dell'Unione a prevenire e contenere i pericoli sanitari connessi alla libera circolazione delle persone?

Risposta di Tonio Borg a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

L'Ufficio regionale per l'Europa dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità e il Centro europeo per la prevenzione e il controllo delle malattie ([1]) hanno elaborato congiuntamente una ventilazione per paese dei casi di tubercolosi. La legislazione dell'UE prevede la sorveglianza della tubercolosi sulla base di una definizione standardizzata dei casi ([2]). La legislazione prevede inoltre un sistema di allarme per i focolai transfrontalieri di malattie trasmissibili come la TB, una valutazione comune del rischio e il coordinamento delle misure di gestione del rischio nell'ambito del Comitato UE per la sicurezza sanitaria.

Per quanto riguarda le misure alle frontiere esterne dell'UE, il Codice frontiere Schengen stabilisce che i cittadini dei paesi terzi possono entrare nel territorio UE se, tra le altre condizioni, essi non sono considerati una minaccia per la salute pubblica.

Il Codice frontiere Schengen definisce la nozione di «minaccia per la salute pubblica» come «qualunque malattia con potenziale epidemico ai sensi del regolamento sanitario internazionale dell'Organizzazione mondiale della sanità e altre malattie infettive o parassitarie contaggiose che siano oggetto di disposizioni di protezione applicabili ai cittadini degli Stati membri.»

I controlli medici alle frontiere esterne rientrano nell'ambito di competenza degli Stati membri.

Secondo le disposizioni del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea, la fornitura di servizi sanitari e di assistenza medica rientra nella responsabilità degli Stati membri.

([1]) Sorveglianza e monitoraggio della tubercolosi in Europa 2014: http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-Europe-2014.pdf

([2]) Decisione n. 1082/2013/UE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 22 ottobre 2013, relative alle gravi minacce per la salute a carattere transfrontaliero e che abrog la decisione 2119/98/CE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004428/14
to the Commission
Cristiana Muscardini (ECR)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Prevention of TB

The free movement of persons which is provided for within the EU is also being accompanied by, and is encouraging, the free movement of diseases, such as tuberculosis, which, at least in western Europe — less so in eastern Europe — had up to now been considered of little concern as their spread was far below danger levels.

However, mass migratory flows, above all from eastern Europe, where tuberculosis remains widespread, have allowed this disease to take hold amongst younger age groups in the population (15-24 years of age), particularly in areas of high housing density. Often contracted in the country of origin, the disease matures in the destination country encouraged by poor living conditions.

In view of the above,

1. Is the Commission aware of this free movement of the disease between EU Member States? Is it in a position to quantify its spread and to provide a country-by-country breakdown?

2. Is there any European legislation applicable to migratory flows, in relation to disease prevention, such as that laid down by the Schengen Agreement in relation to other areas?

3. Does the Commission consider that it is appropriate to request Member States to prevent and contain the health risks associated with the free movement of people?

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

A country-by-country breakdown of tuberculosis cases is provided jointly by the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control ([1]). EU legislation puts in place the surveillance of tuberculosis based on a standardised case definition ([2]). In addition, this legislation provides for an alert system for cross-border outbreaks of communicable diseases such as TB, for a common risk assessment and for coordination of risk management measures within the EU Health Security Committee.

As regards measures at the EU external borders the Schengen Borders Code provides that nationals of third countries may enter the EU territory if (among other conditions) they are not considered a threat to public health.

The Schengen Borders Code defines the notion of 'threat to public health' as 'any disease with epidemic potential as defined by the International Health Regulations of the WHO and other infectious diseases or contagious parasitic diseases if they are the subject of protection provisions applying to nationals of the Member States.'

Any medical checks at the external borders are in the competence of the Member States.

Under the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the delivery of health services and medical care is the responsibility of the Member States.

([1]) Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2014: http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/tuberculosis-surveillance-monitoring-Europe-2014.pdf

([2]) Decision No 1082/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22.10.2013 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 2119/98/EC.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004429/14
an die Kommission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(9. April 2014)

Betrifft: Verhandlungsstand Produktpalette ITA-Abkommen

Im Jahre 1996 wurde das Übereinkommen für Informationstechnologie (ITA) unter der Schirmherrschaft der Welthandelsorganisation (WTO) unterzeichnet. Ziel war es, Zolltarife bei einer bestimmten Produktpalette entfallen zu lassen, um den Handel von IT- und Telekommunikationsprodukten zu erweitern. In den jüngsten Verhandlungsrunden bestand das Ziel zuletzt in einer Erweiterung dieser Produktpalette.

1. Wie ist der aktuelle Verhandlungsstand bei Geräten mit Fernsehtunern, insbesondere den Zolltarifnummern HS 852871, HS 852872 und HS 852873?

2. Wie ist der aktuelle Sachstand bei Video-Monitoren, insbesondere den Zolltarifnummern HS 852849 und HS 852859?

Antwort von Herrn De Gucht im Namen der Kommission
(28. Mai 2014)

1. Die Verhandlungen über die Erweiterung des Übereinkommens über Informationstechnologie (ITA) wurden im November 2013 ausgesetzt, nachdem China immer mehr Ausnahmen vom Entwurf der Liste der zollbefreiten Zolltarifpositionen und Erzeugnisse gefordert hatte. Seitdem haben in Genf keine Treffen der Arbeitsgruppe mehr stattgefunden, doch der Sachverhalt wurde zwischen der EU, den USA, Japan und China auf hoher Ebene angesprochen. Bisher kam es noch zu keiner Einigung mit China über die Liste der Erzeugnisse, die für eine Erweiterung des ITA-Übereinkommens infrage kommen. Die aktuelle Liste vorgeschlagener Erzeugnisse von Ende November 2013 enthält die Positionen HS 852871 (Set-Top-Boxen), HS 852872 (Farbfernsehgeräte) und HS 852873 (Schwarzweißfernsehgeräte). Jedoch verlangen nur China, Hongkong, Malaysia und Singapur weiterhin, dass HS 852872 in der Liste geführt wird. Andere Teilnehmerstaaten wie u. a. die USA, Japan und Korea haben zugestimmt, ihre diesbezüglichen Forderungen angesichts des Einspruchs seitens der EU und anderer Staaten zurückzuziehen. Ende 2013 einigte man sich darauf, auch HS 852873 von der Liste auszuschließen, falls Farbfernseher aus der Liste genommen werden sollten. Die EU forderte mehr Zeit (fünf Jahre), um Zollfreiheit für HS 852871 einzuführen für den Fall der Einigung über die ITA-Erweiterung.

2. Die Liste der vorgeschlagenen HS-Positionen vom November 2013 enthält auch HS 852849 (Monitore mit Kathodenstrahlröhre) und HS 852859 (andere Monitore). Die Kommission unterstützt die Aufnahme der Position HS 852859, weil in der EU seit dem Vorjahr keine Zölle mehr auf die meisten Produkte dieser Kategorie erhoben werden. Doch China lehnte die Aufnahme dieser Monitorart in das ITA-Übereinkommen ab. Die Kommission unterstützt die Aufnahme von HS 852849 nicht, denn diese Technologie gilt als veraltet und wird nur noch wenig gehandelt.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004429/14
to the Commission
Werner Langen (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Stage reached in the negotiations on the range of products covered by the ITA agreement

The Information Technology Agreement (ITA) was signed in 1996 under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The objective was to eliminate tariffs on a specific range of products in order to expand trade in IT and telecommunications products. The aim of the most recent rounds of negotiations was to widen this range of products.

1. What stage has been reached in the negotiations on reception apparatus for television, in particular customs codes HS 852871, HS 852872 and HS 852873?

2. What stage has been reached on monitors, in particular customs codes HS 852849 and HS 852859?

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

1. Negotiations on the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) were suspended in November 2013 after excessive demands from China for exclusions from the draft list of tariff lines and products for duty-free treatment. Since then no working group meetings have taken place in Geneva, but the issue has been raised at high level between the EU, US, Japan and China. So far, this has not led to any agreement with China on the list of products for the expansion of ITA. Items HS 852871 (set-top boxes), 852872 (colour televisions) and 852873 (black and white televisions) are included in the most recent list of proposed products as of end-November 2013. However, only China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore continue to request inclusion of HS 852872. Other participants, including the US, Japan and Korea, have agreed to withdraw such requests in view of opposition of the EU and other countries. There was agreement at the end of 2013 to also exclude 852873 in case colour television would be removed. The EU has requested extra time (5 years) to introduce duty-free treatment of HS 852871, in case an agreement on ITA expansion is reached.

2. HS 852849 (cathode ray tube monitors) and HS 852859 (other monitors) are also included in the list of proposed items of November 2013. The Commission has supported the inclusion of HS 852859, since the EU does not apply any customs duties on most of the products included in this category since last year in the EU. However, China opposes inclusion of this type of monitors in ITA. The Commission has not given support to 852849 which is considered an obsolete technology with little recent trade-flows.

(Hrvatska verzija)

Pitanje za pisani odgovor E-004430/14
upućeno Komisiji
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(9. travnja 2014.)

Predmet: Transatlantsko trgovačko i investicijsko partnerstvo i GMO u EU-u

U svjetlu pregovora između EU-a i SAD-a oko TTIP-a želim istaknuti pitanje reguliranja GMO-a.

Za razliku od SAD-a, Europska unija, odnosno neke njene članice, vode uglavnom restriktivnu politiku oko GMO-a. Sada kad su u tijeku pregovori oko TTIP-a, SAD stavlja pritisak na EU da dopusti uvoz genetski modificiranih proizvoda. Američka poljoprivredna industrija zalaže se za snižavanje visokih europskih standarda u vezi s GMO-ima. Točnije, njihov se lobi u pregovorima SAD-a i EU-a oko TTIP-a zalaže za ukidanje označavanja GMO-a i proizvoda koji ih sadrže.

Javnost špekulira informacijama da bi i proizvodi koji ne bi udovoljavali europskim sigurnosnim standardima mogli, u okviru procesa „ekvivalencije" ili „uzajamnog priznavanja", dobiti dopuštenje i pristup europskom tržištu. Naime, europski sistem odobravanja GMO sjemena zasnovan je na načelu opreznosti, što znači da sama nesigurnost proizvoda za potrošača rezultira zabranom.

Američki pregovarači izjavili su da bi se TTIP-om trebale otkloniti sanitarne i fitosanitarne restrikcije koje nisu znanstveno utemeljene. Drugim riječima, umjesto da poljoprivredna industrija podastre dokaze da GMO ne predstavlja opasnost za potrošače, zabrane za GMO bit će na snazi samo ako vlade znanstveno dokažu prijetnju za ljudski, životinjski ili biljni život.

To znači da će nacionalne vlasti morati dokazivati poljoprivrednoj industriji da je GMO štetan, umjesto da industrija dokazuje vlastima sigurnost GMO-a. Nadalje, moći će optuživati vlade da krše njihova ulagačka prava.

Ako se obistine špekulacije oko „ekvivalencije" i „uzajamnog priznavanja", bit će ugrožen ne samo europski sustav odobravanja GMO-a, već i prava država članica da zabrane GMO na svojem suverenom teritoriju.

Hoće li potpisivanje TTIP-a potkopati načela opreznosti i označavanja GMO-a u EU-u? Hoće li potpisivanje TTIP-a ujedno značiti i prihvaćanje GMO-a u cijeloj Europskoj uniji?

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

Cilj tekućih pregovora između EU-a i SAD-a o transatlantskom trgovinskom i investicijskom partnerstvu nije promjena mjerodavnog zakonodavstva u pogledu sigurnosti hrane, već jačanje suradnje kako bi se uklonile nepotrebne zapreke i prepreke trgovini ne dovodeći u pitanje pravo na zakonsko uređivanje u skladu s razinom zaštite zdravlja i sigurnosti koju svaka strana smatra prikladnom. EU utvrđuje razinu sanitarne zaštite (zdravlje ljudi, životinja i bilja) koju sam smatra primjerenom, a u skladu sa Sporazumom Svjetske trgovinske organizacije o sanitarnim i fitosanitarnim mjerama. To se odnosi na politiku EU-a o genetski modificiranim organizmima prema kojoj genetski modificirani organizam može biti stavljen na tržište EU-a tek nakon temeljite procjene rizika koju provodi podnositelj zahtjeva i ocjenjuje Europska agencija za sigurnost hrane (EFSA) i uzimajući u obzir načelo predostrožnosti ([1]). Tom se procjenom rizika mora pokazati da je genetski modificirani organizam siguran za zdravlje ljudi i životinja te za okoliš. Potrebno je naglasiti da provedene procjene rizika ili odobrenja koja su izdale treće zemlje nisu elementi koji se uzimaju u obzir za ocjenu sigurnosti genetski modificiranog organizma u EU-u, tj. postupci međusobnog priznavanja nisu dozvoljeni. Hrana ili hrana za životinje koja sadrži odobrene genetski modificirane organizme, sastoji se od njih ili je proizvedena od njih podložna je zahtjevima za obavezno označivanje.

Komisija moli uvaženog zastupnika da pogleda i odgovore na pitanje E-2504/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Članak 191.3. Ugovora o funkcioniranju Europske unije i članci 6.3. i 7. Uredbe (EZ) br. 178/2002 od 28. siječnja 2002. o utvrđivanju općih načela i uvjeta zakona o hrani, osnivanju Europske agencije za sigurnost hrane te utvrđivanju postupaka u područjima sigurnosti hrane.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-002504&language=EN.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004430/14
to the Commission
Biljana Borzan (S&D)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and GMOs in the EU

Against the backdrop of the ongoing negotiations between the EU and the USA on the TTIP, I would like to highlight the issue of regulating GMOs.

Unlike the USA, The European Union — or rather some of its Member States — has a largely restrictive policy on GMOs. With TTIP negotiations still under way, the USA is putting pressure on the EU to permit the importation of genetically modified products. The US agricultural industry is in favour of lowering the EU's high standards relating to GMOs. To be more precise, their lobbyists have been advocating abolishing the labelling of GMOs and products that contain them.

This is leading the public to speculate that products which would be unable to meet EU safety standards could be given access to the EU's market through the processes of 'equivalence' or 'mutual recognition'. The European system for approving GMO seeds is based on the precautionary principle, meaning that the existence of a risk to consumers from a product results in that product being banned.

US negotiators have stated that the TTIP would require the elimination of sanitary and phytosanitary restrictions that are not scientifically-based. In other words, rather than the agricultural industry providing evidence that GMOs do not pose a danger to consumers, bans on GMOs would only be in force if governments were able to prove scientifically that a threat to human, animal or plant life existed.

This means that national authorities will have to prove to the agricultural industry that GMOs are harmful, instead of the industry proving to the authorities that GMOs are safe. Furthermore, they will be able to take governments to court for violating their rights as investors.

If the speculation surrounding 'equivalence' and 'mutual recognition' proves to be accurate, not only will the European system for approving GMOs be under threat, but also the rights of Member States to ban GMOs on their own sovereign territory.

Will the signing of the TTIP undermine the precautionary principle and the labelling of GMOs in the EU? Will the signing of the TTIP be tantamount to authorising GMOs throughout the entire EU?

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

The objective of the on-going discussions between the EU and the USA on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership is not to change the relevant legislation in terms of food safety, but to enhance cooperation to remove unnecessary obstacles and trade barriers without prejudice to the right to regulate in accordance with the level of health and safety that each side deems appropriate. The EU sets its sanitary protection (human, animal and plant health) at a level that it considers appropriate, in accordance with the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures. This applies to the EU policy on GMOs, according to which a GMO can be placed on the EU market only after a thorough risk assessment, performed by the applicant and evaluated by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and taking into account the precautionary principle ([1]). This risk assessment has to demonstrate that the GMO is safe for human and animal health and for the environment. It has to be stressed that risk assessments performed, or authorisations granted by third countries are not elements that are taken into account when evaluating the safety of a GMO in the EU, i.e. mutual recognition approaches are not allowed. Food or feed products which contain, consist or are produced from authorised GMOs are subject to compulsory labelling requirements.

The Commission would like to also refer the Honourable Member to its answers to Question E-2504/2013 ([2]).

([1]) Article 191.3 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and Articles 6.3 and 7 of the regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of 28 January2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.
([2]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-002504&language=EN

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004431/14
alla Commissione
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Limiti dei tempi di volo (FTL): richiesta di informazioni

Il regolamento (UE) n. 965/2012 che stabilisce i requisiti tecnici e le procedure amministrative per quanto riguarda le operazioni di volo, è stato recentemente modificato dal regolamento (UE) n. 83/2014. La nuova normativa riprende in gran parte le disposizioni del regolamento (CE) n. 859/2008.

In considerazione dell'importanza della sicurezza nel campo dell'aviazione commerciale, l'EASA (Agenzia europea per la sicurezza aerea), subito dopo l'applicazione del regolamento (CE) n. 859/2008, ha deciso di commissionare uno studio medico-scientifico redatto da un consorzio di esperti indipendenti al fine di modificare, ove necessario, le disposizioni del regolamento.

Il risultato di tale rapporto, conosciuto come «Rapporto Moebus», che avrebbe dovuto costituire il punto di partenza della Commissione per procedere alla modifica del regolamento suddetto, non sarebbe stato tenuto in considerazione dalla stessa nella redazione della nuova normativa per la regolamentazione dei limiti di volo applicabili al personale navigante dell'aviazione commerciale europea.

In particolare, si sottolineano le incongruenze tra le nuove norme proposte dalla Commissione, contenute nel regolamento (UE) n. 83/2014, e quanto invece raccomandato dal gruppo di esperti nel «Rapporto Moebus», relativamente a tre punti qualificanti: ore di servizio di volo diurno, estensioni e ore di servizio di volo notturno.

Ciò premesso, può la Commissione rispondere ai seguenti quesiti:

1. qual è il quadro della situazione?

2. Quali sono i motivi e le valutazioni per cui non sono state seguite le raccomandazioni contenute nel «Rapporto Moebus», almeno per quanto riguarda i seguenti elementi.

a. le ore di servizio consecutive (che, stando al rapporto, sono da ridurre);

b. la possibilità, da parte delle compagnie aeree, di estendere i limiti di servizio di volo fino ad un'ora (secondo il rapporto tale possibilità è da non prevedere);

c. le ore di servizio di volo notturne (fino a 11 ore secondo la nuova normativa mentre, secondo il rapporto, da ridurre a un massimo di 10)?

3. Può fornire un quadro delle misure volte a migliorare la sicurezza del personale navigante?

Risposta di Siim Kallas a nome della Commissione
(27 maggio 2014)

1. Il solo obiettivo delle nuove norme sui limiti dei tempi di volo (FTL) è quello di aumentare ancora il livello già elevato della sicurezza aera. In seguito all'adozione del regolamento (UE) n. 83/2014 ([1]) la Commissione è impegnata a fornire assistenza alle autorità competenti degli Stati membri e ai rappresentanti degli operatori e dei sindacati per prepararli all'attuazione di tale regolamento e aiutarli a comprenderne meglio le norme, in particolare per quanto riguarda le responsabilità delle varie parti in causa.

2. La Commissione ha già fornito informazioni sul seguito dato ai pareri scientifici nelle proprie risposte scritte alle interrogazioni P-007959/2013 e E-009003/2012 ([2]).

3. Il regolamento (UE) n. 83/2014 contiene oltre 30 disposizioni destinate ad accrescere la protezione del personale navigante contro l'affaticamento. La Commissione intende, da un lato, monitorare l'applicazione pratica delle norme sui limiti dei tempi di volo e, dall'altro, raccogliere dati e analizzarli con l'aiuto dell'Agenzia europea per la sicurezza aerea (EASA) per valutarne gli effetti, coinvolgendo in quest'esercizio i rappresentanti del personale navigante.

([1]) GU L 28 del 31.01.2014.
([2]) Disponibili al seguente indirizzo: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/it/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004431/14
to the Commission
Roberta Angelilli (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Flight Time Limitations (FTL): request for information

Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations has recently been amended by Regulation (EU) No 83/2014. The new legislation largely incorporates the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 859/2008.

In view of the importance of safety in commercial aviation, immediately after the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 859/2008, the EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency) decided to commission a medical and scientific study prepared by a panel of independent experts, with a view to amending the provisions of the regulation where necessary.

This report, known as the 'Moebus Report', which should have been the starting point for the Commission to amend the regulation, was not taken into account by the Commission in drafting the new legislation governing the flight time limitations applicable to flight crews in European commercial aviation.

In particular, we highlight the discrepancies between the new rules proposed by the Commission, contained in Regulation (EU) No 83/2014, and the competing recommendations made by the group of experts in the 'Moebus Report', in relation to three qualifying points: daytime flight duty periods, extensions and night flight duty periods.

In view of the above:

1. Can the Commission give an overview of the situation?

2. On what grounds and assessments were the recommendations contained in the 'Moebus Report' not followed, at least as regards the following elements:

(a) consecutive duty periods (which, according to the report, should be reduced);

(b) allowing airlines to extend flight duty periods by up to one hour (according to the report, this should not be allowed);

(c) night flight duty periods (up to 11 hours under the new legislation, whereas according to the report they should be reduced to a maximum of 10)?

3. Can the Commission provide an overview of the steps taken to improve the safety of flight crews?

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

1. Improving even further the already high level of aviation safety is the only objective of the new rules on pilot fatigue (FTL). Further to the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 83/2014 ([1]) the Commission concentrates its efforts on assisting Member States' competent authorities, operators and union representatives to prepare for the implementation of this regulation as well as to better understand the rules, including responsibilities of the different parties involved.

2. Information concerning the consideration given to scientific advice has been provided by the Commission in its answers to written questions P-007959/2013 and E-009003/2012 ([2]).

3. Regulation (EU) No 83/2014 includes more than 30 provisions aimed at increasing crew protection against fatigue. The Commission is committed to monitoring the practical application of the FTL rules and to gather and analyse data with the help of EASA, to evaluate their effects and to involve aircrew representatives in this work.

([1]) OJ L 28, 31.1.2014.
([2]) Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta P-004433/14
alla Commissione
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuova emergenza sbarchi di immigrati in Italia

Secondo le informazioni raccolte nel Nord Africa dall'Aisi e dall'Aise (servizi segreti interni ed esteri dell'Italia) oltre 500 Katibe gestiscono, con la complicità di poliziotti e guardia costiera libica corrotti, il grande business dell'immigrazione clandestina verso l'Italia.

Le aree maggiormente interessate all'organizzazione delle partenze sono quelle intorno a Tripoli, Misurata e Bengasi dove arrivano le centinaia di migliaia di disperati provenienti da Sudan, dalla Nigeria e da altri paesi del Centro Africa. Sul versante orientale del continente il punto di raccolta per coloro che provengono dal Corno d'Africa, prima dell'ingresso in Libia, è la città sudanese di Khartoum.

I trafficanti sono in prevalenza somali, eritrei, sudanesi, nigeriani, maliani che una volta portato il carico di essere umani in Libia devono fare ricorso alla intermediazione delle Katibe per avere il via libera all'accesso alle imbarcazioni e il nulla osta delle forze dell'ordine corrotte. Ci sono altre centinaia di migliaia di disperati provenienti dall'area anatolico-balcanica da sempre collettore dei flussi migratori di Palestina, Iran, Iraq, Turchia, Siria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka.

Può la Commissione riferire:

1. se è a conoscenza di questo allarmante e documentato rapporto dei servizi segreti italiani;

2. quali provvedimenti d'emergenza anti-sbarchi intende attuare, anche ma non solo attraverso Frontex, per contrastare efficacemente quanto sopra riportato, che fa dire pubblicamente al Ministro dell'Interno Alfano che sono in imminente arrivo sulle coste italiane 600mila nuovi immigrati;

3. se ritiene necessario e urgente un forte incremento degli effettivi di Frontex?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

1. Né la Commissione, né Europol sono a conoscenza di uno specifico rapporto dei servizi segreti italiani, ma sia l'una che l'altro sono ben consapevoli della situazione generale in Libia. In risposta al numero crescente di migranti vittime di traffico che sbarcano sulle coste dell'Unione europea, Europol ha preso varie iniziative per sostenere gli Stati membri più colpiti, contrastando i gruppi di criminalità organizzata responsabili di facilitare l'organizzazione dei viaggi via mare.

2. La Commissione segue l'evoluzione degli sbarchi di migranti irregolari in Italia, insieme a Frontex ([1]). In seguito ai tragici avvenimenti dell'ottobre dello scorso anno a Lampedusa, la Commissione sostiene le autorità italiane con un finanziamento aggiuntivo di 9,8 milioni di EUR mediante il Fondo per le frontiere esterne (progetti relativi al trasporto internazionale di migranti, mediazione culturale e linguistica, sostegno ai costi operativi di un mese dell'Operazione Mare Nostrum, pronto soccorso e assistenza medica di base a bordo delle imbarcazioni partecipanti a tale Operazione, progetto «Praesidium» per la consulenza legale, l'informazione e l'assistenza ai richiedenti asilo e l'aiuto ai gruppi vulnerabili al momento dell'arrivo).

3. Poiché l'agenzia Frontex coordina la cooperazione operativa degli Stati membri alle frontiere esterne, ma gli Stati membri rimangono pienamente responsabili del controllo delle loro frontiere esterne, attualmente non risulta urgente rafforzare gli effettivi di Frontex.

([1]) Agenzia europea per la gestione della cooperazione operativa alle frontiere esterne degli Stati membri dell'Unione europea.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004433/14
to the Commission
Mario Borghezio (NI)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Landings of immigrants in Italy: a new emergency

According to information obtained in North Africa by the Aisi and the Aise (the Italian internal and external intelligence services), more than 500 Katibe, aided and abetted by corrupt Libyan police and coastguard officers, are running the large-scale illegal immigration racket that targets Italy.

Departures are organised mainly in the areas around Tripoli, Misrata, and Benghazi, where desperate people arrive in countless thousands from Sudan, Nigeria, and other central African countries. On the eastern side of the continent, for those coming from the Horn of Africa, the assembly point, before they enter Libya, is the Sudanese city of Khartoum.

The smugglers are mostly Somalis, Eritreans, Sudanese, Nigerians, and Malians, who, once they have delivered their human cargo, have to enlist the help of the Katibe, the middlemen who ensure that the passengers can get to the boats and that the (corrupt) police let them through. There are also hundreds of thousands of unfortunates who come from the area encompassing Anatolia and the Balkans, a traditional gateway for migration from Palestine, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka.

1. Is the Commission aware of this well-documented and alarming report by the Italian intelligence services?

2. What emergency landing control measures will it take, using other sources of assistance as well as Frontex, in order to provide effective means of counteracting the situation described above, which is prompting the Italian Minister of the Interior, Angelino Alfano, to say publicly that 600 000 new immigrants are about to reach the coasts of Italy?

3. Does it consider that Frontex's personnel strength needs to be increased substantially as a matter of urgency?

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

1. Neither the Commission, nor Europol, is aware of a specific report by the Italian intelligence services, but both are well aware of the general situation in Libya. In response to the increasing numbers of smuggled migrants arriving by boat to the European Union, Europol has undertaken several steps to support the most affected MS in targeting the organised crime groups responsible for arranging ship facilitation.

2. The Commission is following developments regarding the arrivals of irregular migrants in Italy, together with Frontex ([1]). Following the tragic events in October last year at Lampedusa, the Commission is supporting the Italian authorities with additional funding of EUR 9.8 million via the External Borders Fund (projects related to the internal transportation of migrants, cultural and linguist mediation, support to one month's operational costs of Operation Mare Nostrum, first aid and primary medical assistance on board of the vessels of Operation Mare Nostrum, the 'Praesidium' project for legal counselling, information and referral for asylum-seekers and assistance to vulnerable groups upon arrival).

3. As the Frontex Agency coordinates the operational cooperation of Member States at the external borders, while Member States remain fully responsible for the control of their external borders, there is currently no indication that the personnel strength of Frontex should be reinforced as a matter of urgency.

([1]) European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union.

(Suomenkielinen versio)

Kirjallisesti vastattava kysymys E-004434/14
komissiolle
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(9. huhtikuuta 2014)

Aihe: Juutalaisten hautausmaat Euroopassa

Euroopan juutalaisten kansanmurhasta on kulunut 70 vuotta, mutta monissa Keski- ja Itä-Euroopan kaupungeissa ja kylissä ei ole minkäänlaista fyysistä jälkeä siitä, että nämä paikat olivat taannoin vahvasti juutalaisen elämän ja kulttuurin leimaamia. Toisissa paikoissa viimeinenkin jäänne eli hautausmaa, on jätetty hunningolle ja usein rikollisen ja rasistisen ilkivallan armoille.

1. Katsooko komissio, että näiden paikkojen suojelemiseksi tarvittaisiin yleiseurooppalaista lainsäädäntöä?

2. Onko komissiolla tietoa voimassa olevasta kansallisesta tai yleiseurooppalaisesta lainsäädännöstä, jolla suojeltaisiin tätä juutalaisen ja eurooppalaisen kulttuurin ainesta Euroopassa?

3. Onko jäsenvaltioissa tarjolla kulttuuri- tai sivistysohjelmia, joiden avulla nuorille annettaisiin tietoa tiettyihin fyysisiin paikkoihin keskittyvästä juutalaisesta paikallishistoriasta?

4. Katsooko komissio, että olisi nimenomaan laadittava lainsäädäntöä, jolla jäsenvaltioille annettaisiin yhdenmukainen malli, joka niiden olisi hyväksyttävä?

5. Monet tämän alan mahdollisista suojelutoimista jäävät paikallisviranomaisten toteutettaviksi. Onko komissio luonut ministeriöiden välisen tason suhteita tai suhteita alueiden komiteaan ja jos on, niin millaisia?

Viviane Redingin komission puolesta antama vastaus
(19. kesäkuuta 2014)

Kaikki rasismin ja muukalaisvihan muodot, myös antisemitismi, ovat ristiriidassa niiden arvojen kanssa, joihin EU perustuu.

EU:n lainsäädäntö kattaa rasismiin ja muukalaisvihaan liittyvät hyökkäykset. ([1]) Rasistisiin graffiteihin ja omaisuuteen kohdistuvaan vahingontekoon voidaan tietyissä olosuhteissa puuttua kansallisilla toimenpiteillä, joilla pannaan täytäntöön neuvoston puitepäätös 2008/913/YOS. Kansalaisten Eurooppa -ohjelman (2014–2020) muistiperintöä koskevan ohjelmalohkon avulla tuetaan hankkeita, jotka edistävät Euroopan 1900-luvun tapahtumien pohdintaa ja niiden muiston kunnioittamista. Tällaisiin hankkeisiin voidaan ottaa mukaan sellaisia kulttuurikohteita, joiden avulla voidaan levittää paikallisille tietoa alueen juutalaisesta historiasta. Lisätietoa Kansalaisten Eurooppa -ohjelman kautta myönnettävästä rahoituksesta on saatavilla osoitteesta:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens/strands/european-remembrance_en

Vaikka EU rahoittaa eräitä asiaan liittyviä koulutusohjelmia ja hankkeita, tällä hetkellä ei suunnitella lainsäädännön ehdottamista kysymyksessä mainitun yhdenmukaisen mallin luomiseksi.

([1]) Neuvoston puitepäätös 2008/913/YOS.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004434/14
to the Commission
Hannu Takkula (ALDE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Jewish cemeteries in Europe

Seventy years after the destruction of European Jews in the Holocaust, many towns and villages in central and eastern Europe lack any physical vestige that they once teemed with Jewish life and culture. In other places, the last remnant, the cemetery, has been left to neglect and vandalism, often the work of criminal and racist elements.

1. Does the Commission believe that there is a need for pan-European legislation to protect these sites?

2. Is the Commission aware of any existing national and/or pan-European legislation that protects this vital element of Jewish and European culture and history in Europe?

3. Are any cultural and educational programmes available in Member States to inform young people about local Jewish history centred on these physical sites?

4. Does the Commission see the need to specifically legislate to provide a standardised model for adoption by Member States?

5. Since much potential protection work in this field needs to be accomplished by local authorities, what, if any, contacts have been made by the Commission at inter-ministerial level or with the Committee of the Regions?

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

All forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, including anti-Semitism, are incompatible with the values upon which the EU is founded.

The EU has legislation covering racist and xenophobic attacks. ([1]) Racist graffiti and damage to property could be addressed, under certain circumstances by national measures which implement Council Framework Decision 2008/913/ JHA. The Remembrance Strand of the Europe for Citizens Programme (2014-2020) supports projects reflecting on and commemorating events of the European 20th century which could include cultural sites to raise local awareness of Jewish history. More information about possibilities of funding under the Europe for Citizens programme is available at:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens/strands/european-rememberance_en

Although the EU does finance certain educational programmes and projects, there are no plans to propose legislation which would provide a standardised model of the type mentioned in the question.

([1]) Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004438/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Conseguenze della scossa di terremoto in Francia e nord-Italia

Il 7 aprile alle ore 21.27 in tutta l'Italia nord-occidentale è stata avvertita una forte scossa di terremoto di magnitudo 5.0 sulla scala Richter, con epicentro in Francia, al confine con l'Italia, a cinque chilometri di profondità. La scossa è stata avvertita in Francia, ma anche in Valle d'Aosta e Liguria.

Può la Commissione riferire se dispone di informazioni riguardo a eventuali vittime e feriti e a danni a beni materiali pubblici o privati?

Risposta data da Kristalina Georgieva a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

Il terremoto del 7 aprile 2014 (5,0 Mw; 19.26:59 UTC; coordinate: 44,47N, 6,69E), con epicentro nel sud della Francia, è stato registrato dagli strumenti di allerta precoce e di rilevazione utilizzati dal Centro di coordinamento della risposta alle emergenze (ERCC) della Commissione europea.

Seguendo la propria procedura standard, l'ERCC ha monitorato gli sviluppi della situazione mediante gli strumenti di controllo tecnico disponibili e attraverso contatti diretti con le autorità nazionali francesi e italiane. In questo caso specifico non sono stati segnalati e/o registrati né danni significativi né vittime.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004438/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Consequences of the earth tremor in France and northern Italy

At 9.27 p.m. on 7 April a strong earth tremor was felt throughout north-west Italy, with a magnitude of 5.0 on the Richter scale, with its epicentre at the French border with Italy at a depth of five kilometres. The tremor was felt in France, but also in the Aosta Valley and Liguria.

Can the Commission state whether it has any information concerning any victims and injuries and damage to public or private property?

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

The 7 April 2014 earthquake (5.0 Mw; 19.26:59 UTC; location: 44.47N, 6.69E), with epicentre in the southern part of France, was recorded by the early warning and detection tools used by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) of the European Commission.

Following its standard procedure, the ERCC monitored the development of the situation through available technical monitoring tools and direct contacts with both French, and Italian Civil Protection national authorities. In this specific case no casualties or major damages were reported and/or recorded.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004439/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Estrazione di combustibile verde dalle acque marine per l'alimentazione delle navi

La Marina militare statunitense ha rivelato l'esito positivo di un progetto condotto negli ultimi anni e che potrebbe sensibilmente ridurre i consumi e l'inquinamento prodotto dai mezzi navali, oltre che migliorare le capacità di proiezione delle forze armate degli Usa. Il Naval Research Laboratory ha infatti studiato un modo per estrarre carburante dall'acqua marina, in percentuali ancora modeste a dire il vero, ma che rappresentano un primo traguardo verso lo sviluppo di questa tecnologia. I primi test del nuovo carburante, effettuati su un piccolo aeromodello, hanno infatti dato esito positivo. La nuova tecnologia messa a punto permette l'estrazione d'idrogeno dall'acqua marina tramite un trasformatore catalitico, per poi liquefare il gas e renderlo disponibile come carburante.

Lo sviluppo di questa tecnologia permetterà di ridurre la dipendenza delle forze navali dai carburanti tradizionali: le navi della marina statunitense dipendono, infatti, da quindici petroliere, ma le navi si devono accostare in alto mare, con manovre spesso pericolose e che fanno perdere tempo prezioso nelle fasi di combattimento, mentre l'alternativa sarebbe rientrare in un porto, con un grande dispendio di tempo. Questo nuovo metodo permetterà dunque di velocizzare i movimenti delle navi ed estendere potenzialmente all'infinito la loro capacità di proiezione, oltre che avere importanti ricadute anche nel settore civile. D'altro canto però, non sono stati forniti dati sull'effetto che questa tecnologia potrebbe avere sull'ambiente marino.

In merito a quanto esposto, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza della tecnologia in oggetto?

2. ritiene che essa possa trovare applicazione diffusa in modo da ridurre il forte impatto negativo dei mezzi militari sull'ambiente, processo in cui già diversi produttori di veicoli militari e ad uso duale sono impegnati?

3. dispone di dati che permettano una valutazione dell'impatto ambientale di questa nuova tecnologia?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

In abbinamento ad altre misure come l'efficienza energetica e il trasferimento modale, il ricorso a carburanti alternativi dovrebbe ridurre la dipendenza dal petrolio e le emissioni di gas a effetto serra dei trasporti, indipendentemente dall'uso civile o militare.

Il 24 gennaio 2013 ([1]) la Commissione europea ha adottato una strategia europea in materia di combustibili alternativi che fa parte del pacchetto «Energia pulita per i trasporti» e che interessa tutti i modi di trasporto. Di recente l'UE ha convenuto una direttiva sulla realizzazione di un'infrastruttura per i combustibili alternativi ([2]). La Commissione gestisce inoltre ingenti fondi UE destinati alla ricerca e allo sviluppo in questo settore. Le proposte di ricerca possono essere presentate nell'ambito del programma Orizzonte 2020.

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza del progetto di ricerca di laboratorio della Marina statunitense. Alcuni elementi del processo sono tecnologie conosciute, come l'elettrolisi dell'acqua o la sintesi GTL, mentre è innovativo l'uso dell'acqua di mare come fonte di CO_2, impiegata per produrre idrocarburi.

2. Considerato che attualmente questo processo è in fase sperimentale, è prematuro determinarne il potenziale e il campo d'applicazione futuri. Come per tutte le tecnologie nuove ed emergenti, possiamo presumere che, grazie a ulteriori progressi tecnologici, se ne studieranno altri aspetti, come le caratteristiche d'uso, la praticabilità economica e i relativi impatti.

3. Per lo stesso motivo, la Commissione non è a conoscenza dell'esistenza di dati relativi all'impatto sull'ambiente in questa fase. Poiché il processo consuma molta energia, una questione fondamentale è il raffronto fra gli impatti ambientali dell'input energetico e i relativi risultati rispetto a quelli dei carburanti tradizionali che questa tecnologia mira a sostituire.

([1]) COM(2013) 17.
([2]) 2013/0012(COD).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004439/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Extraction of green fuel from seawater to supply ships

The US Navy has revealed the positive outcome of a project carried out over recent years which may significantly reduce consumption and pollution by naval vessels, as well as increasing the range of the US armed forces. The Naval Research Laboratory has studied a means of extracting fuel from seawater, in point of fact still in very modest percentages, but which represent a first step towards the development of this technology. Initial tests of the new fuel, conducted on a small model aircraft, have indeed produced positive results. The new technology developed allows hydrogen to be extracted from the seawater by means of a catalytic converter; the gas is then liquefied and turned into fuel.

The development of this technology will enable the dependence of naval forces on traditional fuels to be reduced; indeed, US naval vessels depend on fifteen oil tankers, but the vessels have to dock on the high seas, often using dangerous manoeuvres, which waste precious time during periods of combat, whereas the alternative would be to return to port, taking up a huge amount of time. This new method will therefore allow vessel movements to be speeded up and potentially extend their range infinitely, as well as having important impacts on the civil sector. However, data have not yet been provided on the effect which this new technology might have on the marine environment.

In view of the above,

1. Is the Commission aware of this technology?

2. Does the Commission consider that it may have widespread application for reducing the strong, negative impact of military transport on the environment, a process in which various manufacturers of military and dual use vehicles are already engaged?

3. Does the Commission have any data which enable the environmental impact of this new technology to be assessed?

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

The use of alternative fuels should break the dependence on oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport, regardless whether for military or civil purposes, together with other measures such as energy efficiency and modal shift.

A comprehensive EU alternative fuels strategy was adopted by the European Commission on 24 January 2013 ([1]) as a part of the Clean Power for Transport package. This strategy covers all transport modes. The EU recently agreed on a directive on deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure ([2]). Moreover, the Commission manages considerable EU funds for research and development in this area. Research proposals can be submitted under the Horizon 2020 Programme.

1. The Commission is aware of that laboratory-scale research project by the US Navy. Some elements of the overall process seem to be known technology (electrolysis of water, gas-to-liquid synthesis), whereas using seawater as source of CO_2 (used to synthesise hydrocarbons) seems to be innovative.

2. Given that this process is currently being tested at laboratory scale, it seems to be premature to determine its future potential and area of application. As with all new and emerging technologies, we can assume that with further technological progress other elements such as its usage characteristics, its economic feasibility, and its impacts will be investigated.

3. For the same reason provided above, the Commission is not aware of the existence of data on its environmental impact at this stage. Since the process is very energy-intensive, a key issue will be how the environmental impacts of the input energy and its delivery compare to those of the conventional fuels the technology seeks to replace.

([1]) COM(2013) 17.
([2]) 2013/0012(COD).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004440/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Nuove scoperte per il trattamento riabilitativo dei traumi midollari

Uno studio condotto da un'équipe di ricercatori californiana ha allargato gli orizzonti della lotta contro la paraplegia concentrandosi sulle stimolazioni elettriche artificiali. Quattro persone paraplegiche sono infatti, riuscite a muovere volontariamente parte degli arti inferiori grazie a una stimolazione epidurale del midollo spinale tramite impulsi elettrici. I quattro partecipanti allo studio erano stati classificati come affetti da complete e croniche lesioni del midollo spinale e del tutto incapaci di muovere gli arti inferiori. Un precedente studio del 2011 aveva già preso in esame gli effetti della stimolazione epidurale, portando risultati incoraggianti. Nello specifico la stimolazione epidurale prevede che la corrente elettrica sia applicata a frequenze e intensità diverse in distinte zone del midollo spinale lombosacrale, corrispondente ai fasci densi neurali che controllano gran parte del movimento di fianchi, ginocchia, caviglie e piedi. Una volta attivato il segnale, il midollo spinale riattiva la rete neurale per controllare i movimenti muscolari diretti. In effetti i quattro, subito dopo essere stati oggetto d'impianto e attivazione dello stimolatore, sono stati in grado di eseguire dei movimenti volontari, con tempi di recupero rapidissimi e inaspettati, portando i ricercatori a ipotizzare che alcuni percorsi nervali post-infortunio potrebbero essere rimasti intatti e pertanto in grado di facilitare i movimenti volontari. Naturalmente non si tratta di un recupero totale della mobilità, ma due dei partecipanti sono ora in grado di muovere volontariamente fianchi, caviglie e piedi. Uno dei vantaggi principali è che, accoppiando l'intervento epidurale con la terapia riabilitativa, l'impatto della stimolazione risulta intensificato e i soggetti riescono ad attivare i movimenti con meno stimolazione, dimostrando la capacità della rete spinale di imparare e migliorare le funzioni nervose.

In merito allo studio descritto, la Commissione può chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dello studio;

2. esistono studi simili anche nell'UE e se questi godano o abbiano goduto di fondi europei?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della recente pubblicazione di Angeli et al. ([1]) cui fa riferimento l'onorevole deputato.

2. La ricerca relativa alle lesioni del midollo spinale è stata finanziata nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro per le attività di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013) ([2]) con 32 progetti, per uno stanziamento complessivo di 43,7 milioni di euro. In particolare, sei progetti ([3]) (per uno stanziamento totale di 16,2 milioni di euro) erano dedicati a neurotecnologie innovative quali la stimolazione elettrochimica e la microelettronica per l'interfaccia di controllo intelligente per ripristinare le funzioni motorie, nonché lo sviluppo di approcci terapeutici che combinano la stimolazione elettrica con la sostituzione di cellule staminali o terapie farmacologiche.

Altre ricerche finanziate in materia di lesioni al midollo spinale miravano a modellizzare la comunicazione tra i neuroni e i circuiti locomotori, a modellizzare e comprendere meglio i processi sottesi alle lesioni al midollo spinale e alla rigenerazione assonica, a migliorare i metodi di diagnosi, a mettere a punto terapie sicure ed efficaci e a sviluppare tecnologie assistive via computer.

Orizzonte 2020, il programma quadro per la ricerca e l'innovazione (2014-2020) ([4]), può offrire ulteriori opportunità di finanziamento alla ricerca in questo settore nel quadro dell'obiettivo «Salute, cambiamento demografico e benessere», contenuto nella priorità «Sfide per la società» ([5]). Le informazioni sulle attuali possibilità di finanziamento possono essere ottenute attraverso il portale UE dedicato alla ricerca e all'innovazione ([6]).

([1]) Brain 2014: 137; 1394-1409.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([3]) http://www.mimics.ethz.ch/
http://www.mundus-project.eu/
http://sssa.bioroboticsinstitute.it/projects/NEUWALK
http://www.wayproject.eu/
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93173_it.html
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93584_it.html
http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/94236_it.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:IT:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004440/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: New discoveries in rehabilitation treatment for spinal cord injury

A study carried out by a team of Californian researchers has broadened the horizon of the fight against paraplegia, focusing on artificial electrical stimulation. Four paraplegic persons managed to move part of their lower limbs voluntarily thanks to epidural stimulation of the spinal cord by electrical impulses. The four participants in the study had been classified as suffering from complete and chronic lesion of the spinal cord and completely incapable of moving their lower limbs. A previous study in 2011 had studied the effects of epidural stimulation, with encouraging results. Specifically, epidural stimulation involves an electric current being applied at different frequencies and different intensities to various areas of the lumbosacral spinal cord, which relate to the dense nerve bundles which control most of the movement of the hips, knees, ankles and feet. Once the signal has been activated, the spinal cord reactivates the neural network to control direct muscle movements. Indeed, immediately after the implanting and activation of the stimulator, all four were able to make voluntary movements, with very fast and unexpected recovery times, leading the researchers to hypothesise that some neural pathways may have remained intact post-accident and therefore able to carry out voluntary movements. Naturally this is not a complete recovery of mobility, but two of the participants are now able to move their hips, ankles and feet voluntarily. One of the main advantages is that, by linking the epidural procedure with rehabilitation therapy, the impact of stimulation is intensified, and participants are able to activate movements with less stimulation, showing the capacity of the spinal network to learn and improve nerve function.

In view of the study described,

1. is the Commission aware of the study;

2. do any similar studies exist in the EU, and do they benefit or have they benefited from European funding?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the recent publication by Angeli et al. ([1]) referred to by the Honourable Member.

2. Research relevant to spinal cord injury has been supported by the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) ([2]) through 32 projects for a global budget of EUR 43.7 million. This notably included six projects ([3]) (total budget: EUR 16.2 million) investigating innovative neurotechnologies such as electrochemical stimulation and microelectronics for smart control interfaces to restore motor functions and the development of therapeutic approaches combining electric stimulation with stem cell replacement or pharmacological therapies.

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

Horizon 2020, the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020) ([4]), may offer further opportunities to support research in this field through the 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing' societal challenge ([5]). Information on current funding opportunities can be obtained through the EU Research and Innovation Participant Portal ([6]).

([1]) Brain 2014: 137; 1394-1409.
([2]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([3]) http://www.mimics.ethz.ch/ - http://www.mundus-project.eu/ - http://sssa.bioroboticsinstitute.it/projects/NEUWALK - http://www.wayproject.eu/ - http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93173_en.html - http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/93584_en.html - http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/94236_en.html
([4]) http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0809:FIN:EN:PDF
([5]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html
([6]) http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004441/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Possibili ostacoli legali alla fornitura di gas russo all'Ucraina tramite il gas in arrivo in Slovacchia e Ungheria

Il piano europeo di «invertire il flusso» di gas russo in arrivo in Ungheria e Slovacchia al fine di rifornire l'Ucraina potrebbe essere già in pericolo. Durante un'intervista televisiva, l'Amministratore delegato di una nota società russa di gas naturale che fornisce circa il 25 % del gas naturale utilizzato nell'UE, afferma che questa inversione di flusso sarebbe infatti illegale dato che il gas proviene dalla Russia, aggiungendo che qualsiasi decisione del genere dovrebbe anzitutto ottenere il via libera della società fornitrice stessa.

In merito a tali affermazioni, può la Commissione chiarire se effettivamente esistano norme di diritti ostative all'inversione di flusso di gas naturali al fine di garantire la sicurezza di approvvigionamento energetico all'Ucraina? Se del caso, di quali norme si tratta?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(16 giugno 2014)

Le norme primarie dei trattati e la legislazione in vigore nell'Unione europea e nella Comunità dell'energia (che comprende l'Ucraina) mirano a facilitare l'inversione di flusso del gas naturale in qualsiasi gasdotto. Inoltre, nessun atto legislativo nell'Unione europea e nella Comunità dell'energia dovrebbe poter vietare tali flussi.

Le disposizioni nei contratti di fornitura di gas che incidono sul diritto del cliente di organizzare inversioni di flusso devono rispettare la legislazione dell'UE e della Comunità dell'energia. Nella misura in cui influiscono sul commercio fra gli Stati membri, restrizioni territoriali che limitino la facoltà del compratore di rivendere il gas (quali divieti di esportazione o restrizioni implicite alla successiva esportazione) potrebbero violare le norme dell'Unione europea sulla concorrenza (o, ove riguardino il commercio fra Parti contraenti, della Comunità dell'energia).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004441/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Possible legal obstacles to the supply of Russian gas to Ukraine using the gas reaching Slovakia and Hungary

The European plan to 'reverse the flow' of Russian gas reaching Hungary and Slovakia in order to supply Ukraine could already be at risk. During a television interview, the Chief Executive of a well-known Russian natural gas company which supplies around 25% of the natural gas used in the EU stated that such a reversal of the flow would in fact be illegal, since the gas originates in Russia, adding that any decision of this kind would require the prior approval of the supplier company itself.

In relation to these statements, can the Commission clarify whether there is indeed legislation which prevents the reversal of the flow of natural gas in order to ensure the security of energy supplies to Ukraine? If so, what legislation is it?

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

The primary Treaty rules and legislation in force within the European Union and within the Energy Community (therefore, including Ukraine) are designed to facilitate reverse flow of natural gas over any pipeline. Moreover, within the European Union and the Energy Community, there should be no national level legislation which impedes such flows.

Provisions in gas supply contracts which impact on the customer's right to organise reverse flows need to be in line with EU and Energy Community legislation. Insofar as they affect trade between Member States, territorial restrictions which limit the buyer's freedom to re-sell gas (e.g. export bans or implicit restrictions on re-exports), risk infringing the competition rules of the European Union (or, in as far as trade between Contracting Parties is affected, the Energy Community).

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004442/14
alla Commissione (Vicepresidente/Alto Rappresentante)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: VP/HR — Primi segnali positivi sulla crisi in Venezuela

Segnali promettenti arrivano finalmente dal Venezuela, dove il presidente ha affermato di essere disposto ad avviare dei negoziati con le forze di opposizione, dopo aver incontrato un gruppo di ministri degli Esteri dell'UNASUR. Dal canto loro, gli oppositori del presidente hanno affermato che siederanno a un tavolo negoziale solo nel momento in cui avranno la certezza che si tratti di un negoziato «vero», chiaro e basato sull'uguaglianza tra le parti in gioco, oltre a richiedere che questo negoziato venga trasmesso in diretta sui media nazionali.

In un contesto di violenze che ha già portato alla morte di trentanove persone, l'UE, vincolata dai trattati a promuovere nel mondo i propri valori fondativi, dovrebbe intercedere per facilitare la cessazione delle violenze e promuovere il rientro della crisi in corso nel paese latinoamericano, anche in vista del rinnovo delle relazioni tra UE e America latina.

A tal proposito, può la Vice-presidente/Alto rappresentate chiarire se intenda proporsi come mediatore imparziale tra le due parti, al fine di raggiungere nei tempi più brevi una conclusione pacifica e duratura agli scontri?

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

L'Alta Rappresentante/Vicepresidente rinvia gli onorevoli deputati alle sue dichiarazioni del 21 e del 27 febbraio, nonché alle dichiarazioni del suo portavoce del 14 febbraio, del 28 marzo e del 15 aprile.

L'Alta Rappresentante guarda con soddisfazione alle riunioni che si svolgono dal 10 aprile tra il governo e l'opposizione e si congratula con l'UNASUR e con il Vaticano per il ruolo svolto nell'agevolare tale processo. I partner del Venezuela nella regione sono i più qualificati per avvicinare le parti. L'Unione europea è pronta a contribuire a questo processo se le sarà richiesto.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004442/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — First positive signs in the crisis in Venezuela

There have finally been some promising signs in Venezuela, where the President has stated his willingness to open negotiations with the opposition, after meeting a group of Unasur foreign ministers. Meanwhile, the opposition have stated that they will only sit down at the negotiating table once they are certain that the negotiations are 'genuine', transparent and based on equality between the different parties. They also requested that the negotiations be broadcast live on national media.

In a context of violence, which has already resulted in the death of thirty-nine people, the EU, which is bound by treaties to promote its founding values around the world, should intercede in order to bring an end to the violence and to help bring the current crisis in the country under control, including with a view to renewing relations between the EU and Latin America.

In this regard, can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify whether she intends to offer her services as an impartial mediator between the two sides, in order to achieve a peaceful and lasting end to the clashes as soon as possible?

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

The HR/VP refers the Honourable Member to her statements of 21 February and 27 February as well as to her spokesperson's statements of 14 February, 28 March and 15 April.

The High Representative welcomes the meetings that are taking place since 10 April between the government and the opposition and congratulates the Unasur and the Vatican for their role in facilitating this process. Venezuela's partners in the region are best placed to bring parties together. The EU stands ready to assist in this process if requested.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004443/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Pronuncia della Corte di giustizia dell'UE sulla direttiva 2006/24/CE

La corte di giustizia dell'UE ha dichiarato l'invalidità della direttiva riguardante la conservazione di dati generati o trattati nell'ambito della fornitura di servizi di comunicazione elettronica accessibili al pubblico o di reti pubbliche di comunicazione. Essa obbliga i fornitori di servizi di comunicazioni elettroniche a conservare alcuni dati degli utenti, come ad esempio l'orario di una telefonata o il numero chiamato. La giustificazione per tale decisione sta nel fatto che «imponendo la conservazione di tali dati e consentendovi l'accesso alle autorità nazionali competenti, ingerisca in modo particolarmente grave nei diritti fondamentali al rispetto della vita privata e alla protezione dei dati di carattere personale». Secondo la Corte, le informazioni raccolte potrebbero essere opportunamente incrociate per consentire l'identificazione degli utenti, in violazione della normativa europea in tema di privacy.

La direttiva aveva, in effetti, attirato su di sé critiche da diverse parti, ad esempio dagli attivisti per le libertà civili e per la protezione dei dati, nonché dagli operatori telefonici, che denunciavano eccessivi costi per l'immagazzinamento dei dati, tanto da portare a una nuova consultazione pubblica sul tema, che però è stata poi bloccata.

In seguito a questa decisione, come intende agire la Commissione?

Risposta di Cecilia Malmström a nome della Commissione
(18 giugno 2014)

La sentenza della Corte di giustizia dell'8 aprile 2014 nelle cause riunite C-293/12 e C-594/12 conferma in generale la relazione di valutazione della Commissione del 2011 sull'applicazione della direttiva sulla conservazione dei dati ([1]). La Corte ha dichiarato che la direttiva sulla conservazione dei dati ([2]) non rispetta il principio di proporzionalità e avrebbe dovuto prevedere maggiori garanzie. Nel contempo, la Corte ha rilevato che la conservazione dei dati, di per sé, non pregiudica il contenuto essenziale dei diritti fondamentali e persegue, a determinate condizioni, un interesse legittimo e generale, vale a dire la lotta contro la criminalità grave e il terrorismo.

Le questioni sollevate dalla Corte sono molto complesse e le loro ripercussioni devono essere valutate attentamente. Tale valutazione sarà condotta in consultazione con tutte le parti in causa e terrà conto di tutti gli interessi legittimi in gioco. La Commissione intende prendersi il tempo necessario per svolgere tale valutazione, sulla cui base potrà stabilire nei prossimi mesi l'opportunità di una nuova proposta legislativa. Inoltre, la sentenza sottolinea l'esigenza di adottare rapidamente la proposta di riforma della protezione dei dati, in particolare la proposta di direttiva — che si applica nel settore delle attività di contrasto.

([1]) COM(2011) 225 definitivo.
([2]) Direttiva 2006/24/CE del Parlamento europeo e del Consiglio, del 15 marzo 2006, riguardante la conservazione di dati generati o trattati nell'ambito della fornitura di servizi di comunicazione elettronica accessibili al pubblico o di reti pubbliche di comunicazione e che modifica la direttiva 2002/58/CE. (GU L 105 del 13.4.2006, pag. 54).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004443/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Ruling by the European Court of Justice on Directive 2006/24/EC

The European Court of Justice has declared invalid the directive concerning the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services or of public communications networks. This obliges providers of electronic communications services to retain certain user data, such as, for example, the time of a telephone call or the number called. The grounds for this decision are the fact that 'by requiring the retention of such data and by allowing the competent national authorities to access this data, the directive constitutes a serious infringement of the fundamental rights to respect for privacy and to the protection of personal data'. According to the Court, the information collected could be cross-referenced to enable the identification of users, a practice that violates European privacy legislation.

The directive had actually been condemned by various parties, such as activists for civil liberties and data protection, as well as telephone operators, who criticised the excessive costs of storing the data, to such an extent that a new public consultation had been called for. In any event, the directive has now been blocked.

Following this decision, how does the Commission intend to react?

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

The ruling of the European Court of Justice of 8 April 2014 on joined cases C-293/12 and C-594/12 generally confirms the Commission Evaluation Report of 2011 on the implementation of the Data Retention Directive ([1]). The Court has decided that the Data Retention Directive ([2]) does not meet the principle of proportionality and should have provided more safeguards. At the same time, the Court has considered that data retention as such does not adversely affect the essence of fundamental rights, and it serves, under clear conditions, a legitimate and general interest, namely the fight against serious crime and terrorism.

The issues raised by the Court are very complex and require a careful assessment of their impacts. Such an assessment will be carried out in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner to take on board all legitimate interests involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation. On that basis, the Commission will be able to investigate in the coming months whether there is a need for a new legislative proposal. Furthermore, the judgment of course underlines the need for the swift adoption of the proposed Data Protection reform and in particular of the draft Directive which applies to the law enforcement sector.

([1]) COM(2011) 225 final.
([2]) Directive 2006/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15.3.2006 on the retention of data generated or processed in connection with the provision of publicly available electronic communications services or of public communications networks and amending Directive 2002/58/EC OJ L 105, 13.4.2006, p. 54-63.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004444/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Settimana dell'alfabetizzazione digitale e possibilità di progetti congiunti a livello europeo

Una fondazione italiana ha dichiarato la settimana in corso «settimana dell'alfabetizzazione digitale», dedicata agli adulti e nello specifico agli over 60. Ben centosette scuole aprono le proprie aule informatiche agli adulti per farli familiarizzare con il computer, il web, la chat e i servizi on line della pubblica amministrazione, guidati dagli over 60 più esperti.

In Europa altri sei paesi stanno studiando con interesse la formula «nonni su internet», un modello di apprendimento intergenerazionale sperimentato con successo in Italia, con l'obiettivo di contrastare ogni forma di esclusione sociale e per sviluppare nelle nuove generazioni le competenze strategiche per vivere e lavorare nel XXI secolo.

In merito a questa iniziativa, può la Commissione chiarire:

1. se altri paesi interessati nel progetto possano accedere a fondi o strumenti europei per lo sviluppo di iniziative simili?

2. se esiste la possibilità, a livello unionale, di costituire un quadro di cooperazione tra più Stati membri, magari con problematiche simili in materia, per promuovere soluzioni congiunte?

Risposta di Neelie Kroes a nome della Commissione
(3 giugno 2014)

L'acquisizione di competenze digitali da parte delle persone anziane è di cruciale importanza per una loro partecipazione attiva alla società digitale. È importante che le generazioni più anziane facciano esperienze positive con le TIC, aumentino la propria fiducia e siano motivate ad apprendere e utilizzare nuove tecnologie.

Le iniziative intergenerazionali si sono rivelate un successo in diversi Stati membri dell'UE. Gli Stati membri interessati a sviluppare iniziative analoghe o a estendere quelle esistenti potrebbero valutare la possibilità di ricorrere al Fondo europeo di sviluppo regionale (FESR) e/o al Fondo sociale europeo (FSE) per sostenere questo tipo di iniziative, anche attraverso azioni incentrate sulle TIC.

Le autorità regionali o locali in tutta l'UE che si trovano ad affrontare problemi analoghi e che intendono sperimentare diverse soluzioni a livello di UE per promuovere il modello di apprendimento intergenerazionale possono chiedere finanziamenti nell'ambito del programma Erasmus+, per creare partenariati per la cooperazione, lo scambio di informazioni e di buone pratiche e/o per realizzare alleanze strategiche.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004444/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Digital Literacy Week and the possibility of joint European projects

An Italian foundation has declared this week 'Digital Literacy Week', aimed at adults and, more specifically, the over 60s. No fewer than 107 schools are opening their computer rooms to adults in order to familiarise them with computers, the web, on-line chat and public administration services, under the guidance of more experienced over 60s.

In Europe, six other countries are studying the 'grandparents on the Internet' formula with interest. This inter-generational learning model, which has been trialled successfully in Italy, aims to combat all forms of social exclusion and develop strategic skills for new generations to live and work in the 21st century.

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

1. Can other countries interested in the project access European funds or instruments to develop similar initiatives?

2. Would it be possible, at EU level, to build a framework for cooperation between several Member States, perhaps those facing similar problems, in order to promote joint solutions?

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

The acquisition of digital skills by the elderly is crucial for their active participation in the digital society. It is important that older generations have positive experiences with ICT, build up their confidence and are motivated to learn about and use new technologies.

Inter-generational initiatives have proven to be successful in different EU Member States. Those Member States interested in developing similar initiatives or extending current ones could explore using either European Regional Development (ERDF) and/or European Social Funds (ESF) to support these types of actions, including through ICT-focused.

Local or regional authorities across the EU facing similar problems and aiming to explore different EU based solutions to foster the inter-generational learning model may consider applying for Erasmus+ Programme funding, for setting up partnerships for cooperation, the exchange of information and good practices, and/or forging strategic alliances.

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004445/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Ultrasuoni per la lotta contro il cancro

Una ricerca condotta in Svizzera ha svelato che gli ultrasuoni possono essere utilizzati per neutralizzare i tessuti cancerogeni. Il sistema, denominato «Exablate Neuro di InSightec», consiste nell'indirizzare migliaia di fasci di ultrasuoni in maniera mirata su uno specifico punto, in questo caso il tessuto cancerogeno, al fine di annientarlo tramite le vibrazioni. Durante il test, avvenuto con il paziente pienamente vigile, i ricercatori sono riusciti a distruggere una parte del tumore che si trova in profondità all'interno del cervello del paziente, senza l'insorgere di effetti collaterali o complicazioni.

La terapia potrebbe avere un impatto fortissimo, soprattutto perché non è assolutamente invasiva rispetto ad altri metodi tradizionali di lotta contro il cancro, motivo per cui ulteriori studi clinici saranno volti a dimostrare la sicurezza e l'efficacia della terapia, dal momento che il test in questione aveva solo lo scopo di valutare la fattibilità degli ultrasuoni focalizzati nel trattamento di tumori cerebrali, sorpassando qualsiasi risultato immaginato.

In merito a questo studio, può la Commissione chiarire se:

1. è a conoscenza dello studio in questione?

2. è a conoscenza di studi simili condotti in Europa, che abbiano goduto di finanziamenti europei?

3. può fornire informazioni su altri studi clinici relativi a terapie poco invasive per la cura del cancro?

Risposta di Máire Geoghegan-Quinn a nome della Commissione
(23 maggio 2014)

1. La Commissione è a conoscenza della sperimentazione clinica cui fa riferimento l'onorevole parlamentare ([1]) ([2]) ([3]).

2. Sebbene la ricerca su questa particolare terapia non invasiva con ultrasuoni focalizzati (Focused UltraSound, FUS) per il cancro al cervello non abbia beneficiato di un sostegno specifico, nell'ambito del Settimo programma quadro di ricerca, sviluppo tecnologico e dimostrazione (7° PQ, 2007-2013) ([4]) sono stati destinati circa 270 milioni di EUR alla ricerca sul trattamento del cancro, ad esempio su altri approcci di imaging o basati sugli ultrasuoni (MRGFUS IN THE BRAIN ([5]) — ultrasuoni focalizzati guidati dalla risonanza magnetica per la somministrazione mirata di farmaci nel cervello; THERAGLIO ([6]) — imaging e teranostica multimodali basati su microbolle per i gliomi).

Tra le altre strategie di trattamento interessate figurano i metodi di ricerca e somministrazione dei farmaci, le terapie basate su nanoparticelle, anticorpi e cellule, i meccanismi di resistenza e gli effetti collaterali degli approcci terapeutici e le sperimentazioni cliniche.

3. Informazioni dettagliate sulle attuali sperimentazioni cliniche e sulle cure non invasive per il cancro sono reperibili attraverso la banca dati UE sulla sperimentazione clinica (EudraCT) ([7]) e il registro ClinicalTrials.gov ([8]).

([1]) http://www.insightec.com/ExAblate-recurrent-glioma.html
([2]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT01698437
([3]) http://www.fusfoundation.org/the-foundation/news-media/1327-news-flash-brain-tumor-success
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/107945_it.html
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/109351_it.html
([7]) https://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu/
([8]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004445/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: Ultrasound to treat cancer

Research conducted in Switzerland has revealed that ultrasound can be used to neutralise cancerous tissue. The system, which is known as 'ExAblate Neuro' and has been developed by InSightec, involves targeting a specific point, in this case the cancerous tissue, with thousands of ultrasound elements in order to destroy it using vibrations. During the trial, which took place with the patient fully awake, researchers managed to destroy a part of the tumour which was located deep in the patient's brain, without triggering any side effects or complications.

This treatment could have a huge impact, especially because it is not entirely invasive like other, traditional methods used to fight cancer. Further clinical studies will seek to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of the treatment, since the only goal of the trial in question was to assess the feasibility of using targeted ultrasound for the treatment of brain tumours, achieving results which surpassed everyone's expectations.

With regard to this trial, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. Is it aware of this trial?

2. Is it aware of similar studies carried out in Europe, which have benefited from European funding?

3. Can it provide information about other clinical studies concerning non-invasive treatments for cancer?

Answer given by Ms Geoghegan-Quinn on behalf of the Commission
(23 May 2014)

1. The Commission is aware of the clinical trial referred to by the Honourable Member ([1]) ([2]) ([3]).

2. Although research on this particular non-invasive, focused ultrasound (FUS) therapy for brain cancer was not supported specifically, the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities (FP7, 2007-2013) ([4]) provided support amounting to some EUR 270 million for research on cancer treatment including, for instance, other ultrasound and imaging approaches (Mrgfus In The Brain ([5]) — Focused ultrasound under magnetic resonance guidance for targeted drug delivery in the brain; Theraglio ([6]) — Microbubble driven multimodal imaging and theranostics for gliomas).

Additional treatment strategies addressed include drug discovery and delivery methods; nanoparticle-, antibody-, and cell-based therapy; resistance mechanisms and side effects to therapeutic approaches and clinical trials.

3. Detailed information on current clinical studies on non-invasive cancer treatments can be found through the European Clinical Trials Database (EudraCT) ([7]) and the ClinicalTrials.gov registry ([8]).

([1]) http://www.insightec.com/ExAblate-recurrent-glioma.html
([2]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT01698437
([3]) http://www.fusfoundation.org/the-foundation/news-media/1327-news-flash-brain-tumor-success
([4]) http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/health/home_en.html
([5]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/107945_en.html
([6]) http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/rcn/109351_en.html
([7]) https://www.clinicaltrialsregister.eu/
([8]) http://clinicaltrials.gov/

(Versione italiana)

Interrogazione con richiesta di risposta scritta E-004446/14
alla Commissione
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) e Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 aprile 2014)

Oggetto: Politica energetica europea

La crisi ucraina ha sottolineato ancora una volta come la Russia resti un partner strategico per l'UE in materia di forniture energetiche e anche come in realtà permanga una forte dipendenza degli Stati membri dal gas russo. Per superare questa condizione, la scorsa settimana il primo ministro polacco ha suggerito la creazione di un meccanismo più efficace di solidarietà energetica interno all'Unione, da attivare in caso di crisi energetiche, quasi una sorta di forma embrionale di politica energetica europea.

In merito a queste affermazioni, si chiede alla Commissione:

1. Esistono già dei meccanismi di solidarietà negli Stati membri in caso di crisi energetica?

2. L'ipotesi di una politica energetica europea è stata presa in considerazione in passato?

3. Esistono dati aggiornati che disegnano un profilo dell'attuale portafoglio energetico europeo?

Risposta di Günther Oettinger a nome della Commissione
(10 giugno 2014)

1. Il principio di solidarietà è sancito dal regolamento (UE) n. 994/2010 concernente misure volte a garantire la sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento di gas. Ad esempio, ogni Stato membro deve mettere a punto un piano d'azione preventivo e un piano di emergenza che in una fase iniziale devono essere scambiati con gli Stati membri confinanti; il regolamento prevede inoltre specificatamente la possibilità di elaborare piani comuni. Inoltre, gli Stati membri con obblighi di approvvigionamento supplementari per le loro imprese devono individuare, in uno spirito di solidarietà, come questi obblighi possano essere temporaneamente ridotti in caso di un'emergenza a livello dell'Unione o regionale, per garantire una maggiore disponibilità di gas sul mercato.

2. L'articolo 194 del trattato sul funzionamento dell'Unione europea definisce il quadro della politica europea in materia di energia. La sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento energetico è uno dei principali obiettivi di questa politica, che è inclusa nel quadro 2030 in materia di clima e energia proposto dalla Commissione lo scorso gennaio. La crisi in Ucraina conferma la necessità di intensificare i nostri sforzi per aumentare la sicurezza dell'approvvigionamento. A seguito delle conclusioni del Consiglio europeo di marzo, la Commissione sta elaborando un piano globale per la riduzione della dipendenza energetica dell'UE e uno studio dettagliato sulla sicurezza energetica dell'UE. Questo piano sarà presentato al Consiglio europeo di giugno prossimo.

3. Eurostat fornisce un insieme di dati mensili ed annuali dettagliati per fonte energetica e per Stato membro. Inoltre, la sintesi statistica annuale «EU energy in figures», elaborata dai servizi della Commissione, traccia una panoramica completa dell'energia nell'UE, unitamente ai profili energetici nazionali, considerando la produzione, le importazioni e il consumo per prodotto energetico.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004446/14
to the Commission
Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)
(9 April 2014)

Subject: European energy policy

The crisis in Ukraine has once again highlighted the fact that Russia remains a strategic partner for the EU when it comes to energy supplies and also how Member States are actually still heavily dependent on Russian gas. In order to overcome this, the Polish Prime Minister suggested last week that a more effective system of energy solidarity be created within the EU; this system would be activated in the event of an energy crisis, as a kind of embryonic form of European energy policy.

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

1. Are solidarity mechanisms already in place between Member States in the event of an energy crisis?

2. Has the idea of a European energy policy been considered in the past?

3. Are there up-to-date data which provide an overview of the current European energy portfolio?

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

1. The principle of solidarity is enshrined in Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply. By way of example, each Member State has to prepare a Preventive Action Plan and an Emergency Plan which have to be exchanged at an early stage with neighbouring Member States and the regulation specifically foresees the possibility of joint Plans. Additionally, those Member States with increased supply obligations for their undertakings must identify, in a spirit of solidarity, how these obligations may be temporarily reduced in the event of an emergency at Union or regional level and thus make more gas available to the market.

2. Article 194 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union sets out the framework for European energy policy. Security of energy supply is one of the main objectives of this policy, which is included in the 2030 climate and energy framework proposed by the Commission last January. The crisis in Ukraine confirms the need to intensify our efforts to increase our security of supply. Following the conclusions of the March European Council, the Commission is preparing a comprehensive plan for the reduction of EU energy dependence and an in-depth study on EU energy security. This plan will be presented to the European Council in June.

3. Eurostat provides a portfolio of detailed monthly and annual data by energy source and by Member State. In addition, the annual statistical pocketbook 'EU energy in figures' prepared by Commission's services provides a comprehensive overview of energy in the EU, along with country energy profiles looking at the production, imports and consumption by energy product.

(Nederlandse versie)

Vraag met verzoek om schriftelijk antwoord P-004448/14
aan de Commissie
Jan Mulder (ALDE)
(10 april 2014)

Betreft: Budget dierziekten

Het is bekend dat de budgettaire situatie gespannen is. De Europese Unie heeft moeite de middelen te vinden voor de aangegane verplichtingen.

In het verleden hebben de kosten die gepaard gaan met het uitbreken van besmettelijke dierziekten aanzienlijke bijdragen gekost van de Europese belastingbetaler.

In de eventualiteit van een uitbraak van een besmettelijke dierziekte kan dit wederom gepaard gaan met grote onvoorziene uitgaven.

1. Hoe denkt de Commissie de kosten die gepaard gaan met de uitbraak van bepaalde besmettelijke dierziekten te financieren?

2. In het verleden zijn studies uitgevoerd om te komen tot Europees geïnspireerde verzekeringsschema's voor dierziekten gebaseerd op de ervaringen hiermee in bepaalde lidstaten. Is de Commissie van mening dat de tijd nog steeds niet rijp is om ook andere lidstaten te inspireren om soortgelijke verzekeringen te ontwikkelen?

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

1. De kosten die hiermee in verband worden gebracht moeten eerst worden gefinancierd met de financiële middelen voor „veiligheid van levensmiddelen en diervoeders". De rechtsgrondslag legt het maximumbedrag voor de uitgaven voor „veiligheid van levensmiddelen en diervoeders" voor de periode 2014-2020 vast op 1 892 miljoen euro, met een ingebouwde reserve van 20 miljoen euro per jaar voor de financiering van noodmaatregelen.

Elk extra bedrag zou moeten worden gefinancierd uit de marge van rubriek 3 en/of door herprogrammering.

Indien een (volledige) financiering in het kader van rubriek 3 niet mogelijk zou zijn, zou de Commissie elke andere mogelijkheid onderzoeken om de nodige maatregelen te financieren overeenkomstig alle relevante wetgeving, ook die op het gebied van het gemeenschappelijk landbouwbeleid.

Mocht de ernst van de crisis ten slotte extra financiële middelen vereisen, dan zou de Commissie een beroep doen op alternatieve mechanismen zoals het flexibiliteitsinstrument of de marge voor onvoorziene uitgaven.

2. Op basis van de studies die zowel intern als namens de Commissie werden uitgevoerd en op basis van de resultaten van de effectbeoordeling bij het Commissievoorstel voor het beheer van de uitgaven op het gebied van levensmiddelen en diervoeders ([1]) (CFF-voorstel ([2])), zijn er geen voldoende aanwijzingen dat de voordelen van de invoering van Europees geïnspireerde verzekeringsstelsels de kosten zullen compenseren.

Daarnaast is het weinig waarschijnlijk dat deze stelsels door de lidstaten en de belanghebbenden zullen worden aanvaard, vooral binnen het huidige financiële klimaat, dat het voor de nationale autoriteiten en de privésector moeilijker maakt om een groter deel van de financiële lasten op zich te nemen.

De mogelijkheid om zulke systemen in te voeren werd eveneens afgewezen omdat deze te ingewikkeld gevonden worden; daarom zou de invoering ervan niet stroken met de huidige prioritaire doelstelling om het financiële kader te verduidelijken en te vereenvoudigen.

([1]) SWD(2014) 133 final en SWD (2013)0195.
([2]) COM(2013) 327 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004448/14
to the Commission
Jan Mulder (ALDE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Budget for animal diseases

It is well known that budgets are tight. The European Union is experiencing difficulty in finding the resources to meet the commitments into which it has entered.

In the past, the costs associated with outbreaks of infectious animal diseases have necessitated substantial contributions by European tax-payers.

If an infectious animal disease were to break out, it could again involve substantial unforeseen expenditure.

1. How would the Commission finance the costs associated with outbreaks of certain infectious animal diseases?

2. In the past, studies have been performed in order to devise European-inspired insurance schemes for animal diseases based on experience of them in certain Member States. Does the Commission consider that the time is still not ripe to inspire other Member States likewise to devise such insurance schemes?

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

1. The costs associated would have to be financed first within the 'Food and Feed Safety' financial envelope. The legal base sets the maximum amount for 'Food and Feed Safety' expenditure for the period 2014-2020 at EUR 1 892 million, with a built-in reserve for financing emergency measures of EUR 20 million per year.

Any additional amount would have to be financed from the margin of Heading 3 and/or by reprogramming.

If (full) financing under Heading 3 were not possible, the Commission would examine any other possibility for financing the necessary measures in accordance with all relevant legislations, including in the field of the common agricultural policy.

Finally, should the severity of the crisis require further financial resources, the Commission would recur to alternative mechanisms, such as the flexibility instrument or the contingency margin.

2. Based on the studies conducted both internally and on behalf of the Commission, and on the findings of the impact assessment accompanying the Commission proposal on the management of the expenditure in the area of food and feed ([1]) (CFF proposal ([2])), there is not enough evidence to suggest that the benefits from introducing European-inspired insurance schemes will outweigh the costs.

In addition, these schemes are unlikely to be accepted by the Member States and the stakeholders, especially under the current financial climate which makes it more difficult, for national authorities and the private sector, to accept a larger share of the financial burden.

The possibility to introduce such systems was also dismissed because they are considered to be over-complicated; therefore, their introduction would not match the current priority objective of clarifying and simplifying the financial framework.

([1]) SWD(2013) 194 final and SWD(2013)0195.
([2]) COM(2013)0327.

(Wersja polska)

Pytanie wymagające odpowiedzi pisemnej P-004449/14
do Komisji
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(10 kwietnia 2014 r.)

Przedmiot: Bezpieczeństwo dostaw gazu

Rozporządzenie o bezpieczeństwie dostaw gazu (rozporządzenie (UE) nr 994/2010 w sprawie środków zapewniających bezpieczeństwo dostaw gazu ziemnego) zobowiązało Komisję Europejską, państwa członkowskie, regulatorów rynku gazu na poziomie krajowym i europejskim do wprowadzenia standardu bezpieczeństwa dostaw N-1, rozwoju interkonektorów sieci, zdolności sieci do reverse-flow oraz opracowania scenariuszy awaryjnych dostaw gazu na wypadek zatrzymania dostaw.

Na jakim etapie jest wdrażanie poszczególnych elementów rozporządzenia? Czy wszystkie państwa członkowskie osiągnęły standard bezpieczeństwa dostaw N-1? Gdzie są największe opóźnienia w tych obszarach?

Odpowiedź udzielona przez komisarza Günthera Oettingera w imieniu Komisji
(16 maja 2014 r.)

Rozporządzenie (UE) nr 994/2010 w sprawie środków zapewniających bezpieczeństwo dostaw gazu ziemnego zawiera szereg zobowiązań, które mają zostać stopniowo wdrożone do dnia 3 grudnia 2014 r. Ogólna ocena wdrażania poszczególnych zobowiązań jest dobra. Niemniej jednak odnotowano pewne opóźnienia, dotyczące na przykład przekazywania przez państwa członkowskie – na mocy art. 9 rozporządzenia – ocen ryzyka zawierających analizę scenariuszy, o których mowa w zapytaniu. Po skontaktowaniu się z wszystkimi państwami członkowskimi, których dotyczył ten problem, wszystkie oceny ryzyka zostały przedłożone jesienią 2012 r.

W odniesieniu do standardu w zakresie infrastruktury „N-1", zawartym w art. 6 rozporządzenia, ustalony termin upływa 3 grudnia 2014 r. Niemniej jednak, na podstawie informacji dostarczonych przez państwa członkowskie w planach działań zapobiegawczych zgodnie z art. 5 tego rozporządzenia, można stwierdzić, że w ostatnich latach państwa członkowskie znacznie poprawiły zdolność reagowania w przypadku zakłóceń w funkcjonowaniu największych infrastruktur. Oczekujemy, że większość państw członkowskich pomyślnie wdroży standard „N-1" do grudnia 2014 r. W przypadku niektórych państw członkowskich trudne może być jednak terminowe wdrożenie standardu w zakresie dostaw. Komisja podjęła współpracę z tymi państwami członkowskimi, aby znaleźć rozwiązania służące poprawie sytuacji.

Kompleksowe sprawozdanie z wykonania rozporządzenia 994/2010 zostanie przygotowane jeszcze w tym roku. Na wniosek Rady Europejskiej Komisja pracuje również nad pogłębioną analizą dotyczącą bezpieczeństwa dostaw energii oraz strategii na rzecz zwiększenia niezależności energetycznej. Analiza ta zostanie opublikowana w czerwcu.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004449/14
to the Commission
Konrad Szymański (ECR)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Security of gas supply

Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply obliges the Commission, the Member States and national and European gas market regulators to adopt the N-1 standard for security of supply, to develop network interconnectors, to improve reverse flow capacity and to develop scenarios for emergency supplies of gas if deliveries are halted.

What is the state of play as regards implementation of the individual elements of the regulation? Have all Member States attained the N-1 standard for security of supply? Where are the greatest delays occurring in these areas?

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

Regulation (EU) No 994/2010 concerning measures to safeguard security of gas supply contains a series of obligations to be implemented stepwise until the 3rd December 2014. The overall assessment of the compliance is good. Nevertheless, some delays were observed, for example on the submission by Member States of their Risk Assessments pursuant Article 9 of the regulation, which contain the analysis of scenarios referred to in the question. Following contacts with the affected Member States, all the Risk Assessments were submitted in autumn 2012.

With regard to the infrastructure standard ('N-1' standard) contained in Article 6 of the regulation, the deadline established is the 3rd December 2014. Nevertheless, on the basis of the information provided by Member States in their Preventive Action Plans pursuant Article 5 of the regulation, it appears that Member States' abilities to cope with a disruption of their largest infrastructure have significantly improved in recent years. We expect that most Member States will manage to fulfil the 'N-1' standard by December 2014. However, for some Member States it may be difficult to fulfil the supply standard by that date. The Commission is working together with these Member States to find solutions to improve the situation.

A comprehensive report on the implementation of Regulation 994/2010 will be completed later this year. Following a request by the European Council, the Commission is also working on an in-depth study on energy security of supply and a strategy on enhancing energy independence which will be published in June.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004450/14
to the Commission
Diane Dodds (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Funding under the European Regional Development Fund

Can the Commission evaluate the effectiveness of the European Regional Development Fund programme and provide a complete breakdown of the funding allocated through this programme to each Member State?

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

The Commission's independent evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in 2000-2006 was completed in 2012 and is published at the following website:
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/expost_reaction_en.htm

The synthesis report concluded that the ERDF had helped to reduce disparities between Member States and regions and delivered not only economic development, but also environmental and social development.

In 2014, the Commission launched the *ex post* evaluation of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, which support 312 programmes across 28 Member States between 2007 and 2015. Results will be available by the end of 2015.

For the 2014-2020 period, the allocations per Member State are available on the Inforegio website ([1]). The exact amounts of ERDF support by Member State will depend on the breakdown between ESF and ERDF, once the programmes are approved.

For the 2007-2013 period ([2]) the requested data is available on the Inforegio website. The latest state of play of 2007-2013 ERDF implementation per Member State (cut-off date 24 April) is provided in the annex.

([1]) See table 'Total allocations of Cohesion policy': http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/funding/index_en.cfm
([2]) See table EU budget commitments by fund/by year : http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/impact/evaluation/data_en.cfm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004452/14
à la Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Sociétés de prestation de veille médias

Les sociétés de prestation de veille médias fournissent (Press Monitoring/Press Review) à leurs clients une information triée et contextualisée à partir de tous contenus médiatiques.

Dans certains pays de l'Union européenne, les prestataires de veille médias doivent solliciter des autorisations et payer — directement ou indirectement (via leurs clients) — des redevances aux titulaires des droits de propriété intellectuelle sur les contenus médiatiques (sociétés de gestion collective, éditeurs, groupement d'éditeurs, etc.).

Il existe cependant une grande disparité, dans les législations de chaque État membre, quant à la nécessité ou non de telles autorisations, quant aux rémunérations et aux modèles contractuels ainsi qu'aux contraintes techniques imposées qui vont du très simple (par exemple: Federazione Italian Editori Giornali en Italie) au très compliqué (par exemple: Newspaper Licensing Agency au Royaume-Uni).

En outre, le tarif de ces redevances fluctue d'un pays à l'autre, mais aussi à l'intérieur même des frontières des États, selon les groupements d'éditeurs; il peut subir une variation de 1 à 25 (par exemple: Espagne vs Allemagne). D'une manière générale, on constate également une hausse exponentielle de ces tarifs, au détriment des prestataires et de leurs clients, le coût des redevances étant, dans certains cas aussi cher, voire plus cher, que le coût de la prestation de veille.

Pour certaines prestations, les prestataires de veille subissent en outre une distorsion de concurrence avec les géants de l'internet (Google, Facebook, etc.) ou de petits agrégateurs qui fournissent des prestations, sans être soumis aux modèles contractuels, aux contraintes techniques ou aux redevances imposées par les titulaires de droits.

La Commission européenne pense-t-elle réguler ou harmoniser ce marché par exemple par la création d'une exception, d'une licence légale ou d'un régime de gestion collective obligatoire spécifique à la veille médias dans un cadre commercial ou par l'application d'un principe d'une rémunération raisonnable et la création d'un cadre juridique apaisé et pérenne pour cette activité?

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

En matière de suivi des médias, la Commission sait qu'il existe des approches différentes dans les États membres, qu'il s'agisse des procédures d'octroi de licence comme de la législation sur le droit d'auteur. Dans le contexte du réexamen du droit d'auteur en cours, elle a commandé une étude sur l'application de la directive 2001/29/CE sur le droit d'auteur et les droits voisins dans la société de l'information, l'un des sujets abordés étant le fonctionnement de l'exception pour revue de presse appliquée aux institutions et entreprises qui mettent des coupures de presse à la disposition de leurs abonnés ou employés. L'étude du cabinet d'avocats (De Wolf & Partners) a été publiée le 16 décembre 2013 sur le site Web de la Commission ([1]).

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/studies/131216_study_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004452/14
to the Commission
Françoise Castex (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Media monitoring companies

Media monitoring (or press monitoring or press review) companies scour the media to supply their customers with targeted and filtered information packages.

Some Member States require these companies to seek prior authorisation from the owners of the intellectual copyright of the media content (collective management societies, publishers, publisher groups, etc.) and to pay them a user fee, either directly or indirectly, via their customers.

However, there are significant differences between the laws in each Member State governing the need for such authorisation, the fees that can be levied, and the contractual arrangements and technical constraints applied in this domain. For example, the applicable Italian law, upheld by the Federazione Italian Editori Giornali, is very simple, whereas the equivalent UK legislation, overseen by the Newspaper Licensing Agency, is highly complex.

Moreover, the amount of the fees levied not only varies from one country to the next but it can also differ within a single country, depending on the publisher group concerned. Fees in one country might be 25 times those charged in another (Spain versus Germany, for example). More generally, we are now witnessing an exponential increase in fees, negatively impacting both service providers and their customers. Indeed, the copyright fees are in some cases as high if not higher than the fee charged for the monitoring service itself.

For some of their services, the monitoring providers are also facing unfair competition from Internet giants such as Google and Facebook, and small content aggregators who provide similar services without being subjected to the same contractual or technical constraints or the obligation to pay copyright fees.

Does the Commission intend to regulate or harmonise this market? For example, could it create an exception, a licensing framework or a compulsory collective management scheme specifically for commercial media monitoring services? Could it, perhaps, apply the principle of 'reasonable remuneration' and create a less problematic and more durable legal framework for this economic activity?

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

The Commission is aware of the existence of different approaches to the issue of media monitoring in the Member States; both as regards licencing practices and copyright legislation. In the context of the on-going Copyright Review, it has commissioned a study on the application of Directive 2001/29/EC on copyright and related rights in the information society, which among other subjects also deals with the functioning of the press review exception for institutions and enterprises that offer press-clippings to their subscribers or employees. The study, by the law firm (De Wolf & Partners).has been published on 16 December 2013 on the Commission's website. ([1])

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/copyright/docs/studies/131216_study_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004453/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Decizia Curții de Justiție a UE referitoare la Directiva privind păstrarea datelor

În lumina deciziei Curții de Justiție a Uniunii Europene din 8 aprilie 2014 referitoare la compatibilitatea cu dreptul european a Directivei privind păstrarea datelor, care sunt pașii următori pe care Comisia îi are în vedere? Va propune Comisia un nou act legislativ care să ia în considerare îngrijorările exprimate de Curte?

Răspuns dat de dna Malmström în numele Comisiei
(13 iunie 2014)

Problemele ridicate de Curte sunt foarte complexe și necesită o evaluare atentă a impactului pe care îl pot avea. Această evaluare va fi realizată în consultare cu toate părțile implicate, în așa fel încât să fie luate în considerare toate interesele legitime aflate în joc. Comisia intenționează să aloce timpul necesar efectuării acestei evaluări. Pe această bază, Comisia va putea evalua, pe parcursul următoarelor luni, necesitatea unei noi propuneri legislative. În plus, decizia subliniază, desigur, necesitatea adoptării rapide a propunerilor de reformă UE în materie de protecție a datelor.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004453/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Judgment of the EU Court of Justice concerning the Data Retention Directive

In view of the judgment of the EU Court of Justice of 8 April 2014 regarding the validity of the Data Retention Directive under European law, what actions does the Commission now intend to take? Will it propose fresh legislation taking into account the Court's observations?

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

The issues raised by the Court are very complex and require a careful assessment of their impacts. Such an assessment will be carried out in consultation with all relevant constituencies, and in a manner to take on board all legitimate interests involved. The Commission intends to take the necessary time to undertake this evaluation. On that basis, the Commission will be able to evaluate in the coming months whether there is a need for a new legislative proposal. Furthermore, the judgment of course underlines the need for the swift adoption of the EU Data Protection reform proposals.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004455/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Discriminarea etnicilor romi din Uniunea Europeană

Conform unui raport al Amnesty International, publicat la 8 aprilie 2014, care analizează situația concretă a populației de etnie romă din Uniunea Europeană, statele au înregistrat un eșec în tentativele lor de combatere eficientă a discriminării pe considerente rasiale.

Combaterea discriminării romilor este unul dintre pilonii Cadrului strategic privind incluziunea romilor, precum și ai strategiilor naționale în domeniu.

Cum evaluează Comisia rezultatele acestui studiu? Intenționează Comisia să propună recomandări/linii directoare privind combaterea infracțiunilor motivate de ură?

Răspuns dat de dna Reding în numele Comisiei
(10 iunie 2014)

Comisia Europeană este la curent cu raportul Amnesty International menționat în întrebare.

În ceea ce privește problemele de discriminare cu care se confruntă romii, Comisia Europeană monitorizează punerea în aplicare a cadrului UE pentru strategiile naționale de integrare a romilor ([1]) care combină combaterea discriminării cu măsuri de integrare socială. Începând din 2012, Comisia a inițiat un dialog bilateral cu autoritățile naționale ale statelor membre, astfel încât să monitorizeze și să susțină progresele în acest sens. În acest an, Comisia a publicat un raport în care se analizează provocările și progresele înregistrate în materie de integrare a romilor în fiecare stat membru ([2]), inclusiv în ceea ce privește combaterea discriminării. Recomandarea Consiliului a adoptat în decembrie anul trecut ([3]) un prim instrument juridic privind integrarea romilor, care propune statelor membre să adopte măsuri specifice, inclusiv măsuri de discriminare pozitivă în favoarea acestora. În cele din urmă, combaterea discriminării a fost centrul de interes al ultimei reuniuni a punctelor naționale de contact pentru romi, din data de 14 februarie.

Cu privire la infracțiunile motivate de ură, raportul Comisiei ([4]) privind punerea în aplicare a Deciziei-cadru 2008/913/JAI privind rasismul și xenofobia discursurilor de incitare la ură și infracțiunile motivate de ură a fost publicat la 27 ianuarie 2014. Se vor purta discuții bilaterale cu statele membre pe parcursul acestui an, cu scopul de a asigura transpunerea integrală și corectă a deciziei-cadru în dreptul intern.

([1]) Comunicare privind un cadru UE pentru strategiile naționale de integrare a romilor COM(2011)173.
([2]) Raport privind punerea în aplicare a cadrului UE pentru strategiile naționale de integrare a romilor COM(2014)209 și documentul de lucru însoțitor al serviciilor Comisiei SWD (2014)121.
([3]) Recomandarea Consiliului din 9 decembrie 2013 cu privire la măsurile de integrare efectivă a romilor în statele membre, 2013/C.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/com_2014_27_en.pdf

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004455/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Discrimination against Roma in the European Union

According to an Amnesty International report published on 8 April 2014 analysing the specific situation facing Roma in the European Union, EU countries have failed to take effective action to combat racial discrimination. Combating anti-Roma discrimination is one of the pillars of the strategic framework for Roma integration and the national Roma integration strategies.

How does the Commission assess the results of the above study? Will the Commission propose recommendations or guidelines on combating hate crimes?

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

The European Commission is aware of the report of Amnesty International mentioned in the question.

Regarding discrimination faced by Roma, the European Commission is following-up the implementation of the EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies ([1]) linking fighting discrimination with social integration measures. Since 2012, the Commission has entered into a bilateral dialogue with Member States' national authorities so as to monitor and support progress. This year, the Commission published a report analysing challenges and progress made on Roma integration in each Member State ([2]), including on fighting discrimination. The Council Recommendation adopted in last December ([3]) a first legal instrument on Roma integration which proposes specific measures to Member States, including positive action to fight discrimination. Finally, fighting discrimination has been the focus of the last National Roma Contact Points' meeting, on last 14 February.

With regard to hate crime, the Commission report ([4]) on the implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on racist and xenophobic hate speech and hate crime was published on 27 January 2014. Bilateral discussions will be held with Member States throughout this year with a view to ensuring full and correct transposition of the framework Decision into national law.

([1]) Communication on an EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies COM(2011) 173.
([2]) Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies COM(2014) 209 and accompanying Staff working document SWD(2014) 121.
([3]) Council Recommendation of 9.12.2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States 2013/C.
([4]) http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/com_2014_27_en.pdf

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004457/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Utilizarea dronelor civile

Comisia Europeană a lansat în data de 8 aprilie o Comunicare privind utilizarea civilă a dronelor. Scopul acestui document este de a clarifica regimul acestor aparate, stimulând în același timp inovarea în domeniu.

Conform Comunicării sale, Comisia are în vedere mai multe acțiuni. Una dintre acestea se referă la integrarea acestui tip de aparat de zbor în spațiul aerian european începând cu anul 2016. Intenționează Comisia să propună reglementări distincte pentru clarificarea regimului dronelor civile sau se urmărește amendarea legislației deja existente?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(28 mai 2014)

Comisia intenționează să creeze un cadru de reglementare care să permită utilizarea sistemelor aeronautice pilotate de la distanță care va reglementa standardele de siguranță, securitate, viață privată, protecție a datelor, răspundere civilă și asigurări. Scopul este de a se asigura că aceste tipuri de aeronave nu prezintă niciun risc de siguranță în cazul zborurilor în spațiul aerian al Uniunii, garantând, în același timp, că au fost instituite toate măsurile necesare de salvgardare pentru protejarea drepturilor fundamentale ale cetățenilor europeni. Pe baza unei evaluări aprofundate a impactului, Comisia va examina aceste aspecte și va evalua cele mai bune opțiuni pentru a le aborda. Lucrările la această evaluare a impactului au început de foarte puțin timp, iar opțiunile pot include introducerea de norme noi, modificarea legislației existente sau facilitarea punerii în aplicare a normelor existente.

Între timp, Agenția Europeană de Siguranță a Aviației (AESA) poate să înceapă deja să elaboreze normele de siguranță necesare care țin de competența sa actuală.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004457/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Use of civil drones

On 8 April the Commission issued a communication on the civil use of drones. The aim of the document is to clarify the rules applicable to these devices while at the same time encouraging innovation in this field.

According to the communication, the Commission is considering a number of steps. One of these measures concerns integrating civil drones into European airspace from 2016 onwards. Does the Commission intend to propose separate regulations to clarify the rules applicable to civil drones, or will it amend existing legislation?

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

The Commission intends to establish an enabling regulatory framework for remotely piloted aircraft systems which will cover standards for safety, security, privacy, data protection, insurance and liability. The aim is to ensure that these type of aircraft do not pose any safety risk when flying in the Union's airspace, while also ensuring that all the necessary safeguards are in place to protect the fundamental rights of European citizens. On the basis of an in-depth impact assessment the Commission will examine these issues and assess the best options to address them. Work on the impact assessment has just started, and the options may include introducing new rules, amending existing legislation, or facilitating the enforcement of existing rules.

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) can meanwhile already start developing the necessary safety standards within its current remit.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004458/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Combaterea muncii nedeclarate

Comisia Europeană a propus o nouă platformă care să ajute la îmbunătățirea cooperării la nivelul UE, cu scopul de a preveni și de a descuraja munca nedeclarată. Printre scopurile Comisiei se numără cooperarea operațională prin sesiuni de formare comune, schimburi de personal și inspecții comune, precum și elaborarea de principii și orientări comune pentru efectuarea inspecțiilor al căror rol este combaterea muncii nedeclarate.

Poate informa Comisia dacă există fonduri comunitare puse la dispoziția statelor membre pentru atingerea unor astfel de obiective?

Răspuns dat de dl Andor în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2014)

În data de 9 aprilie 2014, Comisia a prezentat o propunere ([1]) de creare a unei platforme europene pentru îmbunătățirea cooperării la nivelul UE între statele membre cu scopul de a combate într-un mod mai eficient munca nedeclarată. Platforma va reuni organisme de aplicare a legii din statele membre precum inspectoratele de muncă și autoritățile din domeniul securității sociale, din domeniul fiscal și al migrației.

Activitățile acestei platforme vor fi finanțate prin credite disponibile pentru perioada 2014-2020 în cadrul Programului Uniunii Europene pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și inovare socială ([2]).

Fondul social european sprijină statele membre în eforturile lor de a îmbunătăți calitatea administrației publice și a guvernanței și de a continua reformele structurale. Statele membre sunt încurajate să utilizeze resursele Fondului social european puse la dispoziție în temeiul cadrului financiar multianual pentru perioada 2014-2020 pentru a-și crește capacitatea de a combate munca nedeclarată.

([1]) Propunere de decizie a Parlamentului European și a Consiliului privind instituirea unei platforme europene pentru intensificarea cooperării în materie de prevenire și descurajare a muncii nedeclarate [COM(2014) 221 final din 9 aprilie 2014].

([2]) Regulamentul (UE) nr. 1296/2013 al Parlamentului European și al Consiliului din 11 decembrie 2013 privind Programul Uniunii Europene pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și inovare socială („EaSI") și de abrogare a Deciziei nr. 283/2010/UE de instituire a unui instrument european de microfinanțare Progress pentru ocuparea forței de muncă și incluziune socială, JO L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 238.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004458/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Combating undeclared work

The Commission has proposed launching a new platform to help improve cooperation at EU level with the aim of preventing and deterring undeclared work. The specific objectives listed by the Commission include operational cooperation through joint training exercises, exchanges of staff and joint inspections, and the drawing-up of common principles and guidelines for inspections designed to combat undeclared work.

Can the Commission say whether Community funds are available to enable the Member States to achieve these objectives?

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

On 9 April 2014 the Commission put forward a proposal ([1]) to establish a European Platform to improve cooperation at EU level between the Member States in tackling undeclared work more effectively. It will bring together such Member State enforcement bodies as the labour inspectorates and the social security, tax and migration authorities.

The Platform's activities will be financed by appropriations available for 2014-20 under the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ([2]).

The European Social Fund supports the Member States in their efforts to improve the quality of public administration and governance and thus to push ahead with structural reforms. The Member States are encouraged to use European Social Fund resources provided under the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2014-20 to improve their capacity to tackle undeclared work.

([1]) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European Platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work (COM(2014) 221 final of 9 April 2014).

([2]) Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on a European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ('EaSI') and amending Decision No 283/2010/EU establishing a European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion, OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 238.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004459/14
adresată Comisiei (Vicepreședintelui/Înaltului Reprezentant)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: VP/HR — Acțiunea Uniunii pentru combaterea epidemiei de febră Ebola din vestul Africii

Recent au fost semnalate mai multe cazuri de febră Ebola în Guineea și în câteva state învecinate. Au fost raportate mai multe decese, iar situația tinde să devină din ce în ce mai alarmantă din cauza imposibilității autorităților de a opri răspândirea virusului.

Uniunea Europeană a anunțat deja că va mobiliza 500 000 de euro și va trimite un expert în sănătate în Guineea pentru a evalua situația.

Are în vedere Uniunea mobilizarea unor fonduri suplimentare și a unui personal mai numeros la fața locului, eventual pe durate mai lungi de timp, pentru a sprijini autoritățile locale să dezvolte planuri de preîntâmpinare pe viitor a unor astfel de epidemii?

Răspuns dat de dna Georgieva în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2014)

Comisia a urmărit îndeaproape actuala epidemie de febră Ebola care a afectat Guineea și Liberia și a trimis experți în domeniul umanitar în țările afectate, de îndată ce amploarea epidemiei a devenit evidentă.

De la bugetul UE s-a alocat ca sprijin umanitar suma de 1,4 milioane EUR pentru a susține timp de trei luni activitatea desfășurată de OMS, de organizația „Medici fără frontiere” și de Crucea Roșie. Instrumentul de stabilitate al UE a finanțat, de asemenea, înființarea în Guineea a unui laborator mobil, în care au fost detașați să lucreze membri ai personalului Centrului European de Prevenire și Control al Bolilor. Strategia de răspuns pusă în aplicare în regiune de autoritățile din domeniul sănătății, activitatea desfășurată pe teren de ONG-uri și de organizații internaționale, precum și sprijinul acordat de partenerii internaționali, printre care se numără și UE, se pare că au dus la ținerea sub control a actualei epidemii. Resursele alocate până în prezent ar trebui să permită eradicarea epidemiei și stabilirea de către OMS a cauzei probabile a acesteia. Actualele măsuri de răspuns instituite de autoritățile regionale din domeniul sănătății ar trebui, de asemenea, să fie utilizate ca bază pentru viitoarele planuri de urgență. Autoritățile vor trebui însă să revizuiască aceste planuri și este probabil ca măsurile viitoare să necesite fonduri suplimentare. Comisia analizează modul în care acest proces pe termen lung ar putea fi sprijinit prin finanțare de la bugetul UE.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004459/14
to the Commission (Vice-President/High Representative)
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: VP/HR — EU action to combat the Ebola fever epidemic in West Africa

Several cases of Ebola fever have recently been recorded in Guinea and some neighbouring countries. Several deaths have been reported, and the inability of the authorities to stop the spread of the virus means that the situation is becoming increasingly alarming.

The European Union has already announced that it is to mobilise EUR 500 000 and send a health expert to Guinea to assess the situation.

Is the EU planning to mobilise additional funds and personnel on the ground, possibly for a longer period of time, in order to support the local authorities in developing plans to prevent such epidemics in the future?

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

The Commission has followed closely the current Ebola outbreak that has affected Guinea and Liberia, and sent humanitarian experts to the affected countries as soon as the scale of the outbreak became apparent.

EUR 1.4 million in humanitarian support has been provided from the EU budget to assist the work of WHO, Medecins sans Frontieres and the Red Cross for a three-month period. The EU's Instrument for Stability has also funded a mobile laboratory that has been set up in Guinea, and the European Centre for Disease Control has seconded staff. Thanks to the response strategy of the health authorities in the region, the work of NGOs and international organisations on the ground and the support of international partners including the EU, it appears that the current outbreak is in the process of being contained. The resources allocated to date should allow for the outbreak to be dealt with and for WHO to determine its probable cause. The current response measures put in place by the regional health authorities should also serve as the basis for future contingency plans. However they will need to review these and it is probable that future measures will require additional funding. The Commission is reviewing how this longer-term process might be assisted by funding from the EU budget.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004460/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Intenția de organizare a unor referendumuri privind independența anumitor regiuni din UE

În ultimele luni au fost semnalate o serie de intenții ale unor autorități regionale din diferite state membre de a organiza referendumuri privind independența regiunilor respective. Cazul Cataloniei și cel al Scoției sunt cele mai cunoscute.

În cazul în care astfel de referendumuri ar fi declarate ilegale, iar populația din regiunile respective s-ar pronunța pentru independență, care ar fi statutul juridic al regiunilor în cauză față de Uniunea Europeană? Ar rămâne acestea membre ale Uniunii Europene sau ar fi necesară o reluare a procedurilor de aderare la Uniunea Europeană?

Răspuns dat de dl Barroso în numele Comisiei
(16 mai 2014)

Comisia dorește să o invite pe distinsa membră a Parlamentului European să consulte răspunsurile sale la întrebările parlamentare E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012 și P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004460/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Plans to hold referendums on independence in some EU regions

It has been reported in recent months that regional authorities in various Member States are planning to hold referendums on independence for their regions. The most widely reported cases concern Catalonia and Scotland.

In the event that such referendums are declared unlawful but the population of the regions concerned vote for independence, what legal status will these regions have *vis-à-vis* the European Union? Will they remain members of the European Union, or will they need to embark on a fresh accession procedure?

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

The Commission refers the Honourable Member to its replies to parliamentary questions E-008133/2012, P-009756/2012, and P-009862/2012 ([1]).

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

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004461/14
adresată Comisiei
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Blocarea de către Rusia a importurilor de carne de porc din Republica Moldova

În data de 8 aprilie, Serviciul federal rus pentru siguranță agroalimentară a anunțat că a decis blocarea importului de preparate de carne de porc din Republica Moldova. Motivele invocate de instituție sunt legate de posibilul export de către o firmă din Republica Moldova a unor produse din carne care, de fapt, ar fi provenit din Germania.

Cum vede Comisia această nouă formă de presiune economică impusă de către Rusia asupra unui partener din vecinătatea estică, ce va semna în lunile următoare Acordul de Asociere?

Ce măsuri are în vedere Comisia pentru a contracara acest embargo impus de Rusia?

Răspuns dat de dl Borg în numele Comisiei
(5 iunie 2014)

Federația Rusă aplică măsuri restrictive în ceea ce privește exporturile de bunuri care fac obiectul normelor sanitare și fitosanitare din diferite țări.

La 27 ianuarie 2014, Rusia a impus o interdicție asupra importurilor de porci vii, de carne proaspătă de porc și de anumite alte produse din porc din întreg teritoriul UE pe baza a două cazuri izolate de pestă porcină africană (PPA) detectate la mistreți în Lituania, aproape de granița cu Belarus. Alte două cazuri izolate la mistreți au fost detectate la 17 și 19 februarie 2014, în Polonia, de asemenea, în apropiere de granița cu Belarus. Deși Comisia a multiplicat eforturile de a demonstra Rusiei că toate măsurile necesare pentru a împiedica răspândirea pestei porcine africane sunt în vigoare și, prin urmare, nu există niciun motiv pentru a interzice importurile din zonele neafectate ale UE, Rusia continuă să interzică importurile de pe întreg teritoriul UE.

UE a lansat o procedură de soluționare a litigiilor în cadrul OMC împotriva acestei interdicții disproporționate (DS475).

În luna aprilie, Rusia a extins interdicția asupra importurilor din Republica Moldova. Nu este prima dată când Rusia impune un embargo asupra importurilor de produse moldovenești. În septembrie anul trecut, Rusia a interzis importul de vin din Moldova pe baza unor motive legate de SPU. Republica Moldova poartă consultări bilaterale cu autoritățile competente ruse în vederea reluării exporturilor de produse din carne de porc prelucrată în Rusia.

Comisia continuă să ofere asistență tehnică și financiară Republicii Moldova în domeniul sanitar și fitosanitar pentru a contribui la îmbunătățirea competitivității producției agricole, la dezvoltarea și punerea în aplicare a sistemelor de calitate care vizează apropierea acestui sector de politicile și legislația UE privind politica agricolă și dezvoltarea rurală.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004461/14
to the Commission
Elena Băsescu (PPE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Russia's blocking of pork imports from the Republic of Moldova

On 8 April, the Russian federal food safety service announced that it had decided to block imports of pork products from the Republic of Moldova. The reasons cited by the food safety authority are linked to possible exports by a firm from the Republic of Moldova of meat products that in fact came from Germany.

What view does the Commission take of this new form of economic pressure exerted by Russia on an Eastern neighbourhood partner which is on the point of signing an association agreement in the coming months?

What steps will the Commission take to counteract this Russian embargo?

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

The Russian Federation applies restrictive measures against exports of goods subjected to sanitary and phytosanitary rules to various countries.

On 27 January 2014 Russia imposed a ban on imports of live pigs, fresh pork meat and certain other pig products from the whole EU territory based on two isolated cases of African swine fever (ASF) detected in wild boars in Lithuania, close to the border with Belarus. Other two isolated cases in wild boars were detected on 17 and 19 February 2014 in Poland, also close to the border with Belarus. Although the Commission has multiplied efforts to demonstrate to Russia that all necessary measures to contain further spread of ASF are in place and, therefore, there is no reason to ban imports from unaffected areas of the EU, Russia continues to ban imports from the whole EU territory.

The EU has launched a WTO dispute settlement procedure against this disproportionate ban (DS475).

Last April, Russia extended the ban to imports from the Republic of Moldova. It is not the first time Russia imposes an embargo on imports of Moldovan products. In September last year Russia banned imports of wine from Moldova based on SPS reasons. The Republic of Moldova is carrying bilateral consultation with the Russian competent authorities to resume exports of pork processed products to Russia.

The Commission continues to provide technical and financial assistance to the Republic of Moldova in the sanitary and phytosanitary field to help improve the competitiveness of agricultural production, develop and implement quality schemes aiming at bringing the sector closer to EU policies and legislation on agricultural policy and rural development.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004462/14
a la Comisión
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: No identificación del ganado equino en Galicia

El caso especial del territorio gallego, con el ganado equino en semilibertad conocido también como ganado mostrenco, está suponiendo un verdadero coladero en lo que respecta a la normativa autonómica, estatal y comunitaria sobre el bienestar animal. Recientemente, fuentes de la Xunta de Galicia reconocían en un medio de comunicación, a través de la consejería competente, que «no se está sancionando» a quienes vulneran la obligatoriedad de identificar a los caballos ([1]). Esta revelación refleja la inactividad y la falta de respuesta del Gobierno gallego a un problema generado a partir de la nula identificación, como es la proliferación de casos de maltrato a partir de la colocación en las patas de los caballos de artefactos que los inmovilizan y les causan heridas y dolencias de diversa gravedad. En este sentido, la memoria de la fiscalía de la Comunidad Autónoma de Galicia para el ejercicio 2012 dedica, en su página 150, un apartado al «maltrato animal» en el que señala el creciente número de diligencias penales abiertas por casos de inmovilización de caballos con cepos, trancas y otros artilugios ([2]). El ministerio fiscal subraya que esas diligencias «se archivaron, al no haber podido averiguarse ningún dato sobre la identidad de los responsables». Esta frase de la fiscalía demuestra nuevamente que en su mayoría los caballos no están identificados tal y como exige la Unión Europea, como es el caso de los que han sido manipulados por los ganaderos al colocarles estos artefactos en las patas. Sin intención de realizar una exposición estrictamente jurídica de la cuestión, a este eurodiputado, y a los colectivos que trabajan contra este maltrato, como la Asociación Animalista Libera y la Fondation Franz Weber (que han detectado desde finales de 2010 más de 114 casos de estas características que se pueden consultar en una página web dedicada al asunto ([3]), en ninguno de los cuales se identifica a los caballos con el método impuesto por Bruselas), nos resulta evidente la situación que existe en territorio gallego.

¿Tiene previsto la Comisión solicitar información adicional sobre la situación del bienestar de los caballos en Galicia a la luz de los datos expuestos? ¿Tiene pensado la Comisión desarrollar alguna iniciativa excepcional para comprobar la situación *in situ*?

Respuesta del Sr. Borg en nombre de la Comisión
(23 de junio de 2014)

La Comisión remite a Su Señoría a la respuesta a las preguntas escritas E-007512/2011 y E-002704/2012 ([4]).

La Comisión carece de información específica para investigar el problema planteado y necesitaría recibir pruebas de un incumplimiento constante y sistemático por parte de las autoridades españolas en la aplicación de la legislación de la UE.

La Comisión organizó en mayo de 2014 el primer grupo de trabajo de expertos de la UE en cooperación con las organizaciones de protección de los animales sobre el bienestar de los caballos. La reunión permitió reconocer la complejidad de la situación de los caballos en relación con la normativa de la UE.

([1]) http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/ferrol/2014/04/09/xunta-obliga-identificacion-reses-equinas-bovinas/0003_201404F9C9992.htm
([2]) http://www.fiscal.es/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobheadername1=Content-disposition&blobheadervalue1=attachment%3B+filename%3DMemoria+FS+Galicia+2013.pdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1246969806502&ssbinary=true
([3]) http://www.senpexas.info
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/es/parliamentary-questions.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004462/14
to the Commission
Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Non-identification of horses in Galicia

The unique status of semi-wild horses in Galicia has created a major loophole in regional, national and EU animal welfare legislation. Galician Regional Government sources recently admitted to the media, via the relevant department, that 'no sanctions are being imposed' on horse owners who fail to comply with the legal obligation to identify their animals ([1]). That admission is a reflection of the Galician Regional Government's inert, unresponsive attitude in the face of problems caused by non-identification, as is the spate of mistreatment involving the attachment of a variety of painful devices to horses' legs to prevent them from moving. Page 150 of the 2012 Autonomous Community of Galicia public prosecutor report contains a specific paragraph on 'animal mistreatment' highlighting the growing number of on-going criminal proceedings relating to the use of shackles, clamps and other devices to prevent horses from moving ([2]). According to the public prosecutor's office, these proceedings 'have been shelved, as it has not been possible to identify the culprits'. The public prosecutor's office's statement further demonstrates that the majority of horses — including those which have had devices attached to their legs — are not being identified as required by EC law. I do not intend to go into the legal minutiae, but the situation in Galicia is clear to me and to the groups that work to prevent mistreatment, such as Asociación Animalista Libera and the Franz Weber Foundation; in over 114 similar cases recorded by the groups since the end of 2010 (which can be viewed on a dedicated website ([3])) not a single horse was identified using the EU method.

Does the Commission now intend to request additional information on the welfare of horses in Galicia? Is the Commission thinking about taking any exceptional action to assess the situation on the ground?

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

The Commission would like to refer the Honourable Member of the European Parliament to its reply to written questions E-007512/2011 and E-002704/2012 ([4]).

The Commission does not have specific information to be able to investigate the problem raised. It would need to receive evidence of a consistent and systematic failure of the Spanish authorities in enforcing EU legislation.

The Commission organised in May 2014 the first EU experts working group on the welfare of horses in cooperation with animal protection organisations. The meeting was an opportunity to acknowledge the complexity of the situation of horses with regards to EU rules.

([1]) http://www.lavozdegalicia.es/noticia/ferrol/2014/04/09/xunta-obliga-identificacion-reses-equinas-bovinas/0003_201404F9C9992.htm
([2]) http://www.fiscal.es/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobheadername1=Content-disposition&blobheadervalue1=attachment%3B+filename%3DMemoria+FS+Galicia+2013.pdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1246969806502&ssbinary=true
([3]) http://www.senpexas.info
([4]) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/plenary/en/parliamentary-questions.html

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004463/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Acordul UE-Rusia privind rutele transsiberiene

În 2006, în baza unui mandat încredinţat de Consiliu, au fost negociate principiile convenite cu privire la modernizarea sistemului actual de utilizare a rutelor transsiberiene între UE şi Rusia. Un posibil acord între UE şi Rusia privind modernizarea sistemului actual de utilizare a rutelor transsiberiene ar consolida cooperarea în domeniul transporturilor în cadrul spaţiului economic comun UE-Rusia.

Având în vedere ultimele evoluţii de pe scena relaţiilor internaţionale, aş dori să întreb Comisia Europeană care sunt evoluţia şi calendarul acestui acord.

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(2 iunie 2014)

„Principiile convenite” în 2006 citate, au stabilit, printre alte chestiuni, eliminarea treptată a redevenţelor pentru survolarea Siberiei, începând cu ianuarie 2010. Totuşi, acest acord nu a fost respectat de Federaţia Rusă. În consecinţă, în noiembrie/decembrie 2011, Comisia şi guvernul Federaţiei Ruse au convenit cu privire la o versiune actualizată a acestor principii, care a intrat în vigoare începând cu 1 ianuarie 2012. Acest acord a conţinut o nouă dată pentru eliminarea finală a întregului sistem de redevenţe pentru survolarea Siberiei : finalul lunii decembrie 2013. Începând de la 1 ianuarie 2014, toate taxele de survolare ar fi trebuit să fie proporţionale cu costurile, transparente şi ar fi trebuit să fie plătite exclusiv autorităţilor competente.
Cu toate acestea, Rusia nu a respectat acest termen limită şi transportatorii aerieni din UE plătesc încă în conformitate cu actualul sistem disputat pentru survolarea Siberiei pe ruta către Extremul Orient, în ciuda angajamentelor asumate de Federaţia Rusă în acest sens.

La 16 ianuarie 2014, ministrul adjunct rus al transporturilor, Valerie Okulov, şi-a luat angajamentul de a finaliza acest proces cu fiecare stat membru al UE în termen de 6 de luni, şi anume până la jumătatea anului 2014.

Comisia urmăreşte îndeaproape aceste negocieri.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004463/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Russia agreement on Trans-Siberian routes

In 2006, on the basis of a mandate granted by the Council, the 'Agreed Principles of the Modernisation of the existing system of utilisation of the Trans-Siberian routes' were negotiated between the EU and Russia. A potential agreement between the EU and Russia on modernising the existing system of the Trans-Siberian routes could consolidate cooperation in the transport field within the EU-Russia common space.

In view of the latest developments on the international scene, can the Commission state whether there have been any changes in the schedule for negotiating this agreement?

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

The cited 2006 'Agreed Principles' established, among other issues, the phasing-out of the Siberian overflight payments starting from January 2010. This agreement has however not been respected by the Russian Federation. Consequently, in November/December 2011 the Commission and the Russian government agreed on an updated version of those Principles, which entered into force as from 1 January 2012. This agreement contained a new date for the final phase-out of the overall system for Siberian overflight royalties: end of December 2013. As of 1 January 2014, all overflight charges should have been cost-related, transparent and payments should have only been made to the responsible authorities. However, Russia has not respected this deadline and EU air carriers are still paying under the disputed existing system for overflying Siberia en route to the Far East, despite Russian commitments made in this regard.

On 16 January 2014, Russian Vice-Minister of Transport Valerie Okulov committed to complete this process with the individual EU Member States within 6 months, meaning by mid-2014.

The Commission is following these negotiations closely.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004464/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Acordul UE-Brazilia privind transportul aerian

Acordul privind transportul aerian între UE și Brazilia a fost negociat de Comisie, conform autorizației primite din partea Consiliului, în octombrie 2010. Serviciile aeriene dintre UE și Brazilia sunt exploatate în prezent în temeiul acordurilor bilaterale încheiate individual de statele membre și Brazilia.

Având în vedere că acest acord aerian va aduce beneficii economice ambilor parteneri, aș dori să întreb Comisia care sunt stadiul și calendarul încheierii acestui acord și, mai ales, de ce se amână încheierea acestui acord?

Răspuns dat de dl Kallas în numele Comisiei
(22 mai 2014)

După mai puțin de șase luni de negocieri desfășurate în urma acordării autorizației corespunzătoare de către Consiliu în octombrie 2010, cele două părți au parafat un acord în martie 2011, cu o recomandare adresată autorităților lor competente în vederea semnării acestuia.

S-a stabilit ca acordul să fie semnat în cursul summitului UE-Brazilia din octombrie 2011, însă, în mod surprinzător, Brazilia a anunțat cu ocazia acestui summit că nu va semna acordul.

Inițial, motivul refuzului părea să fie legat exclusiv de prevederea din proiectul de acord care permitea o participare străină la capitalul companiilor aeriene de până la 49%. Cu toate acestea, în urma unor noi consultări, la începutul anului 2013, a devenit evident că Brazilia dorea să aducă și alte modificări la acord.

Având în vedere această situație și beneficiile economice semnificative pe care chiar și un acord modificat le-ar putea aduce ambelor părți, Comisia a prezentat, în iunie 2013, o cerere de extindere a directivelor de negociere pentru a include și drepturile care țin de libertatea a cincea (autorizarea serviciului la puncte intermediare din UE și Brazilia și la puncte situate în afara acestora). Aceasta a fost una dintre solicitările Braziliei și nu a fost avută în vedere în cadrul directivelor de negociere din 2010. Extinderea respectivă a fost acordată de Consiliu în decembrie 2013 și negocierile au fost redeschise în ianuarie 2014.

Într-o declarație comună din cadrul Summitului UE-Brazilia din 24 februarie 2014, liderii s-au angajat să coopereze pentru a încheia negocierile cât mai curând posibil.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004464/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: EU-Brazil air transport agreement

The air transport agreement between the EU and Brazil is being negotiated by the Commission in line with the mandate it received from the Council in October 2010. Airline services between the EU and Brazil are currently run on the basis of bilateral agreements concluded between Member States and Brazil on an individual basis.

In view of the fact that this air transport agreement will benefit both partners, can the Commission state what stage has been reached in negotiating the agreement, when it expects it will be concluded and why this is being postponed?

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

After less than six months of negotiations following the corresponding authorisation adopted by the Council in October 2010, an agreement was initialled by the two sides in March 2011 with a recommendation to the respective competent authorities to sign the agreement.

It was planned that the agreement should have been signed during the EU-Brazil Summit in October 2011 but, surprisingly, Brazil announced at the Summit that it would not sign the agreement.

Initially, the reason for the non-signature appeared to relate exclusively to the provision in the draft agreement allowing for up to 49% foreign ownership of airlines. However, following further consultations it became clear in early 2013 that Brazil wished to make further modifications to the agreement.

In view of this situation and the significant economic benefits even a somewhat modified agreement could bring to both sides, the Commission presented in June 2013 an adapted request for, extending the negotiating directives also to 5th freedom rights for passengers (to allow service of intermediate points and points beyond the EU and Brazil respectively). This was one of the Brazilian demands and was not envisaged under the 2010 negotiation directives. Such an extension was granted by the Council in December 2013 and renegotiations were launched in January 2014.

In a Joint Statement from the 24 February 2014 EU-Brazil Summit, leaders committed to work together to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible.

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004465/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Creșterea competențelor digitale

Agenda digitală pentru Europa este una dintre cele șapte inițiative-pilot ale Strategiei Europa 2020 și are ca scop definirea rolului motor esențial pe care utilizarea tehnologiei informației și comunicațiilor (TIC) va trebui să-l joace în realizarea obiectivelor Europei pentru 2020.

Agenda digitală pentru Europa are un obiectiv-cheie de performanță, pentru a reduce la jumătate numărul de non-utilizatori de la 30 % (în 2009) până la 15 % până în 2015. Totuși, deși rata de non-utilizatori a continuat să scadă, 22 % din populația UE nu a utilizat încă internetul.

Mai mult decât atât, rata de non-utilizare în UE variază în mod substanțial, de la sub 5 %, (Islanda, Norvegia și Suedia), la peste 40 % în Bulgaria, Grecia și România.

Grupul non-utilizatorilor este în mare parte format din persoane cu vârste de peste 50 de ani, persoane cu venituri scăzute, șomeri și persoane cu un nivel de educație mai scăzut.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia care sunt măsurile pe care intenționează să le ia pentru a accelera procesul de deprindere a competențelor digitale și, prin aceasta, de a elimina un obstacol important în creșterea gradului de ocupare a forței de muncă.

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(2 iunie 2014)

Comisia este de acord cu analiza conform căreia rata analfabetismului digital este în continuare prea ridicată în UE, îmbunătățirea acesteia fiind esențială pentru îndeplinirea obiectivelor Strategiei Europa 2020 privind realizarea unei economii și a unei societăți inteligente, relansarea creșterii economice și crearea de locuri de muncă.

Întrucât politica în domeniul educației este o responsabilitate a statelor membre ale UE, Comisia a fost activă în cadrul mai multor domenii de politică și programe de finanțare menite să-i ajute pe cetățenii europeni să dobândească sau să își consolideze competențele digitale. De exemplu, Comisia a lansat inițiativa „O agendă pentru noi competențe și locuri de muncă”, care este o componentă a Strategiei Europa 2020, și, mai recent, a emis două comunicări privind „Regândirea educației” și „Deschiderea educației”.

Împreună cu organizații naționale, Comisia a pus în aplicare în mod activ o strategie pe termen lung privind competențele digitale ([1]) pentru secolul XXI, care include elaborarea cadrului european de competențe informatice și campanii de sensibilizare, cum ar fi „Săptămâna competențelor digitale” și „Competențe informatice pentru ocuparea forței de muncă” sau Programul pentru un internet mai sigur.

Programele europene de finanțare, cum ar fi Erasmus+ și programele precedente, dar și Fondul social european sunt utilizate pentru finanțarea activităților de formare care vizează îmbunătățirea competențelor digitale în țările UE. În cadrul Programului Orizont 2020 și al programelor precedente, Comisia sprijină și a sprijinit cercetarea și inovarea în ceea ce privește utilizarea tehnologiei informației și comunicațiilor (TIC) în educație, precum și folosirea metodelor de învățare care se bazează pe TIC.

Recent, Comisia a instituit „Marea coaliție pentru locuri de muncă în sectorul digital” ([2]), un parteneriat care reunește mai multe părți interesate și care își propune să faciliteze colaborarea între întreprinderi și instituțiile de învățământ, să asigure furnizarea de activități de formare și de stagii de către actori din sectorul public și din cel privat, precum și să atragă mai mulți tineri către educația în domeniul TIC.

De asemenea, Comisia promovează cadrele de calificare și de certificare pentru a valorifica aceste competențe digitale și pentru a putea compara calificările la nivel transfrontalier.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/extended/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004465/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Digital skill enhancement

The purpose of the European Digital Agenda, one of the seven pioneering initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy, is to define the essential role of information and communication technology (ICT) in providing impetus for the achievement of EU goals by 2020.

The key performance objective of the European Digital Agenda is to halve the number of non-users from 30% (2009) to 15% (by 2015). However, although the number of non-users has continued to diminish, the fact remains that 22% of EU population has not yet used Internet.

Furthermore, the percentage of non-users in the EU varies substantially from below 5% (Iceland, Norway and Sweden) to over 40% (Bulgaria, Greece and Romania).

Non-users are typically over 50, in the lower income brackets, unemployed or with a low level of education.

What measures are being envisaged by the Commission to speed up the acquisition of digital skills, thereby removing a major obstacle to increased employment levels?

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

The Commission shares the analysis that digital illiteracy is still too high in the EU and improving it is vital to achieving the Europe 2020 objectives towards a smart economy and society, restoring growth and creating jobs.

Whereas education policy is a responsibility of EU Member States, the Commission has been active in several policy areas and funding programmes to help European citizens to acquire or enhance their digital skills. For instance, the Commission has initiated the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs as part of the Europe 2020 strategy and more recently two Communications on 'Rethinking Education' and 'Opening up Education'.

Together with national organisations, the Commission has been actively implementing an eSkills ([1]) for the 21st Century strategy for many years, including the development of the European e-competence framework and awareness-raising campaigns such as eSkills week and eSkills for Jobs or the Safer Internet programme.

Europeans funding programmes such as Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes, but also the European Social Fund are being used to fund trainings to improve digital skills in EU countries. Under Horizon 2020 and its predecessor programmes, the Commission supports research and innovation on ICT for education and ICT-enabled learning.

Most recently, the Commission set up the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs ([2]), a multi-stakeholder partnership that endeavours to facilitate collaboration among business and education providers, public and private actors to provide trainings and internships and to attract more young people to ICT education.

The Commission is also promoting qualification and certification frameworks to valorise digital skills and make qualifications comparable cross-border.

([1]) http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/ict/e-skills/extended/index_en.htm
([2]) http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/grand-coalition-digital-jobs-0

(Versiunea în limba română)

Întrebarea cu solicitare de răspuns scris E-004466/14
adresată Comisiei
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 aprilie 2014)

Subiect: Formarea și recunoașterea competențelor digitale

Agenda digitală pentru Europa este una dintre cele șapte inițiative-pilot ale Strategiei Europa 2020 și are ca scop definirea rolului motor esențial pe care utilizarea tehnologiei informației și comunicațiilor (TIC) va trebui să-l joace în realizarea obiectivelor Europei pentru 2020.

Este esențial ca toți cetățenii europeni să utilizeze TIC și, îndeosebi, să se atragă tinerii înspre educația în materie de TIC. Considerăm că trebuie să crească, atât cantitativ, cât și calitativ, competențele TIC și de e-business. În plus, carierele din sectorul TIC trebuie să devină mai atrăgătoare, inclusiv în domeniul producției si proiectării de tehnologii. Toți cetățenii trebuie informați cu privire la potențialul pe care îl reprezintă TIC pentru toate tipurile de profesii. În acest scop, Comisia consideră că va fi nevoie să se creeze parteneriate multilaterale între părțile interesate, să se consolideze formarea și recunoașterea competențelor digitale în sistemele oficiale de educație și formare profesională.

Aș dori să întreb Comisia dacă au fost create parteneriatele mai sus menționate și dacă au fost realizate modalități de formare și certificare eficace în domeniul TIC, inclusiv prin utilizarea de instrumente online și media digitale pentru recalificarea și perfecționarea profesională.

Răspuns dat de dna Kroes în numele Comisiei
(2 iunie 2014)

Comisia consideră la rândul său că dobândirea și reînnoirea competențelor digitale sunt esențiale pentru viața tuturor cetățenilor Europei, în special pentru cei tineri și pentru valorificarea la maxim a oportunităților în materie de creștere și creare de locuri de muncă în UE oferite de economia digitală. Potrivit datelor existente, nivelul competențelor digitale din UE este insuficient. Ca atare, Comisia pune accentul, în cadrul unei serii de domenii de politică conexe, pe ameliorarea competențelor digitale ale cetățenilor UE. O prezentare de ansamblu a acestor politici, inițiative și acțiuni a fost inclusă în cadrul răspunsului la o întrebare anterioară adresată de distinsa deputată (E-004465/2014). Printre acestea se numără chiar competențele din domeniul TIC (competențele din domeniul TIC și al e-business), activitățile de promovare a carierei (competențele digitale și „Marea coaliție”), abordarea multilaterală („Marea coaliție” și competențele digitale), precum și activitățile de dobândire și certificare a educației menționate aici.

În ceea ce privește domeniul de politică „educație”, comunicarea „Deschiderea educației”, adoptată în septembrie 2013, conturează viziunea Comisiei în privința modului de stimulare a soluțiilor de calitate și inovatoare în materie de învățare și predare, prin intermediul noilor tehnologii și al conținutului digital în Europa. Comunicarea vizează stimularea adoptării tehnologiilor informației și comunicațiilor în școli și universități, în vederea obținerii unei educații și a unor competențe digitale de calitate.

Inițiativa are, de asemenea, în vedere diverse acțiuni în domeniul validării și recunoașterii competențelor și al modului în care instrumentele existente și cele în curs de dezvoltare pot fi adaptate la nevoile celor care învață. Prin această inițiativă se va garanta că transparența și instrumentele de recunoaștere destinate educației formale sunt adaptate la noile forme de învățare, incluzând aici validarea competențelor dobândite online.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004466/14
to the Commission
Silvia-Adriana Ţicău (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Acquisition and recognition of digital skills

The purpose of the European digital agenda, one of the seven pioneering initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy, is to define the essential role of information and communications technology (ICT) in providing the necessary impetus for achievement of European objectives by 2020.

It is essential for all European citizens, and in particular the younger generation, to be taught ICT skills, for ICT and e-business skills to be upgraded and increased, for ICT careers to be made more attractive, particularly in the field of technological production and design, and for ICT potential in all professional fields to be made generally known. The Commission accordingly considers it necessary to create multi-stakeholder partnerships and make the acquisition and recognition of digital skills an integral component of formal education and training.

Can the Commission say whether such partnerships have been created and whether effective measures have been taken for the acquisition and recognition of ICT qualifications, for example through the use of online instruments and digital media for the acquisition of new and enhanced professional skills?

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

The Commission also believes that the acquisition and renewel of Digital skills are essential to the lives of all Europeans, especailly the young, and for making the most of the opportunities of the digital economy for growth and jobs in the EU. Evidence shows that Digital literacy levels in the EU are insufficient. As such the Commission puts a focus in a number of its related policy areas on improving the digital skills of EU citizens. An overview of these policies, initiatives and actions was provided in connection with the reply to a previous question by the Honourable Member (E-004465/2014); they include the very ICT skills (ICT and e-Business skills), careers promotion activities (eSkills and Grand Coalition), multistakeholder approach (Grand coalition and eSkills) and educational aquisition and accreditation activities mentioned here.

Regarding the education policy domain, the communication 'Opening up Education', adopted in September 2013, outlines the Commission's vision of how to stimulate high-quality, innovative ways of learning and teaching through new technologies and digital content in Europe. It aims to boost the adoption of Information and Communication Technologies in schools and universities to deliver high quality education and digital skills.

The initiative also contemplates different actions in the area of validation and recognition of skills and how established and emerging tools can be tailored to the needs of learners, and it will ensure that transparency and recognition instruments for formal education are adapted to new forms of learning including validation of skills acquired online.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004467/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη δημιουργίας ενός ευρωπαϊκού επενδυτικού ταμείου βιομηχανικής καινοτομίας

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεσή του με θέμα: «Ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS) στην Ευρώπη» (2013/2079(INI)), ζητά να εξεταστεί «η δημιουργία ενός ευρωπαϊκού επενδυτικού ταμείου βιομηχανικής καινοτομίας προκειμένου να υποστηριχθεί η ανάπτυξη καινοτόμων και φιλικών προς το κλίμα τεχνολογιών, όπως τα εμβληματικά έργα CCS, άλλες καινοτόμες τεχνολογίες χαμηλών εκπομπών CO_2 και μέτρα για τη μείωση των εκπομπών CO_2 από ενεργοβόρες βιομηχανίες και τις διεργασίες τους».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Ως θέμα γενικότερης αναπτυξιακής και περιβαλλοντικής πολιτικής της ΕΕ, θεωρεί χρήσιμο ένα τέτοιο Επενδυτικό Ταμείο;

2. Προτίθεται να κινήσει τη διαδικασία για την υλοποίηση της εισήγησης του Κοινοβουλίου;

3. Από πού και με ποιο τρόπο θα μπορούσαν, κατά την άποψη του Συμβουλίου, να αντληθούν πόροι για τη χρηματοδότηση ενός τέτοιου ταμείου;

Απάντηση
(23 Ιουνίου 2014)

Η βιομηχανική πολιτική υπάγεται κυρίως στις εθνικές αρμοδιότητες, ιδίως όταν πρόκειται για θέματα εθνικής πολιτικής όπως η βιομηχανική καινοτομία και ο ενεργειακός σχεδιασμός, καθώς και οι συναφείς επενδύσεις σε συγκεκριμένες τεχνολογίες. Ωστόσο, στα συμπεράσματά του, του Μαρτίου 2014, το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο έκρινε ότι μια συνεκτική ευρωπαϊκή πολιτική για την ενέργεια και το κλίμα πρέπει να εξασφαλίζει ενέργεια σε προσιτές τιμές, βιομηχανική ανταγωνιστικότητα, ασφάλεια εφοδιασμού και επίτευξη των κλιματικών και περιβαλλοντικών στόχων μας. Το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο δήλωσε επίσης ότι η Ευρώπη χρειάζεται ισχυρή και ανταγωνιστική βιομηχανική βάση και ότι οι βασικές τεχνολογίες γενικής εφαρμογής (ΒΤΓΕ) έχουν καθοριστική σημασία για τη βιομηχανική ανταγωνιστικότητα, ιδιαίτερη δε προσοχή θα πρέπει να δοθεί στο ρόλο της καθαρής τεχνολογίας ως εγκάρσιου στοιχείου για την ενίσχυση της ανταγωνιστικότητας της ευρωπαϊκής βιομηχανίας.

Όσον αφορά την εφαρμογή του ψηφίσματος του ΕΚ για τη δημιουργία ενός ευρωπαϊκού επενδυτικού ταμείου βιομηχανικής καινοτομίας, σε εθνικό επίπεδο η δημιουργία παρόμοιων ταμείων αποτελεί εθνική αρμοδιότητα, αλλά σε επίπεδο ΕΕ εναπόκειται στην Επιτροπή να ασκήσει το δικαίωμα πρωτοβουλίας της.

Το πρόγραμμα «Ορίζοντας 2020» τέθηκε σε ισχύ την 1η Ιανουαρίου 2014, παρέχει δε ειδική υποστήριξη σε τεχνολογίες που σχετίζονται με την ενέργεια και σε ΒΤΓΕ, καθώς και υποστήριξη σε καινοτομικές ΜΜΕ μέσω πρόσβασης σε χρηματοδότηση υψηλού κινδύνου, ιδίως για την τόνωση της καινοτομίας, της ανάπτυξης και της απασχόλησης στην Ευρώπη. Επιπλέον, το πρόγραμμα υποστηρίζει την ανάπτυξη καινοτόμων και φιλικών προς το κλίμα τεχνολογιών καθώς και δυνατότητες χρηματοδότησης για τις καινοτομικές επιχειρήσεις στον τομέα αυτό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004467/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Need for an EU industrial innovation investment fund

The European Parliament, in its report on 'developing and applying carbon capture and storage technology in Europe' (2013/2079(INI)), calls for consideration to be given to 'creating an EU industrial innovation investment fund to support the development of innovative climate-friendly technologies including CCS flagship projects, other innovative low-carbon technologies, and measures to reduce CO2 emissions from energy-intensive industries and their processes'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. As a matter of general EU development and environmental policy, does it consider such an investment fund to be useful?

2. Does it intend to set in motion the procedure for implementing this Parliament recommendation?

3. Where and how, in the Council's view, could resources be found to finance such a fund?

Reply
(23 June 2014)

Industrial policy falls mainly within national competence, in particular when it comes to national policy issues such as industrial innovation and energy planning and related investment in particular technologies. In its March 2014 conclusions, however, the European Council considered that a coherent European energy and climate policy should ensure affordable energy prices, industrial competitiveness, security of supply and achievement of our climate and environmental objectives. The European Council also indicated that Europe needs a strong and competitive industrial base and that key enabling technologies (KETs) are of crucial importance for industrial competitiveness, whereby special attention should be paid to the role of clean technologies as a cross-cutting element for enhancing the competitiveness of the European industry.

With regard to the implementation of the EP Resolution to create an EU industrial innovation investment fund, while at national level the creation of such funds is a sphere of national competence, it is for the Commission to exercise its right of initiative at the EU level.

The Horizon 2020 programme entered into force on 1 January 2014, and provides specific support for energy-related technologies, KETs as well as support to innovative SMEs via access to risk finance, in particular to boost innovation, growth and jobs in Europe. The programme moreover supports the development of innovative climate-friendly technologies as well as funding opportunities for those innovative companies working in the field.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004468/14
προς το Συμβούλιο
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεσή του με θέμα: «Ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS) στην Ευρώπη», ζητεί «την ανάπτυξη της CCS όχι μόνο σε σχέση με την παραγωγή ενέργειας από άνθρακα και φυσικό αέριο αλλά επίσης σε πολλούς βιομηχανικούς κλάδους όπως τη χημική βιομηχανία, τη μεταλλουργία, τη χαλυβουργία, την τσιμεντοβιομηχανία και τα διυλιστήρια· επιμένει ότι η Επιτροπή πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσει το θέμα της ανάπτυξης της CCS μέσα στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια το 2030 και ότι πρέπει να παρουσιάσει προτάσεις για την προώθηση της έγκαιρης κατασκευής εμβληματικών έργων CCS».

Ερωτάται το Συμβούλιο:

1. Θεωρεί χρήσιμες για την Ευρώπη και υλοποιήσιμες τις πιο πάνω εισηγήσεις του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Προτίθεται να προωθήσει πολιτικές και μέτρα για την υλοποίηση των εισηγήσεων του Κοινοβουλίου και ποια;

Απάντηση
(4 Ιουνίου 2014)

Το Συμβούλιο δεν έχει εξετάσει ακόμα την έκθεση στην οποία αναφέρεται η αξιότιμη κυρία Βουλευτής.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004468/14
to the Council
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Applying carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology

The European Parliament, in its report on 'developing and applying carbon capture and storage technology in Europe', calls on the Commission 'to encourage CCS deployment not only in connection with coal and gas power generation but also in a range of industrial sectors such as chemicals, metallurgy, iron and steel, cement and refineries; insists that the Commission should address the issue of CCS deployment within the 2030 climate and energy framework, and should bring forward proposals for promoting the early construction of CCS flagship projects'.

In view of the above, will the Council say:

1. Does it consider the above Parliament recommendations to be useful for Europe and feasible?

2. Will it promote policies and measures to implement Parliament's recommendations? If so, what are they?

Reply
(4 June 2014)

The report referred to by the Honourable Member has not yet been examined by the Council.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004469/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Εθνικοί χάρτες πορείας χαμηλών ανθρακούχων εκπομπών

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεσή του με θέμα: «Ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS) στην Ευρώπη» (2013/2079(INI)), «καλεί την Επιτροπή να προτείνει ότι τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να συντάξουν και να δημοσιεύσουν εθνικούς χάρτες πορείας χαμηλών ανθρακούχων εκπομπών πριν από τη διάσκεψη της σύμβασης-πλαισίου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για την αλλαγή του κλίματος το 2015».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί χρήσιμη για την Ευρώπη την εισήγηση του Κοινοβουλίου για δημοσίευση εθνικών χαρτών πορείας χαμηλών ανθρακούχων εκπομπών;

2. Έχει πάρει ή προτίθεται να πάρει μέτρα για την υλοποίηση της εισήγησης του Κοινοβουλίου;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Ιουνίου 2014)

Στον χάρτη πορείας για τη μετάβαση σε μια ανταγωνιστική οικονομία χαμηλών εκπομπών διοξειδίου του άνθρακα για το 2050 (COM(2011)112 τελικό), η Επιτροπή καλεί τα κράτη μέλη να «αναπτύξουν εθνικούς χάρτες πορείας χαμηλών εκπομπών διοξειδίου του άνθρακα, εάν δεν το έχουν ήδη πράξει».

Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 4 του κανονισμού για τον μηχανισμό παρακολούθησης, ο οποίος άρχισε να ισχύει στις 8 Ιουλίου 2013, «τα κράτη μέλη προετοιμάζουν τις οικείες στρατηγικές ανάπτυξης με χαμηλές εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα και υποβάλλουν έκθεση σχετικά με την πορεία εφαρμογής των στρατηγικών τους μέχρι την 9η Ιανουαρίου 2015 ή σύμφωνα με το χρονοδιάγραμμα που συμφωνήθηκε διεθνώς στο πλαίσιο της διαδικασίας UNFCCC». Ο κανονισμός επίσης ορίζει ότι «η Επιτροπή και τα κράτη μέλη θα πρέπει να γνωστοποιούν αμέσως στο κοινό τις οικείες στρατηγικές ανάπτυξης με χαμηλές εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα, καθώς και τις τυχόν επικαιροποιήσεις αυτών». Σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 13 στοιχείο β του κανονισμού για τον μηχανισμό παρακολούθησης, τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να διαβιβάζουν επικαιροποιήσεις όσον αφορά τις οικείες στρατηγικές ανάπτυξης με χαμηλές εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα έως τις 15 Μαρτίου κάθε δεύτερου έτους.

Όσον αφορά τις διαπραγματεύσεις βάσει της σύμβασης πλαισίου των Ηνωμένων Εθνών για τις κλιματικές μεταβολές (UNFCCC) για μια συμφωνία του 2015, στην 19η διάσκεψη των μερών στη Βαρσοβία συμφωνήθηκε ότι όλα τα μέλη της UNFCCC πρέπει να ξεκινήσουν ή να εντατικοποιήσουν τις εργασίες τους και να καταρτίσουν και να ανακοινώσουν τις προορισμένες συνεισφορές στην παρούσα συμφωνία πολύ πριν από την 21η διάσκεψη των μερών και εκείνα που είναι έτοιμα, να το πράξουν αυτό από το πρώτο τρίμηνο του 2015. Στο πλαίσιο των εν λόγω προετοιμασιών στην ΕΕ, η Επιτροπή δρομολόγησε στις 22 Ιανουαρίου του παρόντος έτους το πλαίσιο πολιτικής της για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια κατά την περίοδο 2020-2030.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004469/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: National low-carbon roadmaps

The European Parliament, in its report on developing and applying carbon capture and storage technology in Europe (2013/2079(INI)), calls on the Commission 'to propose that Member States should be required to prepare and publish national low-carbon roadmaps prior to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change conference in 2015'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider useful for Europe Parliament's recommendation regarding the publication of national low-carbon roadmaps?

2. Has it taken, or does it intend to take, measures to implement Parliament's recommendation?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

In the Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 (COM(2011) 112 final), the Commission invites Member States to 'develop national low carbon roadmaps if not already done'.

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation, that entered into force on 8 July 2013, 'Member States shall prepare their low-carbon development strategy and report on its status of implementation by 9 of January 2015 or in accordance with any timetable agreed internationally in the context of the UNFCCC process'. The regulation also stipulates that 'the Commission and the Member States shall make available to the public forthwith their respective low-carbon development strategies and any updates thereof.' According to Article 13(b) of the Monitoring Mechanism Regulation, Member States must report any updates to their low carbon development strategy each second year by 15 March.

With regards to the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Changes (UNFCCC) for a 2015 agreement, it was agreed at the 19th Conference of the Parties in Warsaw, that all UNFCCC Parties need to initiate or intensify their homework and prepare and communicate intended contributions to this agreement well in advance of the 21st Conference of the Parties, and those ready to do so by the first quarter of 2015. In the context of these preparations in the EU, the Commission launched on 22 January of this year its Policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004470/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS)

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεσή του με θέμα: «Ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS) στην Ευρώπη» (2013/2079(INI)), «καλεί την Επιτροπή να ενθαρρύνει την ανάπτυξη της CCS όχι μόνο σε σχέση με την παραγωγή ενέργειας από άνθρακα και φυσικό αέριο αλλά επίσης σε πολλούς βιομηχανικούς κλάδους όπως τη χημική βιομηχανία, τη μεταλλουργία, τη χαλυβουργία, την τσιμεντοβιομηχανία και τα διυλιστήρια· επιμένει ότι η Επιτροπή πρέπει να αντιμετωπίσει το θέμα της ανάπτυξης της CCS μέσα στο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια το 2030 και ότι πρέπει να παρουσιάσει προτάσεις για την προώθηση της έγκαιρης κατασκευής εμβληματικών έργων CCS».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Πόσο χρήσιμη και υλοποιήσιμη θεωρεί την πιο πάνω άποψη του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Προτίθεται να λάβει μέτρα για υλοποίηση των εισηγήσεων του Κοινοβουλίου και ποια;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(5 Ιουνίου 2014)

1) Η Επιτροπή χαιρετίζει τη σύσταση που της απευθύνει το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο για την ενθάρρυνση της ανάπτυξης της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης διοξειδίου του άνθρακα (CCS) στην παραγωγή ενέργειας, καθώς και στους βιομηχανικούς κλάδους. Οι αξιολογήσεις που πραγματοποιήθηκαν στο πλαίσιο του χάρτη πορείας της ΕΕ για τη μετάβαση σε μια ανταγωνιστική οικονομία χαμηλών επιπέδων ανθρακούχων εκπομπών το 2050 ([1]) και του ενεργειακού χάρτη πορείας 2050 ([2]) αντιμετωπίζουν την CCS, εάν αξιοποιηθεί εμπορικά, ως μια σημαντική τεχνολογία που συμβάλλει στη μετάβαση σε σύστημα χαμηλών εκπομπών άνθρακα στην ΕΕ. Σε πρόσφατη ανακοίνωση της με τίτλο «Πλαίσιο πολιτικής για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια κατά την περίοδο από το 2020 έως το 2030» ([3]) η Επιτροπή υποστηρίζει ότι η αύξηση των προσπαθειών για Ε&Α και η εμπορική επίδειξη της CCS είναι ουσιαστικής σημασίας κατά την προσεχή δεκαετία, ούτως ώστε να μπορεί να αξιοποιηθεί μέχρι το 2030.

2) Προκειμένου να μεθοδευτεί η ανάπτυξη της τεχνολογίας CCS στην Ευρώπη, το πλαίσιο πολιτικής της CCS θα πρέπει να είναι κατάλληλο για τον επιδιωκόμενο σκοπό. Η Επιτροπή θα επανεξετάσει την οδηγία CCS το 2015. Ανάλογα με το αποτέλεσμα της επανεξέτασης θα ακολουθήσει αναθεώρηση της οδηγίας CCS ή άλλων μέτρων, ώστε να επιταχυνθεί η αξιοποίηση της CCS στην παραγωγή ενέργειας και στους βιομηχανικούς κλάδους. Επιπλέον, το πρόγραμμα-πλαίσιο για την έρευνα και την καινοτομία «Ορίζοντας 2020» θα εξετάζει την ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας CCS, τόσο για την παραγωγή ενέργειας όσο και για την βιομηχανία υψηλών εκπομπών άνθρακα. Ωστόσο, η εμπορική βιωσιμότητα της CCS θα εξαρτηθεί σε καθοριστικό βαθμό από την αξία που αποδίδει η κοινωνία στο κόστος μείωσης των εκπομπών CO_2 και από τον τρόπο με τον οποίο η εν λόγω αξία αντικατοπτρίζεται στις κανονιστικές συνθήκες και/ή στις συνθήκες της αγοράς υπό τις οποίες λειτουργούν οι επιχειρήσεις. Οι τιμές του άνθρακα πρέπει να ξεπεράσουν τα τρέχοντα επίπεδα προκειμένου η CCS να καταστεί εμπορικά βιώσιμη.

([1]) COM(2011)112 τελικό.
([2]) COM(2011)885 τελικό.
([3]) COM(2014)15 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004470/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Applying carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology

The European Parliament, in its report on 'developing and applying carbon capture and storage technology in Europe', calls on the Commission 'to encourage CCS deployment not only in connection with coal and gas power generation but also in a range of industrial sectors such as chemicals, metallurgy, iron and steel, cement and refineries; insists that the Commission should address the issue of CCS deployment within the 2030 climate and energy framework, and should bring forward proposals for promoting the early construction of CCS flagship projects'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How useful and feasible does it consider the above recommendation by Parliament to be?

2. Will it take measures to implement Parliament's recommendations? If so, what measures?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. The Commission welcomes the recommendation brought forward by the European Parliament to encourage carbon capture and storage (CCS) deployment in power generation as well as in industrial sectors. Assessments made in the context of the EU's Roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050 ([1]) and the Energy Roadmap 2050 ([2]) see CCS, if commercialised, as an important technology contributing to the low-carbon transition in the EU. Its recent Communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030' ([3]) argues that increased R&D efforts and commercial demonstration of CCS are essential over the next decade so that CCS can be deployed in the 2030 timeframe.

2. In order to advance CCS technology deployment in Europe, the CCS policy framework should be fit for purpose. The Commission will review the CCS Directive in 2015. Depending on the outcome of the review, it could be followed-up by a revision of the CCS Directive or other measures to accelerate the deployment of CCS in power generation and industry sectors. In addition, Horizon 2020 — the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation — addresses the development and application of CCS both for power production and for carbon-intensive industry. Ultimately, however, the commercial viability of CCS will critically depend on the value that society puts on the value of avoided CO_2 emissions and how that value is reflected in the regulatory and/or market conditions under which companies operate. Carbon prices need to substantially increase over current levels before CCS can become commercially viable.

([1]) COM(2011) 112 final.
([2]) COM(2011) 885 final.
([3]) COM(2014) 15 final.

(Ελληνική έκδοση)

Ερώτηση με αίτημα γραπτής απάντησης E-004471/14
προς την Επιτροπή
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 Απριλίου 2014)

Θέμα: Ανάγκη δημιουργίας ενός ευρωπαϊκού επενδυτικού ταμείου βιομηχανικής καινοτομίας

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο, στην έκθεσή του με θέμα: «Ανάπτυξη και εφαρμογή της τεχνολογίας δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης άνθρακα (CCS) στην Ευρώπη» (2013/2079(INI)), «καλεί την Επιτροπή να εξετάσει τη δημιουργία ενός ευρωπαϊκού επενδυτικού ταμείου βιομηχανικής καινοτομίας προκειμένου να υποστηριχθεί η ανάπτυξη καινοτόμων και φιλικών προς το κλίμα τεχνολογιών, όπως τα εμβληματικά έργα CCS, άλλες καινοτόμες τεχνολογίες χαμηλών εκπομπών CO_2 και μέτρα για τη μείωση των εκπομπών CO_2 από ενεργοβόρες βιομηχανίες και τις διεργασίες τους».

Ερωτάται η Επιτροπή:

1. Θεωρεί χρήσιμο ένα τέτοιο Επενδυτικό Ταμείο για την Ευρώπη, και πώς προτίθεται να προχωρήσει για υλοποίηση της εισήγησης του Κοινοβουλίου;

2. Από πού και με ποιο τρόπο θα μπορούσαν, κατά την άποψη της Επιτροπής, να αντληθούν πόροι για τη χρηματοδότηση ενός τέτοιου ταμείου;

Απάντηση της κ. Hedegaard εξ ονόματος της Επιτροπής
(10 Ιουνίου 2014)

1) Η Επιτροπή συμφωνεί με τη σύσταση που διατύπωσε το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο σύμφωνα με την οποία τα προγράμματα που υποστηρίζουν την καινοτομία σε φιλικές προς το περιβάλλον τεχνολογίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δέσμευσης και αποθήκευσης διοξειδίου του άνθρακα (CCS), μπορούν να συμβάλλουν ουσιαστικά στην επίτευξη της μείωσης των εκπομπών διοξειδίου του άνθρακα στην Ευρώπη μακροπρόθεσμα. Στην πρόσφατη ανακοίνωσή της με τίτλο «Ένα πλαίσιο πολιτικής για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια κατά την περίοδο 2020-2030» ([1]), η Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι η ΕΕ θα πρέπει να εντείνει τις προσπάθειές της στην πολιτική έρευνας και καινοτομίας για να υποστηρίξει το πλαίσιο για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια μετά το 2020. Η Επιτροπή επισημαίνει ότι πρέπει να δοθεί έμφαση στην επιτάχυνση της μείωσης του κόστους και στην υιοθέτηση τεχνολογιών με χαμηλές εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα, εστιάζοντας, μεταξύ άλλων, στην εντατικοποίηση των επενδύσεων σε συστήματα επίδειξης μεγάλης κλίμακας.

2) Στην ίδια ανακοίνωση, η Επιτροπή αναφέρει ότι οι εν λόγω δραστηριότητες θα μπορούσαν να περιλαμβάνουν τη χρήση των εσόδων που προκύπτουν από το σύστημα εμπορίας εκπομπών για τη χρηματοδότηση έργων επίδειξης χαμηλών εκπομπών διοξειδίου του άνθρακα. Η Επιτροπή υπογραμμίζει ότι η έννοια του διευρυμένου συστήματος NER 300 θα διερευνηθεί από την Επιτροπή στο πλαίσιο για το κλίμα και την ενέργεια μετά το 2020 ως ένα μέσο διοχέτευσης των εσόδων από το ETS προς την επίδειξη καινοτόμων τεχνολογιών χαμηλών σε εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα στους τομείς της βιομηχανίας και της παραγωγής ενέργειας. Επιπλέον, η Επιτροπή με το ενωσιακό πρόγραμμα έρευνας και καινοτομίας «Ορίζοντας 2020» σχεδιάζει να διαθέσει περίπου 6 δισ. ευρώ στην ενεργειακή απόδοση και στις ασφαλείς και καθαρές τεχνολογίες χαμηλές σε εκπομπές διοξειδίου του άνθρακα, καθώς και στις ευφυείς πόλεις και κοινότητες. Θα διατεθούν επίσης επιπρόσθετα κονδύλια για χρηματοδοτικά μέσα, συμπράξεις δημόσιου-ιδιωτικού τομέα και έργα ΜΜΕ ([1]).

([1]) COM(2014)15 τελικό.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004471/14
to the Commission
Antigoni Papadopoulou (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Need for an EU industrial innovation investment fund

The European Parliament, in its report on 'developing and applying carbon capture and storage technology in Europe' (2013/2079(INI)), calls on the Commission 'to consider creating an EU industrial innovation investment fund to support the development of innovative climate-friendly technologies including CCS flagship projects, other innovative low-carbon technologies, and measures to reduce CO2 emissions from energy-intensive industries and their processes'.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Does it consider such an investment fund useful for Europe, and how does it intend to proceed with the implementation of this Parliament recommendation?

2. Where and how, in the Commission's view, could resources be found to finance such a fund?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(10 June 2014)

1. The Commission welcomes the recommendation brought forward by the European Parliament that programmes supporting innovation in climate-friendly technologies, including carbon capture and storage (CCS), can make an essential contribution to help achieve decarbonisation in Europe in the long run. In its recent Communication 'A policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030' ([1]) the Commission outlines that the EU will have to step up its efforts in research and innovation policy to support the post-2020 climate and energy framework. The Commission points out that emphasis should be on accelerating cost reductions and market uptake of low-carbon technologies, by focusing, among others, on scaling up investments in large scale demonstrators.

2. In the same Communication, the Commission outlines that such activities could involve the use of revenues generated through the ETS to finance low-carbon demonstration projects. The Commission underlines that the concept of an expanded NER 300 system will be explored by the Commission in the post-2020 climate and energy framework as a means of directing revenues from the ETS towards the demonstration of innovative low-carbon technologies in the industry and power generation sectors. Furthermore, the Commission with Horizon 2020, the Union research and innovation programme, plans to dedicate close to EUR 6 billion to energy efficiency and to secure, clean and low-carbon technologies and to smart cities and communities. Additional funds will also be available for financial instruments, public private partnerships and SME projects.

([1]) COM(2014) 15 final.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita P-004476/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Correos: Ayudas públicas concedidas por el Estado y exenciones fiscales — compatibilidad con las reglas sobre ayudas de Estado, competencia desleal y transferencias a empresas públicas

Un informe sobre el Servicio Postal Español acusa a Correos, empresa pública, de practicar dumping comercial gracias a las ayudas concedidas por el Estado, «lo que impide la entrada de otros operadores, alterando la debida competencia» ([1]). El documento censura la gestión de la compañía bajo la premisa de que el apoyo público no tiene oportuno reflejo en una mejora de sus cuentas, en términos de ingresos, costes y beneficios. Pese a ello, la aportación desde las arcas del Estado se multiplicó un 125 % en el periodo 2005-2010 para alcanzar los 1 305 millones de euros en total desde ese mismo año de inicio a cierre de 2013.

Otro apartado subraya cómo las exenciones fiscales de las que disfruta Correos no solo son lesivas para el conjunto de los ciudadanos, al incidir negativamente en la recaudación fiscal, sino que le permite contar con una ventaja adicional a la hora de disfrutar de una caja que el resto de sus competidores destinan al pago de tributos. Así, por ejemplo, tampoco cobra el IVA por los envíos postales ajenos al Servicio Postal Universal (SPU) de determinados clientes (grandes empresas, bancos y eléctricas), con un impacto tributario calculado por el resto del sector en 110 millones de euros anuales.

Junto a ello se formulan acusaciones de falta de transparencia al estar los tres últimos ejercicios sin auditar, lo que ha provocado que la inyección en 2014 se dispare hasta 518 millones de euros, un 60 % por encima del año pasado; de retrasos normativos que perjudican a la competencia, incluida la metodología para el cálculo del coste neto que determina la contribución estatal y cuya definición está recogida en una directiva europea; y de aprovechamiento de las ventajas del SPU para favorecer a Chronoexpress. Aun así, acumula pérdidas superiores a los 200 millones de euros en nueve años.

También se formulan acusaciones de privilegios aduaneros en Canarias; de no aplicación de tasas locales; de exención de cuotas a la Seguridad Social de los 20 000 funcionarios que aún mantiene en plantilla (de un total de 60 000); de baja productividad en comparación con los equiparables francés y alemán (dueños de Seur y DHL, respectivamente); y de financiación preferencial de Chronoexpress gracias al aval público.

1. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión estos hechos? ¿Son estas ayudas y exenciones fiscales conformes al Derecho de la Unión en la materia?

2. ¿Puede confirmar la Comisión si el Gobierno español cumple la legislación europea sobre transferencias a empresas públicas?

Respuesta del Sr. Almunia en nombre de la Comisión
(14 de mayo de 2014)

La Comisión toma nota de los informes que cita Su Señoría. Dichos informes, que la Comisión no ha visto, parecen alegar que Correos utiliza las ayudas públicas para practicar *dumping* comercial. Asimismo, se señala el efecto distorsionador que tienen las exenciones fiscales de las que disfruta Correos. Se formulan, además, otras acusaciones contra Correos (p. ej., retrasos normativos, privilegios aduaneros en las Islas Canarias) con posibles repercusiones negativas sobre la competencia.

Sin embargo, las medidas mencionadas no han sido notificadas a la Comisión por las autoridades españolas. Por el momento, la Comisión no está, por tanto, en condiciones de determinar si las citadas medidas constituyen ayudas estatales, ni si son compatibles con el Tratado de la Unión Europea.

A este respecto, se están manteniendo contactos con las autoridades españolas.

([1]) http://blogs.elconfidencial.com/economia/valor-anadido/2014-04-10/objetivo-correos-guerra-abierta-en-la-logistica-espanola_114292/

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004476/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Correos: State subsidies and tax exemptions — compatibility with rules on state aid, unfair competition and transfers to state-owned companies

A report on the Spanish postal service accuses Correos, the state-owned post office company, of dumping thanks to the subsidies it receives from the State, 'which stops other operators entering the market, distorting proper competition' ([1]). The document criticised management of the company on the basis that the state subsidies are not duly reflected in an improvement in its accounts, in terms of revenue, costs and profits. Despite this, the contribution from the State's coffers increased by 125% in the period 2005-2010, reaching a total of EUR 1 305 million between the year of commencement and the end of 2013.

Another paragraph highlights how the tax exemptions Correos enjoys are not just detrimental to the public as a whole, in that they have an adverse effect on tax revenue, but that it also gains an additional advantage in benefiting from monies that its competitors set aside for payment of taxes. Thus, for example, it does not charge VAT on items certain specific customers (large businesses, banks and electricity companies) despatch by means other than the universal postal service (UPS). The fiscal impact of this on the rest of the sector is estimated to be EUR 110 million per year.

There are also accusations of: lack of transparency, as accounts have not been audited for the last three financial years, causing 2014's cash injection to shoot up to EUR 518 million, 60% higher than the previous year; regulatory delays which are detrimental to competition, including the methodology for calculating net cost which determines the state contribution and whose definition is set out in an EU directive; and profiting from the advantages of the UPS to favour Chronoexpress. Even so, losses of over EUR 200 million have piled up in nine years.

Further accusations follow: customs concessions in the Canary Islands; local taxes not being enforced; exemption from social security contributions for the 20 000 (out of a total of 60 000) officials still on the payroll; low productivity in comparison with its French and German counterparts (the owners of Seur and DHL, respectively); and preferential financing of Chronoexpress thanks to the government guarantee.

1. Can the Commission confirm these facts? Do these aids and tax exemptions comply with the EU legislation concerned?

2. Can the Commission confirm whether the Spanish Government is complying with EU legislation on transfers to state-owned companies?

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

The Commission takes note of the reports quoted by the Honourable Member. The reports, which the Commission has not seen, seem to allege that Correos uses State subsidies to charge dumping prices. Furthermore, tax exemptions for Correos would also seem to have a distortive effect. In addition, other accusations (e.g. regulatory delays, customs concessions in the Canary Islands) with a possible negative impact on competition are raised against Correos.

However, these measures have not been notified by the Spanish authorities to the Commission. At this stage, the Commission is therefore not in a position to assess whether these measures constitute state aid and whether they are compatible with the EU Treaty.

In this context, contacts with the Spanish authorities are continuing.

([1]) http://blogs.elconfidencial.com/economia/valor-anadido/2014-04-10/objetivo-correos-guerra-abierta-en-la-logistica-espanola_114292/

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite P-004477/14
à la Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Sécurité énergétique: mesures de réduction de la dépendance de l'Europe vis-à-vis de la Russie

Le sommet des chefs d'État et de gouvernement de mars 2014 a chargé la Commission européenne de présenter une série de mesures d'urgence pour protéger l'Europe, et tout particulièrement les pays du sud-est de l'Europe, comme la Bulgarie, face au risque de fermeture des gazoducs russes approvisionnant l'Union.

La Commission pourrait-elle préciser les mesures envisagées à horizon de deux et de cinq ans en ce qui concerne:

— le développement des sources d'énergie thermique renouvelables, telles que la biomasse (notamment les granulés de bois), afin de remplacer le gaz dans certains systèmes de chauffage situés dans des zones stratégiques ou centrales;

— la mise en œuvre de mesures d'efficacité énergétique dans l'ensemble des secteurs économiques;

— le fait que ces mesures peuvent être financées en recourant aux fonds structurels, ce qui porte le montant disponible à 23 milliards d'euros sur les cinq prochaines années;

— l'accélération du développement de certains «chaînons manquants» essentiels de l'infrastructure?

La Commission pourrait-elle également indiquer dans quelle mesure les gaz de schiste pourraient contribuer à la sécurité énergétique de l'Europe au cours des deux à cinq prochaines années et préciser dans quels pays leur extraction serait organisée?

Réponse donnée par M. Oettinger au nom de la Commission
(6 juin 2014)

La réduction de la demande en énergie de l'UE et la promotion des énergies renouvelables sont essentielles pour faire face à la dépendance énergétique de l'Europe et, en tant que telles, sont clairement mises en avant dans la Stratégie européenne de sécurité énergétique ([1]) récemment adoptée par la Commission.

L'exploitation du gaz de schiste en Europe est encore peu avancée, avec seulement un petit nombre de projets d'exploration achevés ou en cours. Il n'est actuellement pas possible d'évaluer de manière fiable la contribution éventuelle du gaz de schiste à la consommation de gaz naturel de l'UE.

([1]) COM(2014)330.

(English version)

Question for written answer P-004477/14
to the Commission
Claude Turmes (Verts/ALE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Energy security: measures to reduce Europe's dependence on Russia

As a follow-up to the heads of state summit in March 2014, the Commission has been asked to draft a set of emergency measures providing for the protection of Europe and, in particular, countries of south-east Europe, such as Bulgaria, against the closing down of Russian gas pipelines to the EU.

Could the Commission elaborate on the measures that are envisaged within the next two and five years in terms of:

— the development of renewable sources of heat energy, such as biomass (including wood pellets), to replace gas in certain strategically and centrally located heating systems;

— the development of energy efficiency measures across all sectors of the economy;

— the fact that these measures can be financed with money from the structural funds, making EUR 23 billion available over the next five years;

— speeding up certain critical 'missing links' in infrastructure development?

Could the Commission also suggest how shale gas could contribute to Europe's energy security over the course of the next two to five years, and specify the countries from which it would be extracted?

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

The reduction of the EU's energy demand and the promotion of renewable energy are key for addressing the energy dependency of Europe and as such are highlighted prominently in the Commissions recently adopted European Energy Security Strategy ([1]).

Shale gas development in Europe is still in an early development phase with only a few exploration projects completed or on-going. It is currently not possible to reliably estimate the possible contribution of shale gas to the EU's natural gas consumption.

([1]) COM(2014) 330.

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004478/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Nuevas declaraciones que equiparan el nacionalismo catalán con el franquismo: Implementación de la Decisión marco 2008/913/JAI; seguimiento de la respuesta a la pregunta E-001465/2014

El partido político Unión, Progreso y Democracia (UPyD) ve el discurso del nacionalismo catalán similar al que sostuvo en su día el franquismo o al que promulgan Jean-Marie y Marine Le Pen en Francia, ya que «quiere hacer extranjero y traidor a quien antes era vecino» y fomenta la «hispanofobia». El partido liderado por Rosa Díez ha presentado este lunes en Madrid el libro A favor de España, con el que quiere ofrecer argumentos contra la ruptura del país y «evaluar en términos políticos» el coste de la secesión de un territorio de España, según ha explicado la propia Rosa Díez ([1]).

Según ha adelantado, UPyD se opone a la pretensión del Parlamento catalán no sólo porque es, dicen, inconstitucional, sino también por «antidemocrática». «Lo más parecido al discurso hispanofóbico catalán es el discurso del franquismo. O eras franquista o eras traidor; o eres nacionalista o eres traidor», ha reprochado.

A este argumento se ha sumado su responsable de Acción Institucional y diputado en la Asamblea de Madrid, Ramón Marcos, alma máter del libro, quien ha advertido de que se trata de un «populismo nacionalista muy semejante» al de Le Pen en Francia. «Allí se odia Europa y aquí España», ha argumentado.

En su respuesta a la pregunta E-001465/2014, la Sra. Reding afirma que: «Tal y como se indica en el informe anteriormente mencionado, se mantendrán debates bilaterales con los Estados miembros durante 2014, con el fin de garantizar la incorporación íntegra y correcta de la Decisión marco al Derecho nacional.»

A la luz de lo anterior, y teniendo en cuenta los precedentes de actos de violencia y manifestación fascistas y de intolerancia denunciados en las preguntas E-011140/2013, E-010490/2013 y E-010386/2013:

En los diálogos bilaterales con el Gobierno español, ¿tratará la Comisión estos hechos, que violan flagrantemente los valores de la UE?

¿Cree que la banalización y las comparaciones con el nazismo y el franquismo de colectivos políticos democráticos podrían considerarse posibles casos particulares?

¿Ha recibido respuesta la Comisión sobre por qué el Estado español no declaró ningún caso en 2013?

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

La Comisión se remite a su respuesta a la pregunta E-004388/2014 formulada por Su Señoría.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20140407/54404801330/upyd-nacionalismo-catalan-le-pen-franquismo.html

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004478/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Fresh statements likening Catalan nationalism to Franco's regime: implementation of Framework Decision 2008/913/JAI; follow-up to answer to Written Question E-001465/2014

In the eyes of the political party *Unión, Progreso y Democracia* [Union, Progress and Democracy] (UPyD) the discourse promulgated by Catalan nationalism is similar to that of Franco's regime in the past or to that of Jean-Marie and Marine Le Pen in France, since it 'seeks to make strangers and traitors of those who used to be neighbours' and it promotes 'Hispanophobia'. This party, led by Rosa Díez, has presented this Monday in Madrid a book entitled '*A favor de España*' ['In favour of Spain'], in which it puts forward arguments against the break-up of the country and 'evaluates in political terms' the costs of part of Spain seceding, in Rosa Díez's own words ([1]).

She has declared that UPyD is opposed to the Catalan parliament's initiative not just because, according to them, it is unconstitutional but also because it is 'antidemocratic'. 'The nearest thing to the Hispanophobic Catalan discourse is the discourse of the Franco regime: you were either a Francoist or a traitor; now you are either a nationalist or a traitor', she has admonished.

This argument has also been taken up by Ramón Marcos, a member of the Madrid parliament and the person responsible for institutional measures in the party, who has been the driving force behind the book. He has warned against 'nationalistic populism that is very similar' to that of Le Pen in France and claims that 'There they hate Europe and here they hate Spain'.

In her answer to my Written Question E-001465/2014, Mrs. Reding stated that: 'As mentioned in the report referred to above, bilateral discussions will be held with the Member States throughout 2014 with a view to ensuring full and correct transposition of the framework Decision into national law.'

In light of the foregoing, and bearing in mind the precedents of the acts of violence and manifestations of intolerance and fascism denounced in written questions E-011140/2013, E-010490/2013 and E-010386/2013.

In its bilateral discussions with the Spanish Government, will the Commission raise these incidents, which are in flagrant breach of EU values?

In its view, might the trivialising and comparing of democratic political groups with the Nazi and Franco regimes be deemed possible particular cases?

Has the Commission received any response to the question of why the Spanish State did not declare a single case in 2013?

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

The Commission refers to its reply to Question E-004388/2014 formulated by the Honourable Member.

([1]) http://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20140407/54404801330/upyd-nacionalismo-catalan-le-pen-franquismo.html

(Versión española)

Pregunta con solicitud de respuesta escrita E-004479/14
a la Comisión
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 de abril de 2014)

Asunto: Pagos pendientes del Fondo FEDER

Para recibir el pago del Fondo europeo FEDER los municipios receptores son agrupados en grupos cerrados. Se da el caso de que para recibir dichos fondos ya aprobados por parte de la CE y con un calendario de pago establecido, todos los municipios agrupados han de pasar satisfactoriamente todas las auditorías y verificaciones sobre el terreno. No obstante, si uno de los municipios del grupo no ha pasado, por cualesquiera que sean los motivos esgrimidos, las auditorías pertinentes, el pago por parte de la CE es retrasado hasta que todos los municipios del citado grupo han pasado satisfactoriamente las auditorías.

Así, se puede argumentar que se castiga a los municipios que cumplen los requisitos y pasan satisfactoriamente todas las auditorías porque en el grupo de municipios hay algunos que no hacen lo que deben hacer.

1. ¿Cuál es la razón para justificar la paralización de las transferencias de pago a los municipios que han cumplido correcta y escrupulosamente y han pasado correctamente las auditorías y verificaciones sobre el terreno?

2. ¿Ha calculado la Comisión cuál es el coste económico en forma de intereses de deuda que esta decisión acarrea a las hoy maltrechas arcas públicas municipales?

Respuesta del Sr. Hahn en nombre de la Comisión
(28 de mayo de 2014)

La autoridad de auditoría de un programa del Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional es responsable de realizar auditorías de sistemas y auditorías de proyectos que le permiten emitir un dictamen anual en su informe anual de control.

La Comisión puede interrumpir o suspender los pagos a los organismos intermedios interesados tras los dictámenes de auditoría del informe anual de control. Si las solicitudes de pago recibidas por la Comisión incluyen los gastos de uno o varios organismos intermedios con deficiencias significativas, el pago solo será parcialmente abonado por los gastos no vinculados a los organismos interesados.

No obstante, si se interrumpen o suspenden los pagos a un organismo intermedio responsable de efectuar pagos a varios municipios, pueden quedar bloqueados sin duda los pagos a todos los municipios bajo su responsabilidad. Esto es consecuencia de la estructura de gestión establecida por el Estado miembro para el programa en cuestión.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004479/14
to the Commission
Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Outstanding payments from the ERD Fund

So that local councils can receive payments from the European Union's ERD Fund, they are combined together into closed groups. However, it turns out that, in order for them to receive these funds, which have already been approved by the EC, according to a set timetable for payment, all the local councils in a given group have to pass all the corresponding checks and audits on the ground. But, if one of the councils in the group fails to pass any of these audits for any reason, the EC will postpone payment until all the councils in that group have satisfactorily passed the tests.

It may therefore be argued that some local authorities that meet the requirements and pass all the tests are punished just because there are other councils in their group which fail to comply.

1. What grounds can justify the suspension of payments to those local councils that have scrupulously fulfilled the requirements and satisfactorily passed all the checks and audits on the ground?

2. Has the Commission calculated the economic cost in terms of debt interest that this decision is causing to the already impoverished finances of these local authorities?

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

An audit authority for a European Regional Development Fund programme is responsible for carrying out systems audits and audits of projects that enable it to issue an annual opinion in its annual control report.

Following the audit opinions in the annual control report, the Commission can interrupt or suspend payments for the affected intermediate bodies. If the payment claims received by the Commission include expenditure from one or more intermediate bodies with significant deficiencies, the payment will only be partially paid for the expenditure not linked to the affected bodies.

However, if an intermediate body which is responsible for payments to several municipalities is interrupted or suspended, this may certainly block the payments to all municipalities under its responsibility. This is a consequence of the management structure set up by the Member State for the programme concerned.

(Deutsche Fassung)

Anfrage zur schriftlichen Beantwortung E-004480/14
an die Kommission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(10. April 2014)

Betrifft: Erschreckendes Testergebnis: Babybrei enthält zu viel Zucker, Fett und Reinigungsmittel

Laut einem Bericht des deutschen Verbrauchermagazins „Öko-Test" wurden zwölf Milch-Getreide-Breie für Babys getestet. Das Ergebnis war erschreckend: Es wurden Produkte getestet, welche für Kinder ab dem fünften Monat geeignet sein sollen. Die Breie enthielten zu viel Zucker, Fettschadstoffe und sogar Reste von Reinigungsmitteln. Bedauerlicherweise schnitt kein Produkt, nicht einmal aus der Biosparte, besser als „ausreichend" ab. Kinder werden zu früh auf die Präferenz „süß" geprägt. Außerdem enthalten die meisten Breie Aromen, Zimt und Vanilleextrakt, welche Kinder zu früh an den typischen Geschmack industriell hergestellter Süßigkeiten gewöhnen. Der zu hohe Konsum von Zucker fördert Karies, Übergewicht und Diabetes. Damit sich die Verbraucher jedoch vor Produkten mit Unmengen an Zucker schützen können, reicht oftmals der Blick auf die Zutatenliste nicht aus und kann zu Verwirrungen führen. Die Aufschrift „ohne Zucker" bezieht sich in den meisten Fällen nur auf Haushalts- oder Kristallzucker (Saccharose).

Kann die Kommission dazu folgende Fragen beantworten:

1. Sind die oben genannten Ergebnisse der Kommission bzw. der Europäischen Behörde für Lebensmittelsicherheit (EFSA) bekannt?

2. Wie bewerten die Kommission und die EFSA die Testergebnisse? Gibt es vergleichbare europaweite Studien? Wenn ja, zu welchen Ergebnissen gelangen diese? Wenn nein, gedenkt die Kommission eine solche Studie zu den Inhaltsstoffen von Babybrei durchzuführen? Falls nein, warum nicht?

3. Gedenkt die Kommission Maßnahmen gegen die offensichtlich schädlichen Inhaltsstoffe von Babybrei einzuleiten? Wenn ja, welche? Wenn nein, warum nicht?

Antwort von Tonio Borg im Namen der Kommission
(1. Juni 2014)

Babybreie gelten als Getreidebeikost und sind in der Richtlinie 2006/125/EG der Kommission [1] geregelt. Gemäß der Richtlinie müssen Getreidebeikost und andere Beikost für Säuglinge und Kleinkinder „aus Zutaten hergestellt werden, deren Eignung für die besondere Ernährung von Säuglingen und Kleinkindern durch allgemein anerkannte wissenschaftliche Daten belegt ist." Anhang I der Richtlinie enthält die auf wissenschaftlichen Gutachten beruhenden Anforderungen an die Grundzusammensetzung von Getreidebeikost.

Der Kommission sind die von dem Herrn Abgeordneten erwähnten Ergebnisse nicht bekannt, so dass sie sich dazu nicht äußern kann. Es ist Aufgabe der zuständigen nationalen Behörden dafür zu sorgen, dass die Nahrungsmittel den einschlägigen Rechtsvorschriften entsprechen.

[1] ABl. L 339 vom 6.12.2006, S. 16.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004480/14
to the Commission
Franz Obermayr (NI)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Alarming test results: baby porridges contain excessive amounts of sugar, fat and detergents

According to a report by the German consumers' magazine *Öko-Test*, twelve milk-based porridges for babies were tested. The results were startling: although the products tested were supposed to be suitable for children from the age of five months, they contained excessive amounts of sugar, harmful fats and even traces of cleaning agents. Unfortunately, no product, not even among the organic products, was found to be better than 'adequate'. Children's tastes are channelled too early towards 'sweet'. In addition, most baby porridges contain flavourings, cinnamon and vanilla extract, which get children used at too young an age to the typical taste of industrially produced sweets. Excessive sugar consumption causes tooth decay, obesity and diabetes. However, often it is not enough for consumers wishing to protect themselves from products containing absurd amounts of sugar simply to consult the list of ingredients, because these can be confusing. The words 'no added sugar' refer in most cases only to household or granulated sugar (sucrose).

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. Are the Commission and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) aware of the above findings?

2. How do the Commission and the EFSA evaluate these test results? Do comparable Europe-wide studies exist? If so, what are their conclusions? If not, will the Commission carry out such a study on the ingredients of baby porridges? If not, why not?

3. Does it intend to introduce measures to eliminate the obviously harmful ingredients in baby porridges? If so, what measures? If not, why not?

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

Baby porridges are to be considered as processed cereal-based foods regulated in Commission Directive 2006/125/EC ([1]). The directive foresees that processed cereal-based foods and baby foods for infants and young children 'shall be manufactured from ingredients whose suitability for particular nutritional use by infants and young children has been established by generally accepted scientific data.' Annex I of the directive lays down essential mandatory compositional requirements for processed cereal-based foods, based on scientific advice.

The Commission is not aware of the findings mentioned by the Honourable Member and therefore cannot comment on them. It is the responsibility of the national competent authorities to ensure compliance of food products with the relevant legislation.

([1]) OJ L 339, 6.12.2006, p. 16.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004482/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Déduction fiscale aux personnes physiques

Proposition nous a été faite d'autoriser aux «personnes physiques» la déduction fiscale des actes et/ou produits agréés; cet agrément se faisant exclusivement pour des services créant un emploi direct. Les fournisseurs de services ne pourraient être agréés dans un premier temps que si ces entreprises disposent d'un siège social et des employés résidant sur le même territoire que le lieu des prestations. La déduction de ce type ne concernant que les particuliers, les sociétés de services disposant d'un siège hors du pays de prestation pourront continuer à réaliser des factures pour les entreprises comme précédemment et respecter ainsi l'esprit du droit européen. Le service ne peut bien évidemment pas être délocalisable. Ne peuvent être agréés les compagnies et les services dont une partie des employés se trouvent hors de l'union ou font appel à des sous-traitants pour ce type de service.

Cette déduction ne se ferait pas comme pour les indépendants ou les entreprises. Elle serait limitée à un maximum mensuel de 20 % du salaire brut (famille avec enfant ou personne à charge et ce quel que soit le nombre d'enfants, 15 % sans enfant) et de maximum 75 % de la facture selon différents critères en partie décrits ci-après. La limitation à un maximum de ¾ de la facture devrait éviter certains trafics d'échanges de factures ou de factures artificiellement alourdies. Les dépenses liées à la déduction sont mensuelles afin d'éviter que des personnes attendent la fin d'année pour faire appel à des services ou réaliser des achats «européens» en une seule fois, saturant ainsi le carnet de commandes de certains sans garantie de travail le restant de l'année pour les «agréés».

Avec des «souches de déduction» ou des factures de «sérialisation européenne» obtenues chaque mois et encodées au plus tard pour la fin du mois suivant, les personnes physiques souhaitant la déduction devront être organisées ou assistées d'un comptable; ce qui permettra à celles-ci un meilleur suivi de leurs entrées et dépenses. Les choix seront par extension parfois plus réfléchis. Nous lutterions ainsi sans doute également contre le surendettement. La limitation à 20 % est bien évidemment réalisée pour éviter que certaines personnes ne tentent d'éluder l'impôt et ne réduisent d'autant les caisses des États.

1. Toujours plus encline à proposer aux États des pistes de réflexion pour une meilleure gestion des finances publiques et pour aider ceux-ci à améliorer leur santé financière, que pense la Commission européenne du scénario proposé?

2. Peut-elle détailler sa réponse?

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

La Commission n'est pas en mesure de commenter l'exemple hypothétique de déductions fiscales aux personnes physiques décrit par l'Honorable Parlementaire. En général, les États membres de l'UE disposent d'une grande liberté pour concevoir leurs systèmes fiscaux de la manière la plus appropriée pour atteindre les objectifs de leur politique nationale, bien que, dans l'exercice de leurs pouvoirs fiscaux, ils doivent respecter les obligations qui leur incombent en vertu des traités de l'UE et ne sont dès lors pas autorisés à opérer une discrimination fondée sur la nationalité ni à appliquer des restrictions injustifiées à l'exercice des libertés fondamentales garanties par les traités de l'Union. Dans ses recommandations formulées aux États membres de l'UE dans le cadre du semestre européen, la Commission européenne encourage une réduction de la fiscalité du travail en vue de favoriser l'emploi, le cas échéant par le transfert de la charge vers les taxes à la consommation, les taxes environnementales et les impôts sur les biens immobiliers, qui sont moins préjudiciables à la croissance.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004482/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Tax deduction for natural persons

A proposal has been made to authorise tax deductions for natural persons in respect of approved services and/or products, with this approval being granted exclusively for services that create direct employment. Service providers would not be able to gain approval at first, unless they had a registered office and employees residing in the same territory as the place of supply of services. Given that this sort of deduction only affects individuals, companies that provide services and have a registered office outside the country in which services are provided will be able to continue to produce invoices for companies as before, which is in keeping with the spirit of EC law. It is clearly impossible to relocate the service. But companies and services for which some of the employees are outside the EU or which resort to sub-contractors to provide the service would not be approved.

This deduction would not be made as it would be for freelancers or for companies. It would be limited to a monthly maximum of 20% of gross salary (for a family with a child or dependent person, no matter the number of children, otherwise 15% for those without children) and a maximum of 75% of the sum invoiced, in accordance with the various criteria set out below. The restriction to three-quarters of the sum invoiced should prevent trading in invoices or artificially inflated invoices. The expenditure associated with the deduction is calculated on a monthly basis in order to prevent people from waiting until the end of the year so that they can use services or make purchases that are 'European' all at once, as this would fill up some companies' order books without providing a guarantee of work for the remainder of the year for those approved entities.

Given that natural persons will receive their deduction stubs and invoices with European serial identification numbers each month, and that these will have to be registered — at the latest — by the end of the following month, they will need to be organised or to be assisted by an accountant. This will enable them to better monitor their income and expenditure. Consequently, the choices that they make will sometimes be better thought out. We would, therefore, also be combating over-indebtedness. The 20% restriction is clearly in place in order to prevent attempts to avoid taxes and to prevent the state's revenue from being significantly diminished.

1. Given that it is always more inclined to offer Member States points to consider onimproving management of public finances and to help them to improve their financialhealth, what is the Commission's view of this scenario?

2. Could the Commission provide a detailed response?

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

The Commission is not in a position to comment on the hypothetical example of tax deductions for natural persons described by the Honourable Member. In general, EU Member States have broad freedom to design their tax systems in the most appropriate way to meet their domestic policy objectives, although, in the exercise of their taxation rights, they must respect their obligations under the EU Treaties and are therefore not allowed to discriminate on the basis of nationality or to apply unjustified restrictions to the exercise of the fundamental EU Treaty freedoms. The European Commission in its Recommendations to EU Member States under the European Semester process encourages a reduction of the tax burden on labour, in order to promote employment, shifting the burden where necessary to consumption, environment and property taxes which are less detrimental to growth.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004483/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Drone et protection des données

L'utilisation de drones a de quoi inquiéter.

La Commission partage-t-elle cet avis?

Compte-t-elle proposer au Parlement des normes plus strictes pour encadrer les activités en pleine croissance des drones civils afin de les rendre plus sûrs et de mieux faire respecter la vie privée?

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

La Commission ne saurait souscrire à cette déclaration. Elle invite l'Honorable Parlementaire à se reporter à la communication ([1]) qu'elle a récemment adoptée à ce sujet. Les drones civils peuvent apporter d'immenses bénéfices sociétaux et pourraient commencer à remplacer les vols habités pour certaines activités, qu'il s'agisse d'activités de routine ou d'activités intervenant dans des circonstances exceptionnelles, telles que, par exemple, des conditions climatiques défavorables.

Le défi consiste à présenter un cadre réglementaire qui permette de tirer les avantages sociétaux de cette technologie innovante en répondant, dans le même temps, aux préoccupations des citoyens. La Commission effectuera, dans les mois à venir, une analyse d'impact approfondie afin d'examiner les questions pertinentes. Elle déterminera ensuite les meilleures options pour instaurer un cadre qui maintienne les normes élevées attendues par les Européens en matière de sécurité, de sûreté et de respect de la vie privée. L'analyse d'impact pourrait être suivie d'une proposition législative.

([1]) Communication de la Commission au Parlement européen et au Conseil «Une nouvelle ère de l'aviation — Ouvrir le marché de l'aviation à l'utilisation civile de systèmes d'aéronefs télépilotés, d'une manière sûre et durable», COM(2014) 207 final.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004483/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Drones and the protection of privacy

The use of civilian drones is an alarming development.

Does the Commission agree?

Will it submit to Parliament a proposal introducing stricter standards and regulating the booming business of civilian drones so as to make them safer and ensure better protection of privacy?

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

The Commission cannot agree with this statement and would like to refer the Honourable Member to the communication ([1]) it recently adopted on the matter. Civil drones may bring huge societal benefits and could start replacing 'manned' aviation, in specific activities either of routine character or under specific circumstances, such as adverse weather conditions.

The challenge is to come up with a regulatory framework to reap the societal benefits of this innovative technology while, at the same time, addressing citizens' concerns. The Commission is carrying out, in the coming months, an in-depth impact assessment to examine the relevant issues and will then define the best options for a framework that maintains the high safety, security and privacy standards that the EU citizens expect. The impact assessment may be followed by a legislative proposal.

([1]) Communication from the Commission to the European parliament and the Council 'A new era for aviation — Opening the aviation market to the civil use of remotely piloted aircraft systems in a safe and sustainable manner', COM(2014) 207 final.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004484/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Argent de la PAC

Dans le cadre de la procédure dite d'apurement des comptes, la Commission européenne réclame aujourd'hui aux États membres un montant total de 318 millions d'euros correspondant à des dépenses irrégulières effectuées par ceux-ci au titre de la politique agricole de l'Union. Toutefois, certains de ces montants ayant déjà été récupérés auprès des États membres, l'incidence financière de la décision de ce jour sera d'environ 315 millions d'euros. Ces fonds sont reversés au budget de l'Union en raison du non-respect des règles de l'Union ou de l'inadéquation des procédures de contrôle des dépenses agricoles. En effet, si les États membres sont chargés d'effectuer les paiements et de vérifier les dépenses réalisées au titre de la politique agricole commune (PAC), la Commission est tenue de s'assurer que ceux-ci utilisent correctement les fonds mis à leur disposition.

La décision qui vient d'être adoptée prévoit le recouvrement de fonds auprès de 11 États membres, à savoir le Danemark, l'Allemagne, la Grèce, l'Espagne, la France, l'Italie, le Portugal, la Roumanie, la Slovénie, la Finlande et le Royaume-Uni. Les corrections les plus importantes concernent les montants suivants:

— 238,90 millions d'euros (l'incidence financière est inférieure en raison des montants déjà récupérés auprès de l'État membre ou reversés par celui-ci: 237,83 millions d'euros).

— 12,94 millions d'euros (l'incidence financière: 12,04 millions d'euros) à rembourser par le Portugal en raison de faiblesses liées à la conditionnalité.

— 10,03 millions d'euros à rembourser par la France en raison d'insuffisances dans l'application de la mesure «jeune agriculteur» et dans le contrôle des prêts bonifiés.

1. La Commission confirme-t-elle ces informations?

2. Ne serait-il pas logique que cet argent soit réinvesti dans des dossiers agricoles?

Réponse donnée par M. Cioloş au nom de la Commission
(28 mai 2014)

1. La Commission confirme les informations mentionnées dans la question. Ces corrections financières résultent de la décision 2014/191/UE de la Commission ([1]) adoptée le 4 avril 2014.

2. Conformément à l'article 43 du règlement (UE) nº 1306/2013 du Parlement européen et du Conseil ([2]) relatif au financement, à la gestion et au suivi de la politique agricole commune, les recettes résultant de corrections financières effectuées au titre de décisions d'apurement de conformité sont des recettes affectées. Ce règlement énonce que les recettes affectées sont versées au budget de l'Union européenne et qu'en cas de réutilisation, elles sont exclusivement utilisées pour financer respectivement des dépenses du Fonds européen agricole de garantie (FEAGA) ou du Fonds européen agricole pour le développement rural (Feader).

([1]) JO L 104 du 8.4.2014, p. 43.
([2]) JO L 347 du 20.12.2013, p. 549.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004484/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) money

As part of a procedure known as clearance of accounts, the Commission is demanding that the Member States pay back a total of EUR 318 million. This corresponds to the amount of irregular CAP payments made by the Member States. However, given that some of this money has already been recovered from the Member States, the financial impact of today's decision will be around EUR 315 million. These funds are being returned to the EU due to non-compliance with EU rules or to the inadequacy of procedures for verifying agricultural expenditure. If it is the responsibility of the Member States to make payments and to verify CAP expenditure, then it is the Commission's responsibility to make sure that the funds provided to the Member States are used correctly.

The decision that has just been adopted provides for the recovery of funds from 11 Member States, namely Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Finland and the United Kingdom. The most important corrections concern the following sums:

— EUR 238.90 million (the financial impact is lower in view of the sums already recovered from the Member State or returned by the Member State: EUR 237.83 million).

— EUR 12.94 million (financial impact: EUR 12.04 million) to be paid back by Portugal in view of shortcomings related to conditionality.

— EUR 10.03 million to be repaid by France in view of shortcomings in the implementation of the 'young farmer' measure and in the oversight of subsidised loans.

1. Can the Commission confirm this information?

2. Would it not be logical to reinvest this money in agricultural dossiers?

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

1. The Commission confirms the information quoted in the text of the question. These financial corrections result from Commission Decision 2014/191/EU ([1]) which was adopted on 4 April 2014.

2. In accordance with Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013 ([2]) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy, revenue originating from financial corrections under conformity clearance decisions is designated as assigned revenue. According to these rules assigned revenue shall be paid to Union's budget and, in the event of reuse, shall be used exclusively to finance EAGF and EAFRD expenditure.

([1]) OJ L 104/43, 8.4.2014.
([2]) OJ L 347/549, 20.12.2013.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004486/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Sword group et la Commission

Le consortium IASis, dont Sword Group fait partie, a remporté un contrat avec la Commission européenne. Il représente une valeur de 99 millions d'euros

En quoi Sword group s'est-il distingué de ses concurrents? Merci de détailler la réponse.

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

La Commission souhaiterait souligner que les offres ne sont pas comparées entre elles, mais évaluées selon une série de critères d'exclusion, de sélection et d'attribution qui sont publiés, comme prévu aux articles 105 et 111 du règlement financier. L'offre présentée par le consortium IASis était la plus avantageuse sur le plan économique. La Commission souhaite informer l'Honorable Parlementaire qu'il peut demander accès au rapport d'évaluation en vertu du règlement (CE) nº 1049/2001.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004486/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Sword Group and the Commission

The IASis Consortium, which includes the Sword Group, has won a contract worth EUR 99 million from the Commission.

In what way did the Sword Group stand out from its competitors? Please provide a detailed response.

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

The Commission would point out that offers are not evaluated against each other but against a set of published exclusion, selection and award criteria, as stipulated in Articles 105 and 111 of the Financial Regulation. The offer of the IAS is Consortium represented the most economically advantageous tender. The Commission would like to inform the Honourable Member that access to the evaluation report can be requested under the terms of regulation 1049/2001.

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004487/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Gaz à effet de serre

Les premiers résultats du système d'échange de quotas d'émissions (SEQE ou EU ETS) de gaz à effet de serre (GES) pour l'année 2013, qui ont été publiés par la Commission, montrent une baisse de 3,1 % par rapport à 2012. Ces données sont vérifiées mais demeurent incomplètes car elles ne portent que sur les émissions de 90 % des industries participant au SEQE.

1. Quelle est la réaction de la Commission?

2. Pour la Commission, quelles sont les causes principales de cette baisse?

3. Quelles sont les prochaines étapes?

Réponse donnée par M^me^ Hedegaard au nom de la Commission
(5 juin 2014)

1. Les émissions vérifiées préliminaires communiquées au 1er avril n'incluaient pas encore les données de toutes les installations. Le 14 mai, la Commission a publié un communiqué de presse ([1]) sur les résultats du cycle de mise en conformité du système d'échange de quotas de l'UE pour 2013. Pour cette première année de déclaration de la troisième période d'échanges, environ 3 % des installations fixes soumises à des obligations de mise en conformité en 2013 n'avaient pas déclaré leurs émissions au 30 avril 2014, selon les données du registre. Il incombe aux autorités nationales de faire respecter les obligations prévues par la directive 2003/87/CE, et notamment la présentation de déclarations d'émissions vérifiées par les exploitants participant au système d'échange de quotas d'émission (SEQE) de l'UE.

2. La Commission n'interprète pas ces données. Plusieurs analystes du marché et chercheurs s'emploient à expliquer les déterminants des émissions. Sur une base équivalente, les émissions estimées en 2013 ont diminué d'au moins 3 % par rapport au niveau de 2012 pour les installations dans les secteurs ayant participé tant à la deuxième qu'à la troisième période d'échanges, même si certains problèmes méthodologiques se posent pour évaluer avec certitude l'évolution des émissions par rapport à 2012, du fait de l'extension du champ d'application du SEQE de l'UE pour la troisième période d'échanges. Les émissions ont diminué plus rapidement que les années précédentes, alors même que les économies européennes ont commencé à sortir de la récession.

3. Depuis le 15 mai 2014, la Commission a rendu publics les données concernant la quantité de quotas restitués par installation pour 2013 ainsi que les codes de conformité au niveau des installations, qui indiquent si chaque exploitant a restitué la quantité requise de quotas, sur la base des données disponibles au 30 avril. C'est sur ces données que travaillent les analystes du marché et les parties prenantes.

([1]) IP/14/561, voir: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-561_fr.htm

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004487/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Greenhouse gases

The first results from the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS) for greenhouse gases from the year 2013 have been published by the Commission, and they show a fall of 3.1% compared with 2012. These data have been verified, but they remain incomplete as they only concern the emissions of 90% of the industries that are taking part in EU ETS.

1. What is the Commission's response to this?

2. What, in the Commission's view, are the main causes of this fall?

3. What will happen next?

Answer given by Ms Hedegaard on behalf of the Commission
(5 June 2014)

1. The preliminary verified emissions released by 1 April did not yet include the data for all installations. The Commission published on 14 May a press release ([1]) on the results of the EU ETS compliance cycle for 2013. For this first reporting year of the third trading period, about 3% of stationary installations subject to compliance obligations in 2013 did not report their emissions by 30 April 2014, according to registry data. It is the responsibility of the national authorities to enforce the obligations set out in Directive 2003/87/EC and in particular the provision of verified emissions reports by operators participating in the EU emissions trading system (EU ETS).

2. The Commission does not interpret these data. Several market analysts and researchers work on explaining the drivers of emissions. Estimated emissions in 2013 on a like-for-like basis were at least 3% below the 2012 level for installations in sectors included in both the second and third trading period, although there are some methodological challenges in assessing with certainty the change in emissions compared to 2012 due to the extension in scope of the EU ETS for the third trading period. Emissions declined faster than in previous years even as Europe's economies started to recover from the recession.

3. Since 15 May 2014, the Commission has made available the data on the quantity of allowances surrendered per installation for 2013, as well as the installation-level compliance code, setting out whether each operator surrendered the required amount of allowances, based on the data available on 30 April. This data is used by market analysts and stakeholders for their work.

([1]) IP/14/561, see: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-561_en.htm

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004488/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Condamnation de producteurs de câbles

Plusieurs producteurs de câbles à haute tension ont été condamnés par la Commission européenne pour avoir organisé une entente. Des amendes totalisant 301,6 millions d'euros ont été infligées à plusieurs industriels, au nombre desquels Nexans, qui écope de la sanction la plus lourde, soit 70,7 millions d'euros. Safran devra aussi verser 8,6 millions d'euros. Les autres sociétés sanctionnées sont Goldman Sachs (qui était propriétaire de Prysmian au moment des faits), Prysmian, Pirelli, Viscas, Furukawa, Fujikura, J-Power, Sumitomo, Hitachi, NKT et Brugg Kabel. ABB échappe à la sanction, conformément à la politique de l'antitrust, pour avoir dénoncé l'entente.

1. Comment s'est déroulée l'enquête de la source jusqu'à la finalité?

2. Sur quelle base les amendes ont-elles été évaluées?

3. Quel est le chiffre d'affaires annuel de ces entreprises?

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

L'enquête sur l'entente dans le secteur des câbles électriques a été ouverte à la suite d'une demande d'immunité présentée par ABB (en octobre 2008). Des inspections ont été menées en janvier 2009 et ont été suivies par une demande de clémence de JPS et de ses sociétés mères. La communication des griefs a été adressée en juin 2011 aux parties, qui ont été entendues en juin 2012 lors d'une audience qui s'est étalée sur six jours. En novembre 2012, le Tribunal a partiellement annulé la décision d'inspection pour les câbles autres que les câbles électriques à haute tension. Certains faits ont été clarifiés en 2013, et la décision a été adoptée le 2 avril 2014 (voir http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-358_fr.htm).

Conformément aux lignes directrices pour le calcul du montant des amendes (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52006XC0901(01)), les amendes ont été calculées en tenant compte d'une proportion de la valeur des ventes couvertes par l'entente dans l'EEE (en 2004), multipliée par la durée de l'infraction commise par chaque entreprise. Comme une partie des accords illégaux impliquaient des producteurs asiatiques qui avaient accepté de se tenir éloignés des marchés européens, les ventes réalisées dans l'EEE étaient (quasiment) nulles. Conformément à la méthode exposée au point 18 des lignes directrices précitées, la Commission a par conséquent ventilé les ventes globales réalisées dans l'EEE entre les membres de l'entente, proportionnellement à leur part respective des ventes sur le marché plus vaste faisant l'objet de l'entente.

Les amendes ont été ajustées afin de refléter les différents niveaux de participation des entreprises, ainsi que leur coopération à l'enquête. Les sociétés mères (telles que Goldman Sachs) sont tenues pour responsables du paiement de l'amende infligée à leurs filiales. Certaines entreprises souhaitant que leur chiffre d'affaires bénéficie d'un traitement confidentiel, la Commission ne peut, à ce stade, divulguer les données chiffrées individuelles avant de s'être prononcée sur leur demande. Aucune des entreprises n'était cependant proche du plafond légal applicable en matière d'amendes (soit 10 % du chiffre d'affaires réalisé à l'échelle mondiale).

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004488/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Fining of high-voltage cable manufacturers

The European Commission has found a number of high-voltage cable manufacturers guilty of forming a cartel. Fines totalling EUR 301.6 million have been imposed on the industrial groups concerned, with Nexans receiving the heaviest fine of EUR 70.7 million. A fine of EUR 8.6 million has been imposed on Safran. The other companies found guilty of complicity are Goldman Sachs (which owned Prysmian at the time the cartel was operating), Prysmian itself, Pirelli, Viscas, Furukawa, Fujikura, J-Power, Sumitomo, Hitachi, NKT and Brugg Kabel. ABB received full immunity in accordance with antitrust policy for revealing the existence of the cartel to the Commission, thereby avoiding a fine.

1. Could the Commission describe the investigation from time of the initial revelations to the final decision?

2. On what basis were the fines calculated?

3. What is the annual turnover of each company?

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

The Power Cables cartel investigation was triggered by an immunity application from ABB (October 2008). Inspections were carried out in January 2009 followed by a leniency application from JPS and its parent companies. The Statement of Objections was sent in June 2011 and the parties were heard in a six-day oral hearing in June 2012. In November 2012, the General Court partly annulled the inspection decision for cables other than high voltage power cables. Some facts were further clarified during 2013 and the decision was adopted on 2 April 2014 (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-358_en.htm).

In accordance with the Fining Guidelines (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52006XC0901(01)), the fines were based on a percentage of the value of sales covered by the cartel in the EEA (in 2004) multiplied by the duration of each company's infringement. Since part of the illegal agreements entailed Asian producers agreeing to stay out of Europe, their EEA sales were (close to) zero. In line with the methodology set out in point 18 of the Guidelines, the Commission therefore allocated the aggregated EEA sales to the cartel members in proportion to their market shares on the wider cartelised market.

The fines were adjusted to reflect the companies' different levels of involvement and their cooperation in the investigation. Parent companies (such as Goldman Sachs) are held liable for the fine imposed on their subsidiaries. As some of the companies claim confidentiality for their turnover figures, the Commission cannot at this stage reveal the individual figures before those claims have been processed. However, none of the companies came close to reaching the legal maximum fine (10% of their global turnover).

(Version française)

Question avec demande de réponse écrite E-004489/14
à la Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 avril 2014)

Objet: Inflation prolongée

Après le Fonds monétaire international (FMI), c'est au tour de la Commission de laisser entendre qu'elle souhaiterait un nouvel assouplissement monétaire. En effet, avec plus de doigté que le FMI, la Commission, par la voix du commissaire chargé des affaires économiques et monétaires, a déclaré qu'elle était inquiète des perspectives de basse inflation sur une période prolongée.

1. Sur quoi ces inquiétudes se basent-elles?

2. Comment la Commission réagit-elle à ces perspectives?

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

La politique monétaire de la zone euro relève de la compétence exclusive de la BCE. La Commission respecte pleinement l'indépendance de la BCE et ne commente pas la politique monétaire.

Les dernières prévisions de la Commission ont été publiées le 5 mai. Le principal risque qui pèse sur les perspectives de croissance est lié à une nouvelle perte de confiance résultant d'une stagnation des réformes. De même, l'incertitude entourant l'environnement extérieur s'est renforcée. D'un autre côté, de nouvelles réformes structurelles courageuses pourraient mener à une reprise plus forte que prévu.

Selon les prévisions, il faut s'attendre à une période prolongée de faible inflation qui devrait augmenter progressivement tout au long de l'année 2015. Si l'évolution des prix courants reflète à la fois des facteurs externes et le processus d'ajustement en cours, une période trop longue de faible inflation pourrait également comporter des risques. Toutefois, le renforcement progressif de la reprise et sa base de plus en plus large devraient atténuer ces risques.

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004489/14
to the Commission
Marc Tarabella (S&D)
(10 April 2014)

Subject: Prolonged inflation

After the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Commission is now giving to understand that it favours a fresh dose of quantitative easing. Taking a less heavy-handed attitude than the IMF, the Commission, in the shape of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner, has said that it is worried by the prospect of low inflation over a prolonged period.

1. What is prompting the Commission's worries?

2. How does the Commission view the prospect mentioned above?

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

Monetary policy in the euro area is the exclusive competence of the ECB. The Commission fully respects the ECB's independence and does not comment on monetary policy.

The latest Commission forecast was published on 5 May. The largest downside risk to the growth outlook remains a renewed loss of confidence from a stalling of reforms. Also, uncertainty about the external environment has increased. On the other hand, further bold structural reforms could lead to a stronger-than-envisaged recovery.

The forecast expects a protracted period of low inflation with a gradual increase in inflation throughout 2015. While current price developments reflect both external factors and the ongoing adjustment process, a too prolonged period of low inflation could also entail risks. However, the gradually strengthening and increasingly broad-based recovery should mitigate these risks.